

CELEBRATING JAMES CONLON'S EXTRAORDINARY 37-YEAR TENURE
AS MUSIC DIRECTOR OF THE MAY FESTIVAL

2016 MAY FESTIVAL

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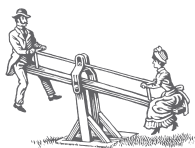


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OR

Remaining focused on the long term.

Medically speaking, checking one's reflexes is an important test of the nervous system. However, in our overly deliberate opinion, the doctor's office is the only place where knee-jerk reactions should be considered a positive. Especially when it comes to investing. We realize that it's only natural to want to react impulsively to a down day or two, but we believe remaining steadfast is the more prudent financial decision. And while there is a time and place to take action, it should be done thoughtfully. As opposed to rapidly. Which is why every



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2016 MAY FESTIVAL

CINCINNATI

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The Louise Dieterle Nippert Musical Arts Fund provides new levels of collaboration between Cincinnati's 4 major performing arts groups - The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the Cincinnati Ballet, the Cincinnati Opera and the Cincinnati May Festival Chorus. These grants reflect Louise Dieterle Nippert's love and support of the performing arts in Greater Cincinnati.



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— CINCINNATI —

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ON THE COVER Maestro James Conlon conducts his final May Festival as Music Director, concluding an extraordinary 37-year tenure. His leadership has inspired countless audience members, chorus members, musicians, soloists and supporters of the May Festival.

CINCINNATI MAGAZINE:

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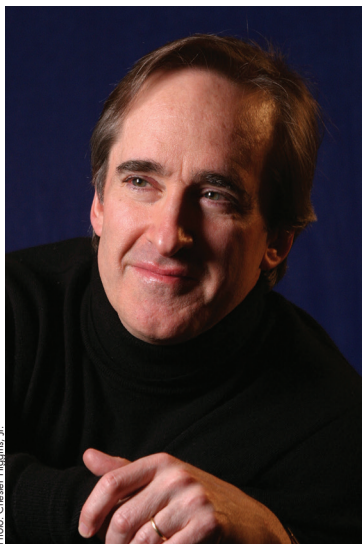


Photo: Chester Higgins, Jr.

Dear Friends,

I customarily write a foreword in the program book for each May Festival, highlighting the programs and events for that particular year. This year, however, is special, as I leave the position of Music Director of May Festival—a position

I have enjoyed for 37 years. I want to take this opportunity to reflect on those years with gratitude for the wonderful and memorable performances of so much extraordinary music. I will look back with pride as I consider what we have, together, accomplished during that time.

As this year's May Festival comes to a close, it leaves, temporarily, its made-to-order home: one of America's oldest and finest concert venues, Music Hall. When it returns, my hope is that it brings back to its refurbished home the sense of tradition and artistic values that have been the Festival's hallmark; it is a meaningful reflection of Cincinnati's commitment to classical music, one that has always been inherent to the Festival and to the city's history.

I am grateful to the people, and especially to James Levine, who brought me here in 1978, affording me the opportunity to collaborate with hundreds of members of the May Festival Chorus and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, many of whom are still active today. I am thankful to them for the years of music-making dedicated to the extraordinary body of classical choral repertoire. And, I am grateful to the generations of Cincinnatians who have supported and nurtured the Festival.

I look back with pride on the fact that May Festival has maintained a principled attitude toward that tradition in the face of a changing society. It has upheld standards of performance and programming in the face of pressures to compromise. I am gratified that the Festival, by its continuing existence, has implicitly defended the role of non-professional choirs. I am proud that it has been a showcase for many of the leading concert and opera singers over the last 37 years, many of whom performed on the stage of Music Hall before being celebrated throughout the rest of the world.

The May Festival, in my experience, is virtually unique. Nowhere in the U.S. can one find anything comparable to the concentrated, annual joining of forces of professional musicians, highly skilled non-professional singers, and international soloists performing in one of America's most beautiful concert halls for more than 140 years.

The Festival embodies a substantial, Cincinnati-exclusive contribution to America's classical music profile. It has given Cincinnatians, and those who travel here especially for the Festival, a yearly opportunity to celebrate a vital tradition.

In an era of instant communication and dissemination of ideas, characterized by an accelerated pace of life and an influx of novelty, classics and tradition may seem expendable. Whatever changes the May Festival may consider in its future, it will enhance that very future by respecting its core tradition as the foundation on which to devise change.



Photo: Dan Sernberg for LA Opera

These principles, that are a source of community pride, have sustained and nourished the unique and extraordinary Cincinnati May Festival over generations, and they should be maintained.

I have had the honor of leading May Festival for over three-and-a-half decades, and I feel deep appreciation for those who have supported this effort. With gratitude for that past, and hopes for the future, I thank you all, performers and public alike, for your generosity of spirit and for the pleasure you have afforded me in making music with you, and for you, all these years.



Portrait of James Conlon by the artist Muli Tang; the portrait hangs in the Music Hall foyer.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James Conlon'.

James Conlon

James Conlon leads the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, May Festival Chorus and audience members in the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah, a closing night tradition.



PRE-CONCERT RECITALS

Hear some of the world's outstanding singers performing gems of the solo vocal literature in recital before each of the four Music Hall concerts. These mini-

Friday, May 20, 7 p.m.

Ben Bliss, tenor
Michael Chertock, pianist

Saturday, May 21, 7 p.m.

Rodrick Dixon, tenor
Michael Chertock, pianist

concerts are performed on the stage of Music Hall and are free to ticketholders for the main performance.

Friday, May 27, 7 p.m.

Sara Murphy, mezzo-soprano
Michael Chertock, pianist

Saturday, May 28, 7 p.m.

Kristinn Sigmundsson, bass
Michael Chertock, pianist

THE MAY FESTIVAL thanks THE ELEANORA C.U. ALMS TRUST, Fifth Third Bank, Trustee, which has endowed in perpetuity the May Festival Pre-Concert Recitals.

YOUR CONCERT EXPERIENCE

TICKETS

- Donated tickets are tax-deductible. Please don't allow your seats to go empty. Tickets can be returned in advance to the Music Hall Box Office at least 30 minutes before concert time, to release your seats for resale and obtain a receipt for tax purposes.

AUDIENCE ACCOMMODATIONS

- An elevator is located in the north corridor with service to all three floors. Escalators to all floors are located in the south corridor. For patron safety, walkers and strollers are not permitted on the escalators.
- Restrooms are located on all levels.

GENERAL COURTESY

- So as to not disturb other patrons, latecomers will be asked to sit at the back of the auditorium until an appropriate musical break. Ushers will then assist latecomers to their seats.
- In consideration of all patrons, children under six are not encouraged to attend May Festival concerts. Ushers will assist patrons with young children to designated seats at the back of the auditorium.

- The use of photographic, recording and other audiovisual devices is prohibited in the auditorium during performances.
- Please turn off all cell phones, wristwatch alarms, pagers, or other devices that make noise.
- Smoking is not permitted in Music Hall.
- Please do not place coats, program books or other objects on balcony railings.

ACCESSIBILITY

- Handicapped parking is available in the Central Parking lot next to Music Hall and in the Washington Park garage.
- An accessible restroom is located on the first floor in the south corridor, on the second floor in the south corridor, and on the third floor in the north corridor.
- Assistive listening devices for the hearing impaired are available at the south foyer cloakroom.
- Audio-descriptive devices for the visually impaired are available at the south foyer cloakroom, courtesy of The Telephone Pioneers of America, employees and retirees of Cincinnati Bell and AT&T, answering the call of those in need.
- Seating for the disabled is available for all events.

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends of the May Festival,

The 2016 May Festival is upon us! It has been a tremendous year for the May Festival, with many exciting changes ahead, and I would like to begin by thanking the dedicated community of patrons, sponsors, chorus members, artistic leaders, administrative staff, partner organizations and others who have made this year such a joy and an honor in which to participate.

Of course it is with bittersweet emotion that I must acknowledge this year's May Festival as Maestro James Conlon's final Festival as Music Director. Over the course of his 37-year tenure, he has led this organization with incomparable artistry, visionary programming and tremendous warmth for the Cincinnati community. Please be sure to take home a copy of the complimentary commemorative book that reflects back on his incredible tenure. Maestro Conlon, we wish you all the best in your future endeavors and look forward to welcoming you back to the podium in the future as Music Director Laureate.

This year's May Festival concerts also mark the final performances at historic Music Hall prior to closing for its long-awaited renovation. Music Hall was originally built to house the May Festival and has been our beloved home ever since the opening of the building in 1878. Since then she has also hosted countless memorable performances by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Pops, Opera, Ballet and many touring groups, weddings, conventions and even some sporting events. Most of us cannot even imagine Cincinnati without Music Hall, and this upcoming renovation ensures she will continue to serve our community for generations to come. Please see page 18 for more information about this exciting renovation.

This also means that the 2017 May Festival will not be able to take place at Music Hall, which will still be under construction. I'm thrilled that the venue for next year's May Festival will be the Taft Theatre, an Art Deco gem right in the heart of Downtown Cincinnati. The CSO has invested over \$3 million in improvements to the Taft (including air conditioning!) to make it the perfect "home away from home" for the musicians, chorus and you—the audience. And of course, we'll be delighted to return to a newly

revitalized Music Hall for the 2018 May Festival.

In other news, earlier this season we announced a new partnership with the Cincinnati Children's Choir and Vocal Arts Ensemble—the Cincinnati Choral Academy. This El Sistema-inspired



program launched in January with third grade students at Carson Elementary School (Price Hill) and Pleasant Hill Academy (College Hill). The after-school program trains students in both choral performance and music literacy, giving these students the opportunity to sharpen 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, teamwork and creativity. So far, the results have been tremendous (see page 16), and I'm looking forward to seeing the fruits of this program in our community.

Finally, this June Cincinnati will be home to the annual Chorus America conference. It's an honor to help host this nationwide celebration of choral music, and I can't wait to show off all that the Queen City has to offer our art form.

This is certainly an exciting time to be part of the May Festival. It is also a time of critical importance for the future of this, the oldest festival of its kind in the nation. The support of subscribers, donors, sponsors, foundations and other patrons is always important, but especially now. I extend my sincerest gratitude to each of you for your unwavering commitment to choral music in our city. From the first notes of Mozart to the final "Hallelujah," I hope that you'll join me in celebrating!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Mark Holcomb". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

J. Mark Holcomb

CINCINNATI SINGS: James Conlon and the Queen City

by Laura Bock

If ever there was one name synonymous with Cincinnati and choral arts, there is no question that name would be James Conlon.

A key fixture in the Cincinnati arts scene since the late 1970s, Maestro Conlon's commitment to the city and the May Festival Chorus can be summed up in a word: extraordinary.

In 1977 Conlon was conducting in Miami when Steven Monder, former CEO of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and May Festival, came to visit in search of a replacement for then-May Festival Music Director James Levine. By 1979, Conlon was appointed to the position. "I was engaged for a three-year period. I imagined that I would stay a few years, get a certain number of big choral works under my belt, and then move on," said Conlon. Luckily, fate had other plans. As he delved deeper into the repertory, his relationship with the Chorus, Orchestra and city grew in significance. "After a few years, the purely professional satisfaction that it afforded me gave way to a greater dimension. The May

Festival simply became part of my life—friendships, professional collaboration, and a 'family-like feeling' gradually took over to the point that it seemed natural to continue."

Throughout the 140-year history of the May Festival, Cincinnati has played a significant role in its nurturing and development. A unique entity, the May Festival, with its combination of professional and non-professional artists, is a national treasure with local roots. According to Conlon, "Nowhere else could one come together with this wide community of musicians, chorus members and soloists in one of America's most beautiful concert halls year after year."

To Conlon, Cincinnati has been the setting for the majority of his career and the backdrop of some of the most impactful memories and friendships of his life. He recalls bringing his parents when he first came to the city and, later, his daughters Luisa and Emma as infants crawling on the rug in Music Hall's Green Room. He met the godparents of his oldest daughter in Cincinnati and formed decades-long friendships with Chorus and Orchestra members as well as special connections with Monder and May Festival Director of Choruses Robert Porco.

Now in his final year as Music Director of the May Festival, Conlon reflects on the Queen City: "The

Festival and the city that has nurtured and supported it have a special place in my life and my heart. I look back with gratitude for the almost four decades of association, and look forward to returning to both the Festival as Conductor Laureate and the Symphony in the future."



A Collaboration and Friendship

by Robert Porco

A remarkable event happened in 1989 when James Conlon and former CSO and May Festival President Steven Monder drove the two-and-a-half hours from Cincinnati to Indiana University to watch my rehearsal of the opera *Eugene Onegin*. Their visit—its purpose to consider me for the position of May Festival Director of Chorus—would, ultimately, reshape my career and enrich my life professionally and personally. However, on that day in 1989, my primary thought was that that important rehearsal wasn't going so well. Yet, a few weeks later I found myself meeting with James in a Chicago hotel lobby and today I am fortunate to be celebrating his May Festival career.

James' and my collaboration, which has spanned 27 May Festivals, has been one of immense personal reward and growth. From day one, James demonstrated no less than total confidence in me, a first-time choral director of a major festival. His unfailing faith freed me to further develop and refine my own choral perspective. With the passing of each Festival, our collaboration deepened. My opinion mattered, which is a unique feature of our relationship. Ego was never an ingredient in our efforts to craft fine musical performances.

The years have produced too many May Festival highlights to list them all. However, among my favorites are James' leading of the May Festival Chorus and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in a Carnegie Hall performance of Britten's *War Requiem* one month after 9/11. A more moving performance could not be imagined. A second Carnegie Hall performance in 2014, of John Adams's *Harmonium* and Nathaniel Dett's *The Ordering of Moses*, also rates high on my list for its exciting and thought-provoking nature. And, of course, James always conducts a masterful Verdi Requiem and Mahler Symphony No. 8.

Artistically, James' combination of skills and experiences has made him unique as the music director of a choral festival. His knowledge of choral repertoire is unsurpassed, and this deep familiarity with choral literature makes him an agile interpreter. His fluency in multiple languages directly aids the Chorus in its performance of foreign-language music. (He once told me that before he conducts in a country for the first time he spends a few months intensively studying and learning the language.) Finally, his

consistent character and technique on the podium free all performers to be their best.

How do you summarize the artistic legacy of a musician who has given so much to the May Festival for 37 years? The answer defines the consummate choral festival: a high level of artistry; an unparalleled breadth of repertoire, from classical to gospel to commissioned works; opportunities for vocal reward and growth for the chorus; highly accomplished soloists; and memorable experiences for the audience.

Describing my collaboration with James would be incomplete without a personal dimension. From that pivotal day in 1989, James has always been warm and friendly and our working relationship collegial and cordial. Yet, with the passing of many May Festivals has come the evolution of our relationship into that of friendship. Perhaps this is a natural result of longevity or the commonality of our Italian roots. What I think is more at the heart of the evolution is James himself. One could not know a more genuinely warm, caring and loyal person.

James' touch has left an indelible mark on the May Festival; on Cincinnati's musical culture and heritage; and on my life, for which I am grateful.



James Conlon congratulates Robert Porco at the 2015 May Festival concert celebrating Porco's 25th anniversary as Director of Chorus.



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James Conlon for
his extraordinary
37-year tenure as
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the May Festival.*

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MARK & MEGAN WEAVER May Festival Chorus Members



As the only father-daughter duo in the May Festival Chorus, Mark and Megan Weaver have the opportunity to share a rare bond. Mark, an engineer by day, played trumpet throughout high school, and while he sang in church growing up, he had no formal vocal training. In 2006, a friend of his in the Chorus called him, saying they needed more men to sing Mahler's Second Symphony. He gave the Chorus a try, and officially joined in 2007. He passed his love of singing to his daughter, Megan, who performed in the Cincinnati Children's Choir growing up and eventually the May Festival Youth Chorus. After studying voice and music education at Miami University, it was a natural fit for her to join the Chorus after college. She's currently a music teacher at Winton Woods. "His passion for music I think really drove me to have my passion," said Megan.

They both cherish memories of favorite concerts (two of Mark's favorites are Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* and Verdi's *Requiem*), but ones that they have shared together particularly stick out. "I would probably have to say the biggest landmark was the year we performed at Carnegie Hall [2014]; it was Megan's first year so we got to do it together. The electricity of that performance and historic nature of it made it something really neat," said Mark.

"I had sung at Carnegie Hall the year before with my college chorus, but to do it the next year with Dad was so much more meaningful," said Megan. "It's interesting being in the Chorus, having grown up in the youth choruses, and being able to look back and

see all that I've accomplished. There's nothing like [the applause at the end of a concert], and you are so proud and happy to be finished and everyone is so grateful. It's something that people who aren't professionals don't get to experience very often. It's really special."

Both father and daughter agree that performing with the May Festival Chorus comes with its own set of rewards and challenges. "We have a really top-notch orchestra in our city; it's major-league caliber, and we're volunteers. It's like saying 'I like baseball, so maybe I'll call up the Reds and after I hit a few grounders they'll let me play with them.' And of course that's never going to happen, but that's kind of like what we're doing. To be singing at the highest level is a great opportunity," said Mark.

"There's something to be said for the uniqueness of what we're able to accomplish," said Megan. "I'm really proud of us, and I think it's incredible to be able to perform these amazing pieces of music at such a high level so that we can perform with such a high caliber orchestra."

The repertoire demands a lot from these singers, both in preparation time and talent. "If you look at the repertoire we go through in a normal season, May Festival alone is like a normal chorus' program for the entire year, and we do it all in two weeks. We're expected to come to rehearsal having already learned this challenging music—and we all have day jobs," said Mark.

"If it's something you're passionate about, it's more than a hundred percent worth the work. We work with fantastic conductors, soloists and musicians, and the payoff of performing this incredible music is well worth the effort any day of the week—even Thursday of May Festival when I've been in rehearsal for hours," said Megan.

"It is demanding, and you just have to know that going in. It is a family. We're a tight knit group," said Mark.

Finally, what's it like for these two performing together? "For me, music has always been something that we shared; it's one of the strongest bonds that we have," said Megan. "To always have him there with me is a comforting feeling, and it makes it even more exciting."

"For me, you get to the point in your life where the greatest satisfaction you have is seeing what your kids do, and I'm very proud of Megan," said Mark. "To sing in the May Festival Chorus is a top-notch experience and it's neat that we're able to be part of it together."

Cincinnati Choral Academy Launched in January 2016

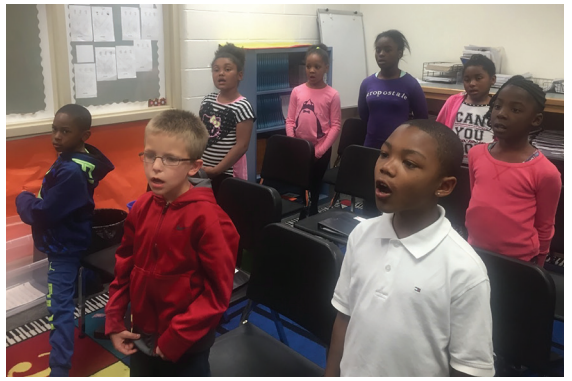
In December, the May Festival, Cincinnati Children’s Choir and Vocal Arts Ensemble announced a new collaboration to launch the Cincinnati Choral Academy, an El Sistema-inspired choir program in area elementary schools. The organizations appointed Sarah Grogan, a former singer with the Cincinnati Children’s Choir and a current member of the May Festival Chorus as well as an alumna of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, as the director. Ms. Grogan previously worked with a similar program in Miami, Florida. The Academy officially launched in January, beginning with third grade students at Carson Elementary School (located in the Price Hill neighborhood of Cincinnati) and Pleasant Hill Academy (located in the College Hill neighborhood).

Students in the program have been rehearsing two days per week at their respective schools. Each session consists of one hour of choral rehearsal and one hour of music literacy learning. The students performed two to three times during the spring semester in their schools and with the Cincinnati Children’s Choir, and have received coaching from members of the

May Festival Chorus and Vocal Arts Ensemble. The program is tuition-free for participating students, and all necessary supplies are provided.

“The singers of the Cincinnati Choral Academy are learning to sing with their best voices while blending as a group. They are also developing their musicianship through games and movement,” said Ms. Grogan. “Many of these students are in choir for the first time and love being part of the CCA ‘team!’”

Following in the footsteps of the El Sistema method of music education that began in Venezuela and other programs it has inspired, the Cincinnati Choral Academy focuses on holistic music education. While social change is the primary goal—creating good



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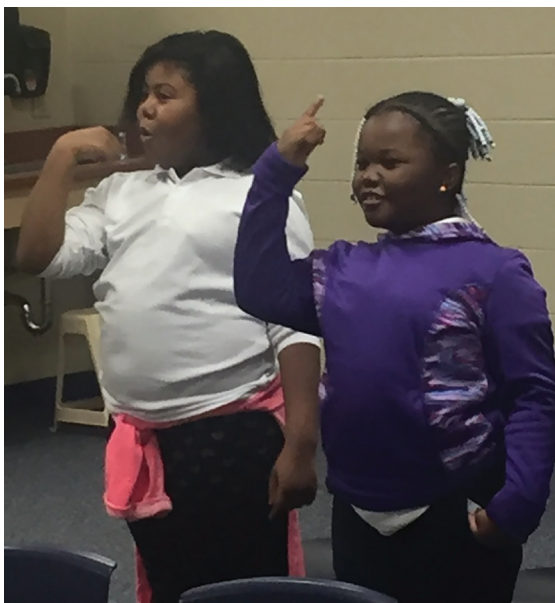
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MAY FESTIVAL

Design shown here is a representative sample.

citizens rather than just great musicians—musical preparation is intense, and students are pushed to perform at a high level. There are currently 105 El Sistema inspired programs in the country; the Cincinnati Choral Academy is one of only five choral-centric programs.

—*Meghan Berneking*



Chorus America and The Big Sing

This summer, June 15–18, the May Festival will help host the annual Chorus America Conference, which brings together artists, directors, board members and managers from choral groups around the world. In addition to informational sessions, roundtable events and peer forums traditionally found at an industry conference, Chorus America attendees will be treated to performances highlighting Cincinnati’s vibrant choral community, including the May Festival Chorus, Cincinnati Children’s Choir and the Vocal Arts Ensemble. (The VAE performance will include Kile Smith’s *Canticle*, a work that received its world premiere as part of the VAE season April 30–May 1.)

A highlight of the conference is The Big Sing on June 18 at 2 p.m. in the Carew Tower Arcade. This group singing experience, where audience and chorus become one, will be led by VAE Director Craig Hella Johnson. Mr. Johnson has chosen music to engage and inspire the audience, who will be invited to sing along with the Vocal Arts Ensemble and Greater Cincinnati’s Choral Consortium. The Big Sing is sponsored by TriHealth and is free and open to the public.

—*Meghan Berneking*

MAY FESTIVAL CONGRATULATIONS!

2016 GOVERNORS AWARDS FOR THE ARTS IN OHIO

JAMES CONLON, *Irma Lazarus Award*

GINGER WARNER, *William R. Joseph Ohio Arts Advocacy Medal*



L-R: Steven Sunderman, May Festival Executive Director, James Conlon, May Festival Music Director, Ginger Warner, May Festival Director Emeritus and CSO Director, Trey Devey, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra President

Music Hall Revitalization, May Festival 2017 Updates

Historic Music Hall, which was originally built in 1878 to house the May Festival, will be undergoing a long-awaited renovation beginning on June 1, and the Hall will re-open in the fall of 2017. Music Hall has not undergone a major renovation in over 40 years, and the building’s mechanical systems (electrical, plumbing, fire suppression, air conditioning, heating and more) are in need of repair. On top of the structural repairs, patrons may have noticed that Music Hall faces some challenges in regards to accessibility, patron comfort and convenience. We look forward to addressing all of these challenges, including increasing restroom capacity by over 50%, adding leg room and wider seats in Springer Auditorium, and making the entire building physically accessible.

Though concerts continue as scheduled through the end of May, construction crews have already begun work in many “non-performance” areas of the hall, where administrative offices and libraries currently exist. You may also have noticed that some restroom and bar areas have been relocated; these adjustments have allowed the construction teams time to complete some work in advance of June 1,

which will help the project to stay on schedule. Much of the construction work to date has involved reinforcing areas of the building, such as the Opera’s scene-and-paint shop, to prepare for additional levels that are being created. Crews are also starting work on the north and south “carriageways,” which are currently unused spaces that are being put to new uses in the renovation.

Music Hall will completely close after May Festival 2016 and construction will continue through the fall of 2017. The CSO and Pops 2016–17 seasons and the May Festival 2017 season will take place at the historic Taft Theatre, one mile from Music Hall in downtown Cincinnati. The Taft Theatre, which opened in 1928, is an Art Deco/neoclassical gem that originally served as the home of many Broadway and vaudeville shows. The Taft also housed the “Mayfair Theatre,” which aired German-language movies for Cincinnati’s growing German population until World War II.

The CSO and Pops 2016–17 seasons have been announced, but the May Festival 2017 season announcement is still to come. We have some surprises in store, including details on free parking for subscribers. We look forward to experiencing the May Festival performances in the intimate charm of the Taft Theatre. Additionally, the same acousticians who are working on the Music Hall renovation have consulted on a

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MAY FESTIVAL



number of acoustical adjustments in the Taft Theatre to ensure a rewarding listening experience.

Music Hall will re-open in the fall of 2017, at which time the May Festival, Cincinnati Symphony, Cincinnati Pops, Cincinnati Opera and Cincinnati Ballet will all return to the newly renovated building. "This renovation will celebrate the Hall's remarkable history, breathe new life and accessibility into the Music Hall experience, and lay the foundation for a bright future," reads the vision for the renovation. "People from all over the country will look to Music Hall as a renovation and restoration in tune with the aspirations of audiences and community." A year-and-a-half from now we'll be able to stand in that beautiful Grand Foyer on that historic red slate floor and see the beautiful, original detail of the plaster rosettes in the coffered ceiling. Springer Auditorium will look better than ever; the painted fresco and chandelier will remain prominently in the center of the coffered ceiling, and all of that room's exquisite architectural detail will remain.

One of the questions we often receive is about the acoustics in the renovated Hall. Rest assured that this is a top priority; the design team has collaborated with musicians, artistic leadership and respected acousticians to ensure that the warm, unique sound of

Music Hall is preserved and protected. All parties, including representatives from the May Festival, Ballet and Opera, are in full agreement with the plan. Music Hall's current acoustics vary dramatically depending on your seat location, and in this respect, not all those seats offer a first-rate experience. The Auditorium's sonic identity will be maintained, yet Music Hall's acoustics will have a more even, present sound throughout the Auditorium, creating an intimate experience between the stage and audience.

We look forward to experiencing the Taft Theatre with you, and to returning to beloved Music Hall together. Visit mayfestival.com/musichall for ongoing updates and feel free to reach out with additional questions: information@mayfestival.com.

—Erica Minton



Courtesy of the Music Hall Revitalization Company

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2016 MAY FESTIVAL

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The Ruth and Richard Wellinghoff Foundation



James Conlon, one of today's most versatile and respected conductors, has cultivated a vast symphonic, operatic and choral repertoire. Since his 1974 debut with the New York Philharmonic, he has conducted virtually every major American and European symphony orchestra. Through worldwide touring, an extensive discography and videography, numerous essays and commentaries, frequent television appearances and guest speaking engagements, Mr. Conlon is one of classical music's most recognized interpreters.

Mr. Conlon is Music Director of the Los Angeles Opera and the Cincinnati May Festival, America's oldest choral festival. This season he brings to a close a 37-year tenure with the May Festival, one of the longest tenures of any American classical music institution, and becomes Conductor Laureate. He also takes the post of Principal Conductor of the RAI National Symphony Orchestra in Torino, Italy in 2016. Mr. Conlon has served as Music Director of Chicago's Ravinia Festival (2006–15); Principal Conductor of the Paris National Opera (1995–2004); General Music Director of the City of Cologne, Germany (1989–2002), where he was Music Director of both the Gürzenich Orchestra-Cologne Philharmonic and the Cologne Opera; and Music Director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic (1983–91). Mr. Conlon has conducted more than 270 performances at The Metropolitan Opera since his debut there in 1976. He has also conducted at Teatro alla Scala, Wiener Staatsoper, Mariinsky Theatre, Royal Opera at Covent Garden in London, Teatro del Opera di Roma, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and Lyric Opera of Chicago.

At the Los Angeles Opera, where he has been Music Director since 2006, Mr. Conlon has conducted 48 different operas, including 23 company premieres, two U.S. premieres and one world premiere. Highlights of his tenure include conducting the first *Ring* cycle in Los Angeles, initiating the groundbreaking Recovered Voices series, and spearheading Britten 100/LA, a city-wide celebration honoring the centennial of the composer's birth. During the coming season at LA Opera, Mr. Conlon conducts Verdi's *Macbeth*, Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Strauss's *Salome* and Puccini's *Tosca*. This summer he opens the Italian Spoleto Festival with *The Marriage of Figaro*, the second opera of a three-year Mozart Da Ponte Trilogy, and returns to conduct the Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra in St. Petersburg.

Mr. Conlon marked his final season as Music Director of the Ravinia Festival in the summer of 2015 with programming that celebrated his 11-year tenure; and during the 2015–16 season he returned

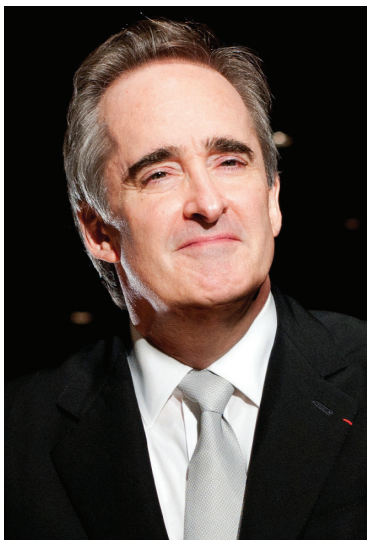


Photo: Dan Steinberg, LA Opera

to conduct the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at Orchestra Hall. Upcoming orchestral engagements include the San Francisco Symphony, Montreal Symphony, National Symphony and New World Symphony in North America, and the RAI National Symphony Orchestra in Italy and on tour in China. Other recent European engagements have included leading the Deutsche Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Orchestre National de France, and the New Year's concert for live television in Venice's Teatro La Fenice.

In an effort to raise awareness of the significance of the lesser-known works of composers silenced by the Nazi regime, Mr. Conlon has devoted

himself to extensive programming of this music throughout Europe and North America. In 2013 he was awarded the Roger E. Joseph Prize at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion for his extraordinary efforts to eradicate racial and religious prejudice and discrimination, in 2007 he received the Crystal Globe Award from the Anti-Defamation League, and in 1999 he received the Zemlinsky Prize for his efforts in bringing that composer's music to international attention. His work on behalf of suppressed composers led to the creation of The OREL Foundation, an invaluable resource on the topic, and the Ziering-Conlon Initiative for Recovered Voices at the Colburn School. His appearances throughout the country as a speaker on a variety of cultural and educational topics are widely praised.

Mr. Conlon's extensive discography and videography can be found on the Bridge, Capriccio, Decca, EMI, Erato and Sony Classical labels. He has won two Grammy Awards for the Los Angeles Opera recording of Weill's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*. His latest recordings, released by Bridge Records in the spring of 2016, include Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* with LA Opera and Dett's oratorio *The Ordering of Moses* with the May Festival Chorus and Cincinnati Symphony at Carnegie Hall.

Mr. Conlon was among the five initial recipients of the *Opera News* awards and was honored by The New York Public Library as a "Library Lion." Other honors include a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Istituto Italiano di Cultura in Los Angeles, the Music Institute of Chicago's Dushkin Award, the Medal of the American Liszt Society, and Italy's Premio Galileo 2000 Award for his significant contribution to music, art and peace in Florence. He holds three honorary doctorates. Mr. Conlon was named Commandeur de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Minister of Culture and, in 2002, he received the Légion d'Honneur, France's highest distinction, from then-President of the French Republic, Jacques Chirac.

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TRAVEL GUIDE

Robert Porco has been recognized as one of the leading choral musicians in the U.S., and for nearly 40 years he has been an active preparer and conductor of choral and orchestral works, including most of the major choral repertoire, as well as of opera. In 2011 Mr. Porco received Chorus America's "Michael Korn Founders Award for Development of the Professional Choral Art." He will lead the May Festival Chorus and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* for Chorus America's 2016 National Conference in Cincinnati in June.

Mr. Porco's conducting career has spanned geographic venues and has included performances in the Edinburgh Festival; Taipei, Taiwan; Lucerne, Switzerland; Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, Israel; and Reykjavik, Iceland; and at the May Festival, Tanglewood Music Festival, Berkshire Music Festival, Blossom Festival and Grant Park Festival. He has been a guest conductor at the May Festival and with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and The Cleveland Orchestra.

The 2016 season marks Mr. Porco's 26th year as the May Festival's Director of Choruses. In recognition of his 25th anniversary last season, the May Festival Chorus commissioned Mr. Porco's portrait, which now hangs in the Music Hall foyer. In 2010 Mr. Porco led the premiere of *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking*, a piece commissioned by the Chorus in honor of Mr. Porco's 20th season as director.

Mr. Porco has prepared the May Festival Chorus for four acclaimed appearances in Carnegie Hall: Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with Jesús López-Cobos and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with Robert Shaw, The Cleveland Orchestra, and other choruses; and Britten's *War Requiem*, John Adams' *Harmonium* and Robert Nathaniel Dett's *The Ordering of Moses* with James Conlon and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. In addition, the Chorus's performance of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *On the Transmigration of Souls*, under the baton of the composer John Adams, led



Photo: Roger Mastromoni

Adams to write, "The pure American quality of their enunciation and their perfectly balanced sonorities lifted the matter-of-fact plainness of the words to a transcendental level, and for once the piece did not seem as compromised and uneven as I had previously thought."

In 1998, Mr. Porco became Director of Choruses for The Cleveland Orchestra and has prepared the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus for appearances at the Edinburgh Festival, Carnegie Hall, the Lucerne Festival and the London Proms,

and in Frankfurt, Paris, Luxembourg and Miami, Florida.

Mr. Porco has gained national recognition for his preparation of choruses for prominent conductors such as John Adams, Pierre Boulez, James Conlon, Andrew Davis, Christoph von Dohnányi, Paavo Järvi, Erich Kunzel, Raymond Leppard, James Levine, Jahja Ling, Jesús López-Cobos, Zubin Mehta, John Nelson, André Previn, Kurt Sanderling, Leonard Slatkin, Robert Shaw, Franz Welser-Möst, John Williams and David Zinman.

Mr. Porco taught doctoral-level choral conducting at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music from 1979 to 1998, and as a guest instructor in 2011 and 2012. A highlight of his tenure at IU included leading a wholly student choral and orchestral ensemble of 250 in a highly acclaimed performance of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass* as part of the Tanglewood Music Festival's celebration of the composer's 70th birthday. As teacher and mentor, Mr. Porco has guided and influenced the development of hundreds of musicians, most of whom are now active as professional conductors, singers or teachers in schools of music, performance ensembles or solo careers. Mr. Porco remains a sought-after guest instructor and coach for conservatory students, young professional conductors and singers. His guest teaching venues have included Harvard University, the University of Miami Frost School of Music and Westminster Choir College (Princeton, NJ). From 1988 to 1998, Mr. Porco was Artistic Director and Conductor of the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir.

MAY FESTIVAL CHORUS Robert Porco, director

The May Festival Chorus has earned acclaim locally, nationally and internationally for its musicality, vast range of repertoire and sheer power of sound. The Chorus of 130 professionally trained singers is the core artistic element of the Cincinnati May Festival as well as the official chorus of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Cincinnati Pops. Throughout each season the chorus members collectively devote more than 40,000 hours in rehearsals and performances.

Founded in 1873, the annual May Festival is the oldest, and one of the most prestigious, choral festivals in the Western Hemisphere. The annual Festival boasts the May Festival Chorus and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra as anchors, hosts an international array of guest artists and presents two spectacular weekends of dynamic programming under the musical leadership of James Conlon and choral preparation of Robert Porco. James Conlon has provided the artistic leadership for more May Festivals than any other Music Director in the Festival's 143-year history. Many important choral works have received their World and American premieres at the May Festival, including Johann Sebastian Bach's Magnificat, Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 3, Benjamin Britten's *Gloriana*, Gian Carlo Menotti's *The Death of the Bishop of Brindisi* and Robert Nathaniel Dett's *The Ordering of Moses*.

Beyond Cincinnati, the May Festival Chorus has performed with great success at numerous venues across the country, including four celebrated appearances at Carnegie Hall. The Chorus returned to New York City in May of 2014 for the Spring for Music Festival at Carnegie Hall, with James Conlon and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

The May Festival Chorus has further strengthened its national presence through numerous PBS broadcasts of live concerts and several award-winning recordings, many in collaboration with the CSO and Pops. In 2001 the Chorus recorded *Christmas with the May Festival Chorus*, a popular a cappella holiday disc. Its 2004 Telarc release, the world premiere recording of Franz Liszt's *St. Stanislaus* featuring James Conlon and the CSO, was awarded the 30th International F. Liszt Record Grand Prix by the Liszt Society of Budapest. The Chorus is also featured on the 2012 Cincinnati Pops release, *Home for the Holidays*.



The May Festival Chorus has garnered two awards in recognition of its continuing artistic excellence and performances throughout the state. In 2011 the Chorus received the Spirit of Cincinnati USA Erich Kunzel Queen City Advocate Award from Cincinnati USA Convention and Visitors Bureau. In 1998 the Chorus earned the Irma Lazarus Award from the Ohio Arts Council's annual Governor's Awards for the Arts.

In 1998 the Chorus earned the Irma Lazarus Award from the Ohio Arts Council's annual Governor's Awards for the Arts.



A native of southeast Iowa, **MATTHEW SWANSON** began his appointment as the **May Festival Conducting Fellow** in September of 2015. In this capacity, he assists Robert Porco in the direction of the May Festival Chorus and James Bagwell in the direction of the May Festival Youth Chorus. He also leads community outreach and engagement activities for the May Festival throughout the year. Swanson is staff conductor for Berkshire Choral International, where he assists conductors, manages the BCI Apprentice Program, leads community outreach activities, and teaches classes in music history. His recent conducting appearances include concerts for the Cincinnati Early Music Festival and performances with Cincinnati's Musica Sacra, Cambridge University Baroque Ensemble, King's College Music Society, and frequent appearances with ensembles at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM). He serves on the musical staff of the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain, appearing as a section leader for its Training Choirs.

Swanson is Assistant Choirmaster at Cincinnati's Episcopal Church of the Redeemer. He previously was Master of the Schola at the Chapel of St. John Fisher, Cambridge, U.K. He holds undergraduate degrees in trumpet performance and American Studies from the University of Notre Dame and earned graduate degrees in conducting from CCM and in choral studies from King's College, Cambridge.

Swanson is Assistant Choirmaster at Cincinnati's Episcopal Church of the Redeemer. He previously was Master of the Schola at the Chapel of St. John Fisher, Cambridge, U.K. He holds undergraduate degrees in trumpet performance and American Studies from the University of Notre Dame and earned graduate degrees in conducting from CCM and in choral studies from King's College, Cambridge.

*The May Festival is grateful to **Ginger Warner** for her generous support of the Conducting Fellowship.*

THE MAY FESTIVAL CHORUS

The May Festival Chorus is endowed by the Betsy & Alex C. Young Chair

Robert Porco, *Director of Choruses*

Heather MacPhail, *Assistant to the Director of Choruses and Accompanist*

Matthew Swanson, *May Festival Conducting Fellow*

Rosanne Wetzel, *Chorus Manager*

Joe Basel, *Chorus Librarian*

Soprano

Karen C. Allen, 17
Tracy L. Bailey, 15
Kristin Berger, 1
A. Maris Bernard, 12
Cindy Bosh, 1
Dawn Bruestle, 11
Beth A. Curtis, 7
Kathy Dietrich, 2
Laurel Boisclair Ellsworth, 11
Magdalena Greenewald, 2
Anita Marie Greer, 27
Sarah Grogan, 1
Leonardia Hardy, 2
Dana Harms, 8
Lauren Steiger Hess, 20
Carolyn Hill, 5
Ruth Hill, 6
Lisa Koressel, 17
Judith C. LaChance, 38
Hilary Landwehr, 27
Marissa Miller, 2
Lauren Peter, 12
Mary Beth Poulimenos, 2
Elizabeth Rancourt, 1
Kristi C. Reed, 5
Beth Roberts, 10
Julia H. Schieve, 21
Hannah Scott, 1
Yvon F. Shore, 4
Susan L. Thiel, 35

Christine A. Wolterman, 19
Maria Luisa Yerdon, 2

Alto

Jackie Baker, 1
Robin Bierschen, 5
Rachael Blum, 2
Cynthia Bourgeois, 11
Barb Brown, 5
Megan Christman, 1
Lindsey Dolan, 5
Sarah Keeling Dorger, 6
Alicia Falcón, 2
Margaret E. Hagar, 40
Sarah Hamilton, 6
Sally Vickery Harper, 45
Spence B. Ingerson, 26
Lindsey Jeffers, 2
Karolyn L. Johnsen, 44
Alexandra Kesman, 2
Andrea Kiehl, 2
Julie Laskey, 12
Kay M. Luccasen, 38
Kathy Mank, 11
Melissa A. Martin, 15
Teri McKibben, 8
Jennifer Moak, 2
Rozelia Park, 4
Amy M. Perry, 4
Jeanne E. Phillips, 22
Laura Schapiro, 2

Molly Scruta, 1
Rachel Seymour, 8
Patricia Somers, 1
Megan Weaver, 3
Linda Wiley, 8
Monica Wilson, 26

Tenor

Jim Baxter, 25
Daniel Blosser, 2
Keith Dale, 7
Brian Donaldson, 9
Douglas Easterling, 1
Nathaniel B. Garriss, 2
Jeffrey Nielsen, 8
Jon Olson, 6
Scott C. Osgood, 17
Jason Ramler, 14
Evan T. Ratley, 2
Larry Reiring, 7
Stephen Scott, 1
Adam Shoaff, 3
David Skiff, 14
Jeffrey Stivers, 6
Matthew Swanson, 4
Gary Wendt, 13
Barry Zaslow, 32

Kenny Bierschen, 4
John E. Black, 31
Andrew L. Bowers, 1
Scott Brody, 1
Douglas J. Bruestle, 7
Tim Butz, 6
Christopher Canarie, 22
Lawrence E. Coleman, 17
Steven L. Dauterman, 34
Steve France, 11
Jon Gibson, 3
Bradley Kauffman, 1
Jim Laskey, 6
Armando H. Linares, 4
Michael Merry, 21
Justin Peter, 12
James V. Racster, 34
Ron Schofield, 8
James Shackson, 13
Gerald Shannon, 7
Roger Sidebotham, 2
Samuel M. Stover, 26
Marc Tuel, 4
Joshua Wallace, 9
Mark Weaver, 10
Ronald M. Webber, 33
Joe White, 32

Bass

Mark Aiken, 4
Richard Arnest, 15
Tony Barkley, 21

Numbers behind chorus members' names signify their years of service.

MAY FESTIVAL BASILICA ENSEMBLE

Soprano

Karen C. Allen
Tracy L. Bailey
Kristin Berger
Beth A. Curtis
Anita Marie Greer
Carolyn Hill
Lauren Peter
Kristi C. Reed
Beth Roberts
Yvon F. Shore
Maria Luisa Yerdon

Tenor

Daniel Blosser
Brian Donaldson
Nathaniel B. Garriss
Jeffrey Nielsen
Jon Olson
Scott C. Osgood
Larry Reiring
Jeffrey Stivers
Matthew Swanson
Gary Wendt

Alto

Robin Bierschen
Megan Christman
Lindsey Dolan
Sarah Keeling Dorger
Alicia Falcón
Sarah Hamilton
Teri McKibben
Rozelia Park
Amy M. Perry
Linda Wiley

Bass

Mark Aiken
Kenny Bierschen
John E. Black
Christopher Canarie
Steven L. Dauterman
Steve France
Jon Gibson
Bradley Kauffman
Armando H. Linares
Justin Peter
James V. Racster
Marc Tuel
Joshua Wallace

AUDITIONS

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The May Festival Youth Chorus, now in its 29th season, was organized to give high school students the opportunity to rehearse and perform challenging choral music in a highly stimulating artistic environment. The group, generously sponsored by the Scripps Howard and Stillson foundations, rehearses weekly and currently represents students from more than 25 area high schools. The May Festival Youth Chorus, which has become an integral component of the annual Cincinnati May Festival, was specifically established to foster the development of musical expertise and appreciation that encourages participants to further pursue musical endeavors following graduation.

In addition to annual May Festival and ArtsWave events, the May Festival Youth Chorus performs frequently with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Cincinnati Pops. In past seasons they performed in and recorded the “Superheroes” concert with John Morris Russell and the Cincinnati Pops, performed as a guest choir at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music’s (CCM) “Feast of Carols” and participated at CCM as one of the ensembles for Chorus America’s masterclass sessions for directors of young choirs. In 2013 the chorus participated in collaborative “Sing for a Cause” performances with the Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra and, in 2007, the May Festival Youth Chorus was featured in a PBS broadcast of the nationally recognized program *From the Top* recorded in Music Hall.

Performances this season have included major collaborative initiatives with the Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra, American Legacy Tours “Saengerfest” and the Cast in Bronze Youth Handbell Choir from Friendship United Methodist Church. In November the Cincinnati Pops and May Festival Youth Chorus performed the score for the movie *Home Alone* as it was shown at Music Hall. This May Festival the Youth Chorus will be featured at the Basilica (Covington) Concert on May 22 and will perform with the May Festival Chorus and CSO on the May 20 opening night concert at Music Hall.

Students are selected for membership in the May Festival Youth Chorus through auditions held in September and January. Students in grades 9–12 from area public, private and parochial schools are eligible to audition. For more information, or to schedule an audition, call the May Festival Office at 513.744.3229 or email rwetzel@mayfestival.com.



James Bagwell

JAMES BAGWELL

James Bagwell, who has served as music director of the May Festival Youth Chorus since 1997, maintains an active international schedule as a conductor of choral, operatic and orchestral music. He was most recently named associate conductor of The Orchestra Now (TON) and in 2009 was appointed principal guest conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra. From 2009 to 2015 he served as music director of The Collegiate Chorale; some of the highlights of his tenure with them include conducting a number of rarely performed operas-in-concert at Carnegie Hall. He conducted the New York premiere of Philip Glass’s *Toltec Symphony* and Golijov’s *Oceana*, both at Carnegie Hall. His performance of Kurt Weill’s *Knickerbocker Holiday* at Alice Tully Hall was recorded live for Gaslight Records and is the only complete recording of this musical. Since 2011 he has collaborated with singer and composer Natalie Merchant, conducting a number of major orchestras across the country. Other recent performances include Glass’s *Another Look at Harmony* at the Park Avenue Armory and Rossini’s *Opportunity Makes the Thief* with the Little Opera Theatre of New York.

James Bagwell has trained choruses for a number of major American and international orchestras and has worked with noted conductors such as Charles Dutoit, Andris Nelsons, Gustavo Dudamel, Alan Gilbert, Gianandrea Noseda, Valery Gergiev, Yannik Nézet-Séguin, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Lorin Maazel, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Michael Tilson Thomas, Louis Langrée, Leon Botstein, Ivan Fischer, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Raymond Leppard, James Conlon, Jesús López-Cobos, Erich Kunzel, Leon Fleischer and Robert Shaw.

Bagwell has prepared The Collegiate Chorale for numerous concerts at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland; in 2012 the Chorale traveled to Israel and the Salzburg Festival for four programs with The Israel Philharmonic. He has prepared The Concert Chorale of New York for performances with the American Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Mostly Mozart Festival (broadcast nationally in 2006 on *Live from Lincoln Center*)—all in Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center. Since 2003 he has been director of choruses for the Bard Music Festival, conducting and preparing choral works during the summer festival at The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College. In 2011 and 2012 he conducted the Amici New York Orchestra at the OK Mozart Festival, and in December 2014 he made his second

appearance with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in a highly acclaimed performance of *Messiah*

Bagwell conducted some 25 productions as music director of Light Opera Oklahoma. At Bard Summer-Scape he has led various theatrical works, most notably *The Tender Land*, which received glowing praise from *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker* and *Opera News*. He frequently appears as guest conductor for orchestras around the country and abroad, including the Jerusalem Symphony, Tulsa Symphony, the Interlochen Music Festival and the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. From 2005 to 2010 he was music director of The Dessoff Choirs in New York, who under his leadership made numerous appearances at Carnegie Hall in addition to their regular season. He holds degrees from Birmingham-Southern College, Florida State University and Indiana University. He is Professor of Music at Bard College and Director of Performance Studies in the Bard College Conservatory.

DAVID KIRKENDALL, May Festival Youth Chorus Accompanist and Assistant Director, taught choral music at Princeton High School in Cincinnati from 1980 to 2013. Choral groups under his direction achieved superior ratings at numerous Ohio Music Educators Association adjudicated events.

MAY FESTIVAL YOUTH CHORUS

James Bagwell, *Director*

David Kirkendall, *Accompanist and Assistant Director*

Rosanne Wetzell, *Chorus Manager*

Seth Allen	Dana Godsey
Rachael Autzen	Anna Greco
Jake Balzer	Lily Hill
Haley Elizabeth Bosse	Lea Huth
Breanna Brandenburg	Eliza Kohl
Jessica Broering	Shelby Martin
Vivian Comer	Rebecca Mills
Elizabeth Donnelly	Ashton Morris
Christopher Ford	Olivia Claire Munro

Kirkendall received his undergraduate degree, as well as a master's degree in Choral Conducting, from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Conducting instructors included Elmer Thomas, John Leman, Earl Rivers and H. Teri Murai. He completed studies for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting at the University of Illinois, where he studied with Donald V. Moses, Ann Howard Jones and Paul Vermel. For three years he was an adjunct instructor in choral music at Mount St. Joseph University, and he provided continuo realizations for the Roger Dean edition of Vivaldi's *Gloria*.

Kirkendall served as rehearsal pianist for the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Cincinnati at the time of its founding in 1978. For the next 10 years he performed with the Vocal Arts Ensemble as pianist, harpsichordist and organist with conductor Elmer Thomas, and also served as rehearsal pianist for various choral rehearsals of Michael Gielen, Jesús López-Cobos, James Conlon, John Nelson and Robert Shaw. For the 1988–89 season Kirkendall was the Assistant Conductor for the Vocal Arts Ensemble with Earl Rivers. He joined the May Festival Youth Chorus as Accompanist and Assistant Director in October of 2006.

Matthew Swanson, *May Festival Conducting Fellow*

Andrew H. Nash	Moriah Slaughter
Shaine Olmstead	Warren Stoker
Erin Patrick	Naomi Stoner
Elizabeth Pease	Rebecca Stout
Deenie Pelfrey	Nathan Sullivan
Meredith Read	Katelyn Verbarg
Caroline Reckers	Ke'Andra Warren
Andrew Rines	Nathaniel Weyand-Geise
Katherine Sharp	Alexandria Woosley

The May Festival Youth Chorus is financially assisted by the **Stillson Foundation**, **Fifth Third Bank, Trustee**, and the **Scripps Howard Foundation**.



Special thanks to **Knox Presbyterian Church**.

The May Festival Youth Chorus members and directors would like to thank this season's participating Greater Cincinnati Area schools and their choral directors for exemplary dedication to excellence in choral music and vocal training:

Boone County High School, *Lauren Barnhill*
 Cincinnati Country Day, *Esther K. Rose*
 Conner High School, *Chris Peterson*
 Dixie Heights High School, *Kathryn Hayward*
 Edgewood High School, *Libby Wolf*
 Glen Este High School, *Sean Baley*
 Hillsboro High School, *David White*
 Holy Cross, *Denise Dirkes*
 Indian Hill High School, *Deborah Centers*
 Lakota East Freshman School, *Rebecca Huddilston*
 Lakota West High School, *Susan Bauer*
 Leaves of Learning
 Little Miami High School, *Sara Baker*

Madison High School, *Kathleen Personke*
 Mason High School, *Jason McKee*
 Milford High School, *Tracy Carpenter*
 Notre Dame Academy, *Erin McCamley*
 Princeton High School, *David Dendler*
 School for the Creative and Performing Arts, *Laurie Wyant*
 Simon Kenton High School, *Melissa Martin*
 Summit Country Day, *Theresa Merrill*
 Sycamore High School, *Kenneth Holdt*
 Turpin High School, *Julie Dima*
 Ursuline Academy, *Amy Clark*
 Walnut Hills High School, *Anthony Nims*
 Wyoming High School, *Brian Potts*

CINCINNATI CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Ensemble-in-Residence at the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music

- Winner of the 2016 Chorus America ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming
- Winner of the 2015 American Prize in Choral Performance for Youth Choirs
- Voted City Beat's #1 Local Vocal Arts Group 2015
- Gold Medal Choir, Youth Choirs of Equal Voices, World Choir Games 2012
- Winner of the 2008 Scripps-Corbett Award, Artist Category

The Cincinnati Children's Choir, recognized as a leading youth choral program in the U.S., is celebrating its 23rd anniversary season serving young singers from across the Tri-state. Each year, over 1000 Greater Cincinnati children in grades one through 12 benefit from this educational venue focusing on performance as a result of the children's education. Presently, the program involves children in seven resident choirs, 11 satellite choirs, the summer festival choir, the Cincinnati Public School Honor Choir and the Cincinnati Choral Academy. CCC's Bel Canto Choir was a featured ensemble at Carnegie Hall in March 2013, in Beijing's Forbidden City Concert Hall

in 2014 and at mass at St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City in 2015. CCC regularly performs with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops, Vocal Arts Ensemble, May Festival Chorus and CCM ensembles.

Totaling over 60 commissions/premieres since its inception, CCC has collaborated with some of the finest U.S. composers, including Dan Forrest, Joan Szymko, Gary Fry, Rollo Dilworth, Andrea Ramsey, Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory, Paul Carey, Bob Chilcott, Reese Norris, Malcolm Dalglish, Cynthia Gray, David Kisor, Alan Naplan, Shirley McRae, Nick Page, Jim Papoulis and Jason Webb.

The advanced choirs have toured Austria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Wales and the United States. In July 2015, CCC earned the great honor of being invited to represent the United States of America at the World Expo in Milan.

ROBYN REEVES LANA is the Founder, Managing Artistic Director and Conductor of the award winning Cincinnati Children's Choir (CCC), Ensemble-in-Residence at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) Preparatory

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ELLEN
KATZ
President/CEO,
The Greater
Cincinnati
Foundation



Robyn Lana

Department. Under her leadership, CCC earned a gold medal in the 2012 World Choir Games coming in first in the U.S. in their category. In December 2015, CCC received the prestigious American Prize for Choral Performance in Youth Choirs and in June 2016 will receive the Chorus America ASCAP Award for Ad-

venturous Programming. She is also on the choral faculty at Xavier University.

A leading clinician and conductor across the U.S., Lana has been invited to present and conduct internationally. Invitations include China, Italy, Japan and Malaysia. She has been a featured guest conductor at Carnegie Hall, Beijing's Forbidden City Concert Hall and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, and she will make her Kennedy Center debut in 2017. She has presented workshops for American Choral Directors Association, American Orff Schulwerk Association, Chorus America, the World Choir Games 2012, National

Association for Music Education and Chamber Music America.

Lana regularly prepares her choirs for collaborations with the Cincinnati Symphony, Pops, May Festival and CCM forces. Her work has earned praise from collaborating conductors including John Adams, Louis Langrée, John Morris Russell, Marcus Huber, James Conlon, Earl Rivers and Mark Gibson, among others. She prepared CCC for two Telarc label recordings with the Cincinnati Pops under the direction of Maestro Erich Kunzel.

Lana has a choral series with Santa Barbara Music Publishing. She is published in the ACDA's *Choral Journal*, Choristers Guild's *The Chorister*, and Chamber Music America's *CMA Matters*. In the summer of 2016 she will debut her new collaborative book, *Voices in Harmony: Youth Choir Leadership, Education, and Artistry*. She has served ACDA as National Chair for Children's and Community Youth Choir Repertoire and Standards and was guest editor of the March 2016 *Choral Journal*. Lana currently serves on the Chorus America Board of Directors and as the Chair of Advocacy and Collaboration for the ACDA.

A founding board member of the Greater Cincinnati Choral Consortium, she has served as president of the board since its inception.

CINCINNATI CHILDREN'S CHOIR, Bel Canto Ensemble

Robyn Lana, Artistic Director

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Abby Bamberger | Ian Fisher | Henry Loeb | Madeline RingswaldEgan |
| Grace Batsch | Hannah Foss | Anna Lorenz | Miranda Roberson |
| Kaelin Beckner | Madeline Frank | Abbigail Love | Ruth Robinson |
| Amy Bushman | Amanda Gast | Andrew Marsh | Diego Rodriguez-Sanchez |
| Jenna Calhoun | Lyla Graf | Caitlyn Matchett | Jessica Roncalli-McCoard |
| Grace Calvert | Becca Grunkemeyer | Julia Mathew | Deja Roumegoux |
| Anna Charron | Gracie Grunkemeyer | Shannon Mathews | Bruno Schardong |
| Kehley Coleman | Olivia Hazel | Allison McElroy | Kathleen Sebastian |
| Sydney Cooper | Elizabeth Hill | Erin McElroy | Abigail Sherrard |
| Ella Cope | Emma Horton | Erin Miller | Olivia Sherwood |
| Diana Currier | Cassidy Howard | Georgia Miller | Vivianne Skavlem |
| Ellie Dedrick | Sophia Hughes | Lucia Montefiore | Camryn Snapp |
| Madelyn Deininger | Fauna Jackson | Ryanne Morr | Paige Strasel |
| Calvin DeLay | Caroline Joseph | Mary Nerswick | Ellie Walters |
| Grace Devoid | Sasha Justice | Abbey O'Rourke | Emma Watson |
| Lucy Dobson | Ella Karpe | Katie Olson | Maxwell Wolter |
| Kurt Drath | Samuel Kist | Roberta Orebaugh | Ainsley Worthley |
| Tayshawn Elliott | Sarah Knappenberger | Maya Parks | Grace Yi |
| Adele Enns | Anna Laine | Sankhya Rajan | Jackie Zimmer |
| Corinne Fanta | Nicole Line | Avery Riekert | Isabel Zory |



Photo: Kenneth Dolin

BEN BLISS, tenor

American tenor Ben Bliss is a recent graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at The Metropolitan Opera. Bliss was the recipient of the Mozart and Plácido Domingo awards at the 2015 Francisco Viñas International Competition

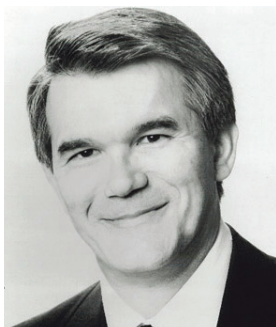
in Barcelona, and received second place overall. He was also awarded first prize in the 2014 Gerda Lissner and Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation competitions, as well as a Sara Tucker and Sullivan Foundation grant. Bliss is also the 2013 Operaia Don Plácido Domingo Sr. Zarzuela prizewinner.

In the 2015–16 season, Bliss returned to The Metropolitan Opera as Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, conducted by James Levine, and made his European debut in the same role with Glyndebourne Festival on tour. He also returned as a principal artist to Los Angeles Opera, where he appeared as Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* under the baton of James Conlon, as well as to Des Moines Metro Opera as Belmonte. On the concert stage, Bliss debuted with the New York Philharmonic singing Tony in Bernstein’s *West Side Story* Concert Suite No. 1 with Alan Gilbert, in Haydn’s *The Creation* (2015) at the Cincinnati May Festival with James Conlon, and in holiday concerts with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Lexington Philharmonic. Bliss also performed in Carnegie Hall’s Neighborhood Recital series with pianist Lachlan Glen, and with the New York Choral Society in Handel’s *Israel in Egypt* at Carnegie Hall. He concludes the season with his company debut at Santa Fe Opera as Flamand in *Capriccio* directed by Tim Albery.

While in the Lindemann Program, Bliss made his Metropolitan Opera stage debut as Vogelgesang in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, conducted by James Levine. In May 2014, he was tapped to fill in as Ferrando in the Los Angeles Philharmonic’s production of *Così fan tutte* under the baton of Gustavo Dudamel.

As a member of LA Opera’s Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program, Bliss appeared as Benvenuto in *Roméo et Juliette*, Barbarigo in *I due Foscari*, and the Male Chorus in Britten’s *The Rape of Lucretia* with the Colburn Orchestra under James Conlon. He has been the tenor soloist for Bach’s *Magnificat* with the

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* with the La Jolla Symphony and made his Los Angeles Philharmonic debut singing Bach under the baton of Gustavo Dudamel.



JOHN CHEEK, bass-baritone

One of the most accomplished singers of our time, John Cheek continually meets with high acclaim for his artistic productions. Since his initial debut, he appeared at The Metro-

politan Opera in more than 360 performances; his roles include the title role in *Le nozze di Figaro* (at Lincoln Center and on tour in Japan), Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Publio in *La clemenza di Tito* and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, as well as Colline in *La bohème* and Alvisè in *La Gioconda*. Cheek performed these roles with James Levine conducting.

At the New York City Opera he sang three title roles in one season: Boito’s *Mefistofele*, Verdi’s *Attila* and the world premiere of Jay Reise’s *Rasputin*. In the following season, he sang the title role in *Don Giovanni*.

Other of Cheek’s numerous performances include his 2009–10 season debut at the Santa Fe Opera for the world premiere of Lew Spratlan’s Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *Life is a Dream*, Handel’s *The Creation* with both the Flint Symphony Orchestra and the Minería Orchestra of Mexico City, Klingsor in *Parsifal* with the Krakow Philharmonic, and a return to The Metropolitan Opera. He also appeared in the role of the Water Sprite in Dvořák’s *Rusalka* with Boston Lyric Opera. Cheek also took the title role of the protagonist in *Elijah* performed with the Charlemagne Orchestra in Brussels.

Cheek is historically active in oratorio performance, appearing with all the major orchestras in North America. He has participated in the Cincinnati May Festival for 17 seasons and the Ravinia Festival for 15 seasons. Other festival appearances include Blossom, Mann Center, Lanaudière, Tanglewood, Saratoga, Bard, Mostly Mozart and Marlboro, among others.

His versatility reflects a repertoire encompassing an enormous variety of music, ranging from the Baroque era to many world premieres by composers such as Sir Michael Tippett, Ned Rorem, and David Diamond. Cheek created the role of Lawyer Royal in Stephen Paulus’s *Summer*, and the title role in Romeo

Cascarino's *William Penn* at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia.

In Europe he has sung with Paris Opera, l'Orchestre de Paris, Opera de Nice, Bregenzer Festspiel, the Zürich Tonhalle Orchestra, Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels and Finnish National Opera, as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, Salzburg Festival, Bachakademie of Stuttgart, London Promenade concerts, BBC Symphony and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic.

Cheek also joined forces with conductor James Levine in four notable recitals in New York and Chicago.

His many recordings include *The Rake's Progress* (Nick Shadow) conducted by Robert Craft, Handel's *Messiah* (RCA), Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* with the New Jersey Symphony, Handel's last opera *Deidameia* (Albany), and Haydn's *The Creation*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Boito's *Mefistofele*: Prologue with Robert Shaw and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Cheek resides in the Berkshires with his wife, Lee.



MICHAEL CHERTOCK, pianist

Pianist Michael Chertock has fashioned a successful career as an orchestral soloist, collaborating with conductors such as James Conlon, Jaime Laredo, Keith Lockhart, Erich Kunzel and Andrew Litton. His many or-

chestral appearances include solo performances with The Philadelphia Orchestra, and with the Atlanta Symphony, Dallas Symphony, l'Orchestre Symphonique du Montreal, Toronto Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Chattanooga Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony and Cincinnati Symphony orchestras.

Chertock performs frequently overseas, most recently playing and conducting a Gershwin program with the State Symphony Orchestra of Russia. In 2014, Chertock recorded a concerto by John Alden Carpenter with Keith Lockhart and the BBC Orchestra at the famed Dutton Epoch recording studio in London. His 2003 performance on the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's recording of *Petrouchka* with Paavo Järvi turned in rave reviews in *Gramophone* and *American Record Guide*.

Chertock made his debut at age 17, performing the Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 3 with Andrew Litton conducting. In 1994, Chertock released his first

CD on the *Telarc* label, a collection of his original arrangements of music from movies titled *Cinematic Piano*. Since then, he has recorded three more discs with *Telarc*: *Palace of the Winds*, *Christmas at the Movies* and *Love at the Movies*, for which he has been praised for lush, original arrangements and exquisite technical facility.

Chertock began conducting in 2001 when he stepped in for Maestro Carmon De Leone in performances of Cincinnati Ballet's *The Nutcracker*. He now serves as Assistant Conductor of that organization. Chertock is the Music Director of the Blue Ash-Montgomery Symphony, and he frequently composes and arranges music for the orchestra's concerts. He has also conducted the Columbus (Ohio) Symphony and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Cincinnati Pops.

Chertock serves as chair of the piano department at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where he received his master's degree. He has garnered numerous awards at major competitions, among them the top prize in the 1989 Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition (Brahms Division) and the grand prize in the 1993 St. Charles International Piano Competition. He also shared the silver medal in the 1991 World Piano Competition of the American Music Scholarship Association. He received the Rildia B. O'Bryon Cliburn Scholarship in 1986.

Chertock makes his home in Cincinnati with his wife Maaike, son Joshua and daughters Maria and Janneke. Most Sundays you can find him playing piano and organ for services at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church. In the coming season, he will return to Moscow for a performance with the State Symphony Orchestra of Russia, and will tour with the Boston Pops Orchestra.

ELIZABETH DeSHONG, mezzo-soprano

(May Festival debut)

In the current season, Elizabeth DeShong's operatic performances include a return to The Metropolitan Opera as the Wardrobe Mistress/Schoolboy/Page in Berg's *Lulu*, which will be broadcast to movie theaters worldwide in HD; Fenena in *Nabucco* with Lyric Opera of Chicago; Arsace in *Semiramide* with Opera National de Bordeaux; Calbo in *Maometto II* with Canadian Opera Company; and Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Glyndebourne Festival. On the concert stage, she performs Handel's *Messiah* with both the Toronto Symphony and the University Musical Society.

Operatic and orchestral engagements during the 2014–15 season took DeShong to the Canadian Opera Company for performances as Suzuki in



Photo: Larry Lapidus

Madama Butterfly, the Orchestra of St. Luke's for Mendelssohn's *Die erste Walpurgisnacht* in Carnegie Hall, the Wiener Staatsoper for Angelina in *La Cenerentola*, and Los Angeles Opera for Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. In addition, DeShong sang Elgar's *The Kingdom*

with the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra, Mozart's Requiem with the Dallas Symphony and Houston Symphony orchestras, and the role of Hermia in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

Last season at The Metropolitan Opera, she sang two Hermias: in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and in the pastiche opera *The Enchanted Island*, as well as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, a role she will also sing with San Francisco Opera. In addition, DeShong performed Handel's *Messiah* with the National Symphony Orchestra, Bernstein's *Jeremiah* Symphony with the Radio Symphonie Orchester Wien under the direction of Marin Alsop, and Mozart's Requiem with The Cleveland Orchestra under the direction of David Robertson and with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in Carnegie Hall conducted by Manfred Honeck.

The recipient of numerous awards, DeShong received Washington National Opera's Artist of the Year Award in 2010 for her debut performance as the Composer in Richard Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Her portrayal of Maffio Orsini in San Francisco Opera's production of *Lucrezia Borgia* was recently released on DVD on EuroArts Music and Naxos of America.

JULIANNA DI GIACOMO, soprano

With recent debuts in several top international opera houses, soprano Julianna Di Giacomo has earned the reputation as one of the exciting young up-and-coming *lyrica-spinto* sopranos on the classical music scene today.

This season, Di Giacomo debuts at the Bayerische Staatsoper as Leonora in *Il trovatore*, Teatro La Fenice as Lina in *Stiffelio* and Teatro de la Maestranza as Desdemona in *Otello*. In addition, she appears with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a concert performance of *Tosca* with Gustavo Dudamel, Maggio Musicale in Florence for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Zubin Mehta, and the San Antonio Symphony in concert performances of *Il trovatore*.

Di Giacomo made her debut at The Metropolitan Opera as Clotilde in *Norma* and was subsequently



re-engaged for Lina in *Stiffelio* and Leonora in *Il trovatore*. Other recent North American engagements have included Amelia in *Un ballo in maschera* at San Francisco Opera, Nedda in *Pagliacci* and the Verdi Requiem at the Hollywood Bowl, special performances of

Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in both Los Angeles and Caracas and broadcast live to movie theaters in North and South America; Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and excerpts from *Don Giovanni* with the New York Philharmonic, Margherita/Elena in *Mefistofele* with the Collegiate Chorale at Carnegie Hall, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at the Los Angeles Opera, *Il trovatore* and Mathilde in *Guillaume Tell* at the Caramoor International Music Festival and Mme. Lidoine in *Dialogues des Carmelites* at Pittsburgh Opera. She also appeared at Lincoln Center as a feature soloist in its Puccini 150th Birthday Celebration gala concert and in 2011 made her Cincinnati May Festival debut in a performance of *Elijah* conducted by James Conlon.

In Europe, Di Giacomo most recently made her debut at the Vienna Philharmonic in performances of the Beethoven Symphony No. 9 with Maestro Dudamel. Other European engagements have included Lucrezia in *I due Foscari* at La Scala, the title role of *Norma* at Teatro dell'Opera di Roma in the famed Terme di Caracalla, *Otello* at the Teatro di Bari and the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Valentine in *Les Huguenots*, Elena in *I Vespri Siciliani*, and the title role in *Suor Angelica* at the Teatro Real de Madrid, *Le roi d'Ys* at the Opéra National Montpellier and Opera Comique, *Il trovatore* at Teatre Principal de Mao in Minorca, and performances of *Il trovatore*, *Otello* and *Un ballo in maschera* with Zubin Mehta and the Israel Philharmonic. In concert she has sung the Verdi Requiem with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester in Berlin under James Conlon, with Daniele Gatti and the l'Orchestre National de France at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the Teatro Comunale di Firenze with Zubin Mehta, the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, and with Los Angeles Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel recorded live from the Hollywood Bowl.

A native of Santa Monica, CA, Di Giacomo is a graduate of the San Francisco Opera's prestigious Merola Program and the Santa Fe Opera's Apprentice Program. Her many awards include the

Leonie Rysanek Prize from the George London Foundation, the top prize from the Gerda Lissner Foundation, First Prize from the Licia Albanese Puccini Foundation Competition, the NYCO Richard F. Gold Career Grant for her portrayal of Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, and numerous scholarships from the Opera Buffs Foundation.



Photo: Don Demerich

RODRICK DIXON,
tenor

Rodrick Dixon possesses a tenor voice of extraordinary range and versatility that has earned him the respect and attention of leading conductors, orchestras and opera companies throughout North America.

Notable operatic engagements include Los Angeles Opera in the title role of Zemlinsky’s *Der Zwerg* conducted by James Conlon and as Walther von der Vogelweide in *Tannhauser*, Michigan Opera Theater as Tonio in *La fille du Regiment*, Todi Music Festival as Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* and as Tonio, Portland Opera in the title role of *Les contes d’Hoffmann*, Opera Columbus for the premiere of *Vanqui* (Prince), and Virginia Opera as Sportin’ Life in *Porgy & Bess*, Cincinnati Opera as the Duke in *Rigoletto*, and Opera Southwest in the title role of Rossini’s *Otello*.

On the concert stage, he is a regular guest of the Cincinnati May Festival. Other notable appearances include The Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Sydney Arts Festival in Australia, Ravinia Festival, The Cleveland Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Vail Music Festival, the Longfellow Chorus for a program of works by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor that was recorded and included in a film about the composer, and the Choral Arts Society of Music. This spring he returns to Carnegie Hall to debut with the American Symphony Orchestra as tenor soloist in Delius’ *A Mass of Life* and to the Cincinnati May Festival. This summer, he will appear with The Philadelphia Orchestra at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and Hannibal Lukumbe’s *One Land, One River, One People*. Next season includes his debut with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra as Erik in *Der fliegende Holländer*.

As a member of “The Tenors: Cook, Dixon & Young,” he appeared in concert throughout the U.S.

A gifted recitalist, Dixon earned rave reviews for his Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert broadcast honoring Roland Hayes on WFMT-FM/Chicago. He has also presented pre-concert recitals at the

Cincinnati May Festival, and he completed a 30-city tour for Community Concerts and a duet concert “Following in the Footsteps” at Hampton University with soprano Alfreda Burke, with whom he has also appeared in duet recitals for the Umbria Music Festival in Italy and throughout the U.S.

His extensive television credits include several PBS specials and guest appearances on network and cable television shows. Rodrick Dixon’s musical theater credits include the original cast of *Ragtime* on Broadway, *Show Boat* at the Auditorium Theatre, Pops Concerts at Grant Park Music Festival, the Chicagoland Pops Orchestra at the Rosemont Theater and the Cincinnati Pops with Erich Kunzel, and Christmas concerts of *Too Hot to Handel* at the Detroit Opera House and at the Auditorium Theatre.

Dixon’s recent recordings include (Sony/BMG) *PBS Great Performances Cook, Dixon & Young Volume One* (2005), *Follow That Star* Christmas CD (2003), Liam Lawton’s *Sacred Land* (2006), *Rodrick Dixon Live in Concert* (2008), and a Christmas album with the Cincinnati Pops.



Photo: Jimmy Williams

ANTHONY DEAN GRIFFEY,
tenor

(May Festival debut) American tenor Anthony Dean Griffey has captured critical and popular acclaim on opera, concert and recital stages around the world. The combination of his beautiful and powerful lyric

tenor voice, gift of dramatic interpretation and superb musicianship have earned him the highest praise from critics and audiences alike.

This season, in addition to his May Festival debut, Griffey performs Mahler’s Symphony No. 8 with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Verdi Requiem with the Atlanta Symphony and Schönberg’s *Guerlieder* with the Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo.

Next season he appears in Britten’s *War Requiem* with the Kansas City Symphony and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the North Carolina Symphony, and he creates the role of Uncle Billy in Jake Heggie’s new opera *It’s a Wonderful Life* for Houston Grand Opera.

Griffey has appeared in the world’s most prestigious opera houses, including The Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Los Angeles Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Paris Opera, *Teatro Comunale* di Firenze,

Teatro dell'Opera in Rome, and the Saito Kinen Festival in Japan. His many roles include the title roles in *Peter Grimes*, *Idomeneo*, *Oedipus Rex* and Kurka's *The Good Soldier Schweik*; Florestan in *Fidelio*; Erik in *Die fliegende Holländer*; Male Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia*; Alfred in *Die Fledermaus*; and Jim Mahoney in *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*.

Griffey is particularly noted for his portrayal of the title role in *Peter Grimes* which has won him international acclaim. He debuted the role at the Tanglewood Festival under the baton of Seiji Ozawa, and has since performed it all over the world, most recently in concert performances with the Atlanta Symphony in Carnegie Hall as part of its Britten Centenary celebration. He also appeared in a new production at The Metropolitan Opera that was broadcast live in the company's *Met: Live in HD* series and subsequently released on DVD (EMI Classics) and in a production with Mark Wigglesworth at the Glyndebourne Festival, which was also released as a commercial recording.

A supporter of new works, Griffey has won critical acclaim for creating the role of Mitch in the world premiere of André Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* with San Francisco Opera and for his performances as Lennie in Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*, for which he won a Helpmann award for Best Male Performer in an Opera when he performed the role at the Australia Opera. He also recently premiered Christopher Theofanidis' *The Gift* with the Pittsburgh Symphony.

A celebrated concert performer, Griffey appears regularly with many distinguished international orchestras, including those of North America, the U.K., Europe and Asia. He has also appeared in the world's most prominent festivals, including the BBC Proms and the Tanglewood, Ravinia, Aspen Music, Edinburgh, Lanaudière, and Saito Kinen festivals.

Griffey made his Carnegie Hall Zankel Hall recital debut in 2004 where André Previn composed and dedicated a song cycle for him and accompanied him on the piano. Griffey has also been presented with his long-time pianist and collaborator Warren Jones by many prestigious recital series throughout the U.S. In the spring of 2006 he had the distinction of being invited to perform a recital at the Supreme Court of the United States by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

A four-time Grammy-winning recording artist, Griffey's extensive DVD and compact disc recordings include The Metropolitan Opera's *Peter Grimes* (EMI Classics); Los Angeles Opera's *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (Euroarts); The Metropolitan Opera's *Tristan und Isolde* (DG/Universal); San Francisco Opera's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (video on

Image Entertainment and audio on DG); Taylor's *Peter Ibbetson* with the Seattle Symphony (Naxos); Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony (SFS Media), Lorin Maazel and the New York Philharmonic (New York Philharmonic) and the Tonhalle Orchestra (RCA); Britten's *War Requiem* with Kurt Masur and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO); *Les mamelles de Tirésias* with Seiji Ozawa (Philips); *I Lombardi* with James Levine (Decca/London); Amy Beach's *Cabildo* (Delos); and *Of Mice and Men* with Houston Grand Opera (Albany). He has also been featured as an Artist of the Week on A&E's *Breakfast with the Arts*. Griffey also collaborated with classical guitarist Joseph Pecoraro on a solo Christmas album titled *This Little Light*, which was released in October 2012 (CGS Enterprises).

Since the start of his career Griffey has taken an active role in many charitable efforts, advocating for arts programs in the Guilford County Public Schools, raising money for the Mental Health Association, as well as giving benefit concerts for the "Open Door Shelter" in his home town. He is also actively involved with the High Point Area Arts Council. Griffey holds degrees from Wingate University, the Eastman School of Music and the Juilliard School and was a member of The Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artists Program. He was awarded the Doctorate of Humane Letters from Wingate University in 2012 and was also inducted into the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame in 2011. He currently holds the position of Professor of Voice at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY.

GREGORY KUNDE, tenor

(May Festival debut)

Regarded as one of the most elegant and accomplished singers on the opera stage today, Gregory Kunde continues to earn acclaim for his sensitive phrasing, impeccable style and dramatic command of the most demanding Italian and French operatic roles. He has appeared regularly at the world's most notable venues, including The Metropolitan Opera, Carnegie Hall, Houston Grand Opera, Opéra Bastille, Théâtre du Châtelet, Théâtre des Champs Élysées, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and the Sydney Opera House. He has collaborated with many outstanding conductors and stage directors, including Bonyngé, R. Abbado, Muti, Mehta, Plasson, Prêtre, Rattle, Pappano, Dutoit, Nelson, Gardiner, Davis, Ronconi, Pizzi, Vick and Loy.

Acclaimed throughout his career for his performances in French and Italian *bel canto* roles, Kunde has recently earned a formidable reputation for Verdi and other dramatic repertoire. Since his criti-



Photo: Chris Clogog

cally acclaimed debut as Verdi's *Otello* at La Fenice in 2012, he has performed this signature role in Valencia, Genoa, Salerno, Florence, Turin, Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Seoul and São Paulo. Other Verdi debuts in recent seasons include Arrigo in *I vespri siciliani* and

Riccardo in *Un ballo in maschera* (Turin), Radames in *Aida* (São Paulo), and Don Alvaro in *La forza del destino* (Valencia). In the 2012–13 season, Kunde earned the unique distinction of being the only tenor in recorded history to perform both Rossini's *Otello* and Verdi's *Otello* in the same season—something he repeated last season and will do again this season.

Highlights of the current season include his debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Manrico in *Il trovatore*, his role debut in the title role of Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* in Madrid and Bilbao, Verdi's *Otello* in Seville and Cincinnati, Rossini's *Otello* at the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the title roles of both *Idomeneo* and *Samson et Dalila* in Valencia, and Des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut* in Bilbao.

Engagements last season included Verdi's *Otello* in São Paulo, Peralada and Seville; Rossini's *Otello* at La Scala; Radames in *Aida* at Arena de Verona; Pollione in *Norma* at Gran Teatre del Liceu and La Fenice; and role debuts as Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* (Liège), Turridu in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Canio in *Pagliacci* (Bilbao), and Manrico in *Il trovatore* (La Fenice).

Other recent roles include Enée in *Les Troyens* (La Scala), Peter Grimes (Santa Cecilia with Pappano), Vasco da Gama in *L'Africaine* (La Fenice), Gualtiero in *Il Pirata* (Gran Teatre del Liceu), Raoul in *Les Huguenots* (Opéra National du Rhin), Rodrigo in *La donna del lago* (Theater an der Wien), and Faust in *La damnation de Faust* (with Maestro Dutoit in Amsterdam).

Kunde's rich discography includes Berlioz's *Les Troyens* at the Théâtre du Châtelet (Opus Arte DVD, *Gramophone* magazine's DVD of the Year), Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini* (Virgin Classics CD, *Gramophone*'s Opera Recording of the Year), *Benvenuto Cellini* with Sir Colin Davis (LSO Live CD), and Verdi's *Otello* from the Palazzo Ducale in Venice (Unitel DVD).

SUSANNA LEMBERSKAYA, vocal coach, pianist

Susanna Lemberskaya was born in the former Soviet Union to the family of a famous professor of violin. She spent her youth in Ukraine in Odessa, where she graduated from the School of Gifted Children (piano) and the Leningrad Conservatory. Since the age of 14, Lemberskaya has worked in the opera theater, first in Odessa, then in St. Petersburg and Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

While in the former Soviet Union, she worked with Dmitri Shostakovich on his revision of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, titled *Katerina Ismailova*. As accompanist she worked with cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and conductors Yuri Temirkanov, Valery Gergiev and Mark Ermler. She also worked as vocal coach for Elena Obrazcova, Vladimir Atlantov and Evgeny Nesterenko.

In 1975 she immigrated to the U.S. (San Francisco), where she worked until 2001 as head vocal coach and assistant conductor for San Francisco Opera under the supervision of Dr. Kurt Herbert Adler and Lotfi Mansouri. Singers she has assisted with role preparation include Mirella Freni, Nicola Giurrov, Plácido Domingo, Luciano Pavarotti, Leontyne Price, Margaret Price, Piero Cappuccilli, Cesare Siepi, Marilyn Horne, Leonie Rysanek, Regina Resnik, Thomas Hampson, Ruth Ann Swenson, Deborah Voigt and many others. Conductors with whom she is associated include James Levine, Daniel Barenboim, James Conlon, Nello Santi, Maurizio Arena, Dr. Kurt Herbert Adler, Sir John Pritchard, Zubin Mehta, Seiji Ozawa and Vladimir Yurovsky.

From 2001 to 2006, she worked with Pittsburgh Opera, where her duties included preparing the cast for Pittsburgh's production of Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, under the direction of John Mauceri. She has also worked with the Opera National de Paris, Staats Opera Berlin, Richard Wagner Festival in Bayreuth (Germany), Opera Festival Florence (Italy) and the Glyndebourne Festival (United Kingdom), among others.

In 2006 Lemberskaya moved to Los Angeles to work under James Conlon at the LA Opera, where she has served as head vocal coach, as well as accompanist and prompter. A highlight of her tenure with the company has been her work as prompter under the baton of Maestro Conlon during the two-season *Ring Cycle* (2009–11). In 2011, Ms. Lemberskaya retired from LA Opera, but she continues to work under the baton of Maestro Conlon at the Cincinnati May Festival and Ravinia Festival. She resides in the Pittsburgh area and is a vocal coach at St. Vincent College in Latrobe, PA.



HEATHER MacPHAIL, pianist and organist

Heather MacPhail has been the accompanist for the Cincinnati May Festival Chorus since 1990. In addition, she currently serves as Music Assistant to Robert Porco, Director of Chorus. She is a frequent keyboardist with the

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, performing on all keyboard instruments. MacPhail has been Staff Accompanist at Miami University since 1997. There, she supervises and coaches students in accompanying and performs with faculty and guest artists. She is the pianist for Miami3, a faculty trio of clarinet, violin and piano that performs largely commissioned works. MacPhail has performed as piano soloist with the Oxford String Quartet, Miami University Orchestra and Central Ohio Symphony Orchestra. She performs regularly on local concert series, such as Christ Church Glendale Music at Noon, Holy Trinity Episcopal Noon Series and Westwood First Concert Series.

MacPhail is Organist/Director of Music Ministries at Westwood First Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati. She maintains a private teaching studio for piano and organ, with students active in competitions and recitals. She holds a Master of Music degree in Accompanying and a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

SARA MURPHY, mezzo-soprano

Sara Murphy is a concert, opera and recital artist who has been called “absolutely unforgettable for her versatility and ability to conquer any sensitive soul” (*El Nacional*). In October of 2016, she will make her company and role debut at Opera Theater of Rome as Ulrica in Verdi’s *Un ballo in Maschera* under the baton of Jesús López-Cobos.

Current season highlights include two appearances at Carnegie Hall: *A Prayer for Peace*, with music of Leonard Bernstein and Turkish composer Ahmed Adnan Saygun with MidAtlantic Opera, and Handel’s *Messiah* with Oratorio Society of New York. Murphy appears again with Oratorio Society of New York in two performances of Mahler’s Symphony No. 8, one with orchestra and one with a world premiere organ transcription by David Briggs.

Her recently released recording of Hindemith’s *The Long Christmas Dinner* was named one of the “Top Ten Opera Recordings of 2015” in *Opera*



News, and made the top of Arts Beat’s playlist in *The New York Times*. Additionally, *Opera News*, *The Guardian* and *Gramophone* all praise her portrayal of Mother Bayard and Ermengarde.

Highlights of past seasons include appearances at the May Festival in Mahler’s Symphony No. 8, Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and Tchaikovsky’s *Ode to Joy*; Ligeti’s Requiem, Schnittke’s *Nagasaki* and Hindemith’s *The Long Christmas Dinner* with the American Symphony Orchestra; Verdi’s Requiem with Oratorio Society of New York; and performances of Britten’s *Phaedra*, Barber’s *Dover Beach* and High Priestess in Verdi’s *Aida* at the Ravinia Festival with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Murphy is a frequent soloist on the Sacred Music in a Sacred Space concert series in New York City, performing such works as Mozart’s Requiem and *Solemn Vespers*, Bach’s *Magnificat*, Szymanowski’s Stabat Mater, Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis*, Duruflé’s Requiem and the Rachmaninoff *Vespers*. In recital, Murphy has frequently presented Wagner’s *Wesendonck Lieder* and Mahler’s *Rückert Lieder*, and her collaborators have included pianist Dalton Baldwin and duo pianists Pascal and Ami Rogé.

Sara Murphy earned a bachelor’s degree from Oberlin College and a master’s degree from Catholic University. In 2010 she was awarded an honorable mention in the George London Foundation Competition and was a finalist in the Joy in Singing Competition, as well as a recipient of a Wagner Society of New York grant. In 2013, she was first place winner in the Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition.

LISETTE OROPESA, soprano

(May Festival debut)

Soprano Lisette Oropesa has been hailed as one of the most exciting and magnetic singers of her generation.

This season Oropesa made her role and house debut as Violetta in *La traviata* at Opera Philadelphia and her house debut at the Teatro Real in Madrid as Gilda in *Rigoletto*. She also made her New York City recital debut at the Park Avenue Armory, appeared in The Philadelphia Orchestra’s 100th anniversary gala performances of Mahler’s Symphony No. 8, and performed with the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Strasbourg Philharmonic, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra. This spring, she returns to the Bayerische Staatsoper for both Konstanze in *Die Entführung*



Photo: Matthew Murphy

aus dem Serail and Héb  and Zima in a new production of *Les Indes Galantes*. Next season she debuts at Washington National Opera as Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* and as Marie in *La fille du R giment*, and she returns to Bayerische Staatsoper as Konstanza and

to Netherlands Opera as Gilda.

Oropesa has appeared in over 100 performances at The Metropolitan Opera, including as Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Gilda in *Rigoletto*, as well as having appeared in eight of The Met's *Live in HD* productions. Other career highlights in the U.S. include Nannetta in *Falstaff*, Romilda in *Xerxes* and Susanna at San Francisco Opera; Susanna at the Santa Fe Opera; Rosalba in *Florencia en el Amazonas* at the LA Opera; Marie in *La fille du R giment* and Konstanza at Pittsburgh Opera; Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* with Michigan Opera Theatre; and Susanna and Leila in *The Pearl Fishers* at the New Orleans Opera. In Europe she debuted at Op ra National de Paris and Welsh National Opera as Konstanza, Bayerische Staatsoper as Ismene in *Mitriadate*, Grand Th atre de Gen ve as Gilda, Netherlands Opera and the ABAO Opera Bilbao as Nannetta, and Deutsche Oper am Rhein in the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Fiorilla in *Il Turco in Italia*.

In concert, Oropesa has appeared with the Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Radio Concertgeouw Orchestra in Amsterdam, and at the Ravinia and Tanglewood festivals. She has also appeared in Carnegie Hall's Weill Hall in a performance of *Liebeslieder-Walzer* with James Levine and Daniel Barenboim at the pianos.

A first generation Cuban-American, Oropesa was raised in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and graduated from the LSU School of Music at Louisiana State University. She is an alumna of The Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artists Program and her many awards include Grand Finals Winner of the 2005 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a 2007 Sarah Tucker Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation, the Zarzuela Award at the 2007 Operalia International Opera Competition, and the 2008 George London Award.

AUDREY SAINT-GIL, vocal coach

A native of France, Audrey Saint-Gil attended the Conservatoire National de Musique de Toulouse where she was awarded three first prizes with distinction in piano solo, chamber music and vocal coaching. She continued her doctoral studies at the Universit  of Toulouse and graduated with a PhD in Greek philosophy.

Saint-Gil began her career at the Th atre du Capit le in Toulouse and her international career at the Konzerthaus in Vienna under the direction of Bertrand de Billy. At the same time she was appointed Head Vocal Coach of the  cole Normale de Musique de Paris.

Saint-Gil made her American debut as Assistant Conductor with Michigan Opera Theatre and has since been working with major opera houses such as Cincinnati Opera Festival, Ravinia Festival, Caramoor International Music Festival, Festival del Sole, Royal Opera House's Covent Garden, New York City Opera and LA Opera under the direction of James Conlon and Pl cido Domingo.

Saint-Gil has frequently been invited to give master classes and is also the author of several books on French diction. She has served as a judge for several major vocal competitions including the International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition at The Metropolitan Opera. She was also recently commissioned to write the film score for a documentary on James Salter by the Checkerboard Film Foundation.

Saint-Gil has collaborated with many renowned opera singers such as Erwin Schrott, James Valenti, Angela Meade, Aylin Perez, Sondra Radvanosky and Ildebrando d'Arcangelo.

She is currently the Assistant Conductor for James Conlon and Pl cido Domingo at LA Opera and is part of the music staff of the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia.



ABBY SHERRARD, treble soloist

(May Festival debut)

Abby Sherrard is a sophomore at Mason High School and is in the Mason Honors Concert Choir. She has been a member of the Cincinnati Children's Choir for six years and has toured with the ensemble to

Italy and New York, singing in venues such as St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and Carnegie Hall in New York City. Abby was also a member of CCC's Lyric Choir during the 2012 World Choir Games in Cincinnati.



KRISTINN SIGMUNDSSON,
bass

Lauded for his portrayal of Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*, in the 2015–16 season Icelandic bass Kristinn Sigmundsson joins the Dallas Symphony Orchestra for Hunding in excerpts of *Die Walküre* and sings Melchthal in *Guillaume Tell* and performs the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlos* with Staatsoper Hamburg, Rocco in *Fidelio* at the Caramoor International Music Festival and Don Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Íslenska óperan. In addition, his summer performances include the Grant Park Music Festival for Méphistophélès in *La damnation de Faust*. Future seasons include performances at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Staatsoper Hamburg and with the Budapest Festival Orchestra. Last season, he joined Los Angeles Opera for its trilogy of Beaumarchais operas, singing Don Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Louis XVI in Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* and Doctor Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro*. He also sang King Philip in *Don Carlo* with Íslenska óperan and returned to both the Ravinia Festival as Daland in *Der fliegende Holländer* and the Cincinnati May Festival for Haydn's *The Creation*.

As one of the world's most sought-after basses, Sigmundsson has sung nearly his entire repertoire with the Opéra National de Paris. His performances at The Metropolitan Opera include Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Hundig in *Die Walküre*, Rocco in *Fidelio*, Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette* and Vodnik in *Rusalka*. He has sung leading roles regularly with the Staatsoper Wien, Bayerische Staatsoper and Semperoper Dresden, where his most recent performances include Méphistophélès in *La damnation de Faust*.

His concert performances include collaborations with many of the world's leading conductors. He recently joined the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Budapest Festival Orchestra on tour at Avery Fisher Hall for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and sang Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* with the Hamburger Symphoniker, Schumann's *Geburtstag* at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig and Dvořák's Requiem with the Orchestra del Maggio Musicale. Among his discography are commercial recordings of *Don Giovanni* and *Die Zauberflöte* with Arnold Östman (Decca) and Schreker's *Die Gezeichneten* (Deutsche Grammophon). With Frans Brüggen he has recorded both Bach's *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion* (Phillips). He has recorded

Schumann's *Faustszenen* with Philippe Herreweghe (Harmonia Mundi) and *Fidelio* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Sir Colin Davis.

In the early part of his career he performed principally in his native Iceland before joining the Hessische Staatstheater in Wiesbaden. His initial training was as a biologist, and he taught for a few years before becoming a singer, studying first at the Reykjavik Academy of Singing and then at the Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Vienna.



EGILS SILINS,
bass-baritone

(May Festival debut)

The bass-baritone Egils Silins was born in Latvia and graduated from the Latvian Academy of Music. He made his debut at the Latvian National Opera, performing Boito in *Mephistopheles*. He

has won ten international competitions and received the Latvian Annual Music Award in 1996, 2003 and 2014. He made his debut at the Wiener Staatsoper in *I Puritani*. He gained huge international acclaim singing the title role in *Le Demon* (Rubinstein) at the 1997 Bregenzer Festspiele. He has also performed at prestigious music festivals including the Tanglewood Music Festival, Savonlinna Opera Festival and Glyndebourne Festival.

Egils Silins has performed at many of the world's leading opera houses, including Teatro alla Scala, Metropolitan Opera, Hamburgische Staatsoper, Semperoper, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Teatro del Liceu, Mariinsky Theatre, Opernhaus Zürich, Chicago Opera, Staatstheater München, among others.

His repertoire (more than 90 roles), includes Holländer in *Der fliegende Holländer*, Wotan and Rheingold in *Die Walküre*, Wanderer in *Siegfried*, Amfortas and Klingsor in *Parsifal*, Telramund in *Lohengrin*, Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde*, Mandryka in *Arabella*, Jochanaan in *Salome*, Barak in *Woman Without Shadows*, Orest in *Elektra*, Demon in *Demon*, Rangoni in *Boris Godunov*, Gd. Prêtre in *Samson et Dalila*, Mephisto and Faust in *La damnation de Faust*, Sebastiano in *Tiefland*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Iago in *Otello*, Germont in *La traviata*, Igor in *Prince Igor* and Aleko in *Aleko*.

Egils Silins' next projects include Wotan and Wanderer at Leipzig Opera, Holländer at Düsseldorf Opera, Escamillo at Hamburg Opera, Mandryka at Oper Köln, Pizarro at Vienna State Opera, *Ring/Wotan-Wanderer* at the Budapest Wagner Festival

and Tokyo Nomori Festival, and his return to Opéra de Paris with *Samson et Dalila* and *Lohengrin*, among others.



TAMARA WILSON,
soprano

(May Festival debut)
American soprano Tamara Wilson is rapidly gaining notoriety for her interpretations of Verdi, Mozart and Strauss. She is the recipient of the prestigious 2016 Richard Tucker Award from

the Richard Tucker Music Foundation.

Recently, Tamara Wilson made her Metropolitan Opera debut in the title role of *Aida* to great critical and audience acclaim. In the 2015–16 season, Wilson made her London debut in Calixto Bieto’s production of *La forza del destino* at English National Opera. She returned to Oper Frankfurt as Elisabetta in *Don Carlo* and Teatro Municipal de Santiago as Lucrezia Contarini in *I due Foscari*. She also inaugurated the new opera house in Kyoto, Japan with Seiji Ozawa as Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*. In concert, Wilson performed Mahler’s Symphony No. 4 with Marin Alsop and Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo to be released for commercial recording, Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with Osmo Vänskä and the Minnesota Orchestra, Verdi’s *Messa da requiem* with Marin Alsop and the Baltimore Symphony, and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with Donald Runnicles at the Grand Teton Music Festival. In the 2016–17 season, Wilson will debut at the Bayerische Staatsoper and Deutsche Oper Berlin, as well as return to Gran Teatre del Liceu and Théâtre du Capitole, all in leading Verdi roles.

Tamara Wilson made her role and house debut in the demanding title role of *Norma* at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2014–15 season. She returned to Oper Frankfurt for her first performances as the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, which was just released by Oehms Classics. In concert, she returned to the Ravinia Festival as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* with James Conlon and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a role she also debuted with Edo de Waart and the Milwaukee Symphony. Wilson debuted with The

Cleveland Orchestra in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 under Franz Welser-Möst, the National Symphony in Mendelssohn’s Symphony No. 2 with Matthew Halls, and returned to the Baltimore Symphony in Mahler’s Symphony No. 4 with Marin Alsop.

On the concert stage, Wilson made her Carnegie Hall debut with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under Marin Alsop in Honegger’s *Jeanne d’Arc au bûcher*, and she appeared with the Saint Louis Symphony in Handel’s *Messiah*, Charlotte Symphony in Beethoven’s *Missa solemnis* and returned to the Oregon Bach Festival in Tippett’s *A Child of Our Time*. Recently, she was soprano soloist for performances of the *Missa solemnis* with John Nelson and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe in Lisbon, which is available on DVD, as well as Mozart’s Requiem with Edo de Waart and the Milwaukee Symphony and Mendelssohn’s Symphony No. 2 with the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra. A favorite of the Oregon Bach Festival, she debuted in Verdi’s *Messa da requiem* under Helmuth Rilling for the opening of their 40th Anniversary season, subsequently returning for the same piece in Rilling’s final season as music director. She then returned to sing Brahms’s *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 under Rilling, Marguerite in *Jeanne d’Arc au bûcher* under Marin Alsop, and a concert of Verdi, Britten and Wagner with Matthew Hall. She has toured Japan with Helmuth Rilling and Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9.

An alumna of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, Wilson’s awards include the George London Award from the George London Foundation, as well as both a career grant in 2011 and study grant in 2008 from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation. Other notable awards include first place in the 2005 Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers in Houston and finalist in the 2004 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, among others. She was a featured soloist at the 2010 NEA Opera Honors in which she sang “Ernani, involami” from Verdi’s *Ernani* to honor recipient Martina Arroyo. In addition to her operatic and orchestral performances, Wilson is an avid lecturer on vocal technique. She has been a Guest Master Class Lecturer for the National Pastoral Musicians in the Chicago area. Wilson received her degree at the University of Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music.

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Louis Langrée began his tenure as the CSO's 13th Music Director in the 2013–14 season, succeeding Paavo Järvi, whose tenure concluded in 2011 after ten seasons. Over the Orchestra's 119-year history, it has also been led by Leopold Stokowski, Eugène Ysaÿe, Fritz Reiner, Eugene Goossens, Max Rudolf, Thomas Schippers and Jesús López-Cobos, among others.

The CSO has built a reputation as one of the world's foremost orchestras and a champion of the new music of its day. The orchestra has given the American premieres of works by such composers as Debussy, Ravel and Bartók and has commissioned works that have since become mainstays of the classical repertoire, including Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*. The CSO was the first orchestra to be broadcast to a national radio audience (1921) and the third to record (1917). The orchestra continues to commission new

works and to program an impressive array of music from such composers as Philip Glass, Nico Muhly, David Lang, Caroline Shaw, André Previn, Thierry Escaich, Zhou Tian and more.

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§ Begins the alphabetical listing of players who participate in a system of rotated seating within the string section.

* Associate Principal

** Assistant Principal

† One-year appointment

‡ Leave of absence

++ CSO endowment only



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Music Director*

*Robert Porco,
Director of Choruses
Cincinnati Symphony
Orchestra*

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ELIZABETH DeSHONG mezzo-soprano
BEN BLISS tenor
JOHN CHEEK bass-baritone
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MOZART Overture to *Lucio Silla*, K. 135
(1756–1791)

MOZART Overture to *Idomeneo, rè di Creta*, K. 366

MOZART Overture to *Le nozze di Figaro*, K. 492

MOZART *Ave verum corpus*, K. 618

MOZART *Exsultate, jubilate*, K. 158a [165]
Exsultate, jubilate
Recitative: Fulget amica dies
Tu virginum corona
Alleluja!

INTERMISSION

MOZART Mass in C Minor, K. 417a [427], *The Great*
Kyrie
Gloria
Credo (fragment)
Sanctus
Benedictus

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Tonight's concert will end at approximately 10 p.m.

This concert will be broadcast on WGUC-FM on October 2, 2016 at 8 p.m.

The use of photographic and recording devices at these concerts is prohibited.

PROGRAM NOTES

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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)

Overture to *Lucio Silla*, K. 135

Composed in 1772. Premiered on December 26, 1772 in Milan.

The highlight of Mozart's first trip to Italy came on December 26, 1770, one month before his 15th birthday, when the music lovers of Milan awarded his opera *Mitridate* (K. 87) a splendid reception. On March 4, 1771, shortly before he and his father, Leopold, returned to Salzburg, Mozart signed another contract with Milan's Teatro Regio Ducale to provide an *opera seria* titled *Lucio Silla* for the Carnival season the following year. Except for a trip back to Milan in the fall of 1771 to produce the "theatrical serenade" *Ascanio in Alba* in honor of the marriage of the Archduke Ferdinand to Princess Maria Beatrice Ricciarda, Mozart spent the intervening months at home in Salzburg tending to his duties as violinist, organist and composer in the Archbishop's musical establishment. His contract called for him to prepare the recitatives for *Lucio Silla* before arriving in Milan in early November 1772, so he duly began work on

the libretto supplied to him before he and Leopold departed from Salzburg on October 24th. (The arias were to be tailored precisely to the tastes and tessituras of the solo singers, so they could not be composed in advance.) The pair traveled by way of Innsbruck, Bolzano and Verona, and reached Milan on November 4th, young Wolfgang "killing time" during the journey, as his father reported home, by writing the String Quartet in D Major, K. 155. Mozart discovered upon his arrival that the work he had done on the recitatives was largely for nought, since the librettist, Giovanni de Gamerra, newly converted to a writing career after stints as a priest and a soldier, had submitted his book to the venerable poet and master librettist Pietro Metastasio for criticism, and had received some. The text of *Lucio Silla* was revised under Metastasio's supervision sufficiently that Mozart could not fit his recitatives to it, and had to start again. Since the soloists were delayed in arriving in Milan, Mozart polished off the choruses, ballet music and overture first, leaving the vocal writing until he could evaluate the qualities of his singers.

With the opera finally completed, Mozart was able to begin rehearsals on December 12th, though the preparation process was hampered by frequent cast changes and difficulties with facilities. The problems continued right through the premiere on

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December 26, 1772, which began at 8 p.m., three hours after the appointed time, and ended some six hours later. *Lucio Silla* received a mixed reception at its first performance, but proved popular enough with the Milanese audiences (many of whom were Austrian, or at least would-be Austrian, and in tune with Mozart's expressive northern musical language) that the work was repeated no fewer than 25 times during the Carnival season.

(It was for the eminent Roman *castrato* Venanzio Rauzzini, who sang the role of Cecilio, that the well-known motet *Exsultate, jubilate*, K. 165 was composed the following month. See page 49 of this program for notes on *Exsultate, jubilate*.) Mozart *père* and *fils* lingered in Milan until March (Leopold feigned illness because his leave from his Salzburg post expired directly after the New Year) in the hope that the Grand Duke of Tuscany would offer Wolfgang regular employment in his household in Florence. No such offer materialized, however, and the travelers left for home on March 4, 1773 to bring the young Mozart's third and last trip to Italy to a close on a note of disappointment. Though Mozart occasionally borrowed arias from *Lucio Silla* for his concert performances in later years, the opera was not revived during his lifetime, and remained unheard again until 1955, when it was produced in Dresden.

Alfred Einstein, in his classic 1945 study of Mozart, summarized the plot of *Lucio Silla*: "Lucio Silla, the dictator of Rome, desires as his wife Giunia, who is betrothed to the banished Cecilio. Cecilio has secretly returned to Rome; the first act ends with the reunion of the lovers. The second act is devoted to a conspiracy against Silla, in which Cecilio takes part. The conspiracy fails, and Cecilio is arrested. In the third act, Cecilio is condemned to death—a fate that Giunia is prepared to share with him. But at the end, after a pathetic accusation of Silla by Giunia before the assembled senate and people, Silla, suddenly showing himself to be a man of noble heart, transforms himself from a dictator into a citizen, and gives up any objections to a wedding." The genre of *opera seria* was slipping quickly from fashion by the time Mozart composed *Lucio Silla*, and Gamera's stuffy and unlikely libretto did not draw from the composer the subtlety of drama and characterization that mark his later masterworks, though the score does contain several attractive numbers. The Overture, modeled

Lucio Silla received a mixed reception at its first performance, but proved popular enough with the Milanese audiences that the work was repeated no fewer than 25 times during the Carnival season.

on the old Italian overture form (fast–slow–fast), is, in its structure and style, a miniature three-movement symphony. A tiny sonata form occupies the first *Allegro*: martial main theme proclaimed by the full orchestra; delicate subsidiary subject given after a pause by the violins; compact development section; and recapitulation. The *Andante* is a melodious episode for oboes and strings suspended upon a sonatina structure. The finale is a vivacious rondo.

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
Overture to *Idomeneo, rè di Creta*
("Idomeneo, King of Crete"), K. 366

Composed in 1780. Premiered on January 29, 1781 in Munich.

By 1780, Mozart's duties in the musical establishment of the Salzburg Archbishop had become almost unbearably irksome to him. Among his greatest frustrations was that the small provincial city allowed him no opportunity to indulge his greatest creative desire—to write operas. Much of the fame he gained as a teenager had come from the successes his stage works enjoyed in Milan and Vienna, but he had not composed an opera since *Il rè pastore* ("The Shepherd King") in 1775, and he was almost painfully eager to prove his growing artistic mastery to the world. It was therefore with great excitement that he received a commission in the summer of 1780 for a grand *opera seria* from the Elector Carl Theodor to be performed during the Munich carnival season early the next year. Mozart saw the commission as a chance to establish his fame and international standing, and perhaps gain a much-desired position at the Bavarian court or some other musical capital of Europe.

For his subject, Mozart chose the old French libretto *Idomeneo* by Danchet that André Campra had set in 1712, and enlisted the Salzburg Court Chaplain, Giambattista Varesco, to adapt the story into Italian. Some of the music was completed by the time Mozart left for Munich on November 5, 1780, but much was left undone to be specifically tailored during rehearsals to the talents of the premiere's singers. Working in a state of frenzied inspiration, he lavished his greatest care on the score, trying to infuse the old-fashioned genre of *opera seria* with new life. So well did he succeed that he was able to write

to his father, Leopold, following the first rehearsal, “I cannot tell you how delighted and surprised the musicians all were.” The Bavarian Elector was similarly affected when he heard the first performance. In a pretentious *mélange* of French and his mother tongue, he allowed, “I was quite *surprise*; music has never had such an effect on me before. This music is *magnifique*.” *Idomeneo* was performed three times during the Munich carnival season but then fell into neglect because of the declining interest in *opera seria*, and was presented only once again during Mozart’s lifetime, at a concert performance in Vienna directed by the composer in 1786. Though Busoni and Richard Strauss attempted to revise and revive *Idomeneo* early in the 20th century, it has only been in recent years that what Wolfgang Hildesheimer called an “unsurpassed masterpiece of the genre [of *opera seria*]” has been conceded a place among Mozart’s greatest stage works.

In the story, the fleet of King Idomeneo of Crete is ravaged by a storm, and he vows to sacrifice the first person he meets on shore if the gods allow him to reach safety. That person turns out to be his son, Idamante. Idomeneo tries to send Idamante away in

an attempt to save him, but a fearsome tempest erupts and a terrible sea monster rises from the depths as the ship is about to embark. Idomeneo recognizes these signs as punishment by the gods, and confides everything to the High Priest. Idamante declares himself ready to be sacrificed, but his beloved, Ilia, offers herself in his place. The High Priest announces that Idomeneo will be forgiven everything if he abdicates in favor of Idamante and if Ilia marries the new king. This being done, the opera comes to a happy conclusion.

One of the outstanding elements of *Idomeneo* is Mozart’s superb handling of the orchestra. For the premiere, he had at his disposal the legendary Mannheim Court Orchestra, supplemented by some of Munich’s finest players, and he made the most of the opportunity by supplying the opera with some of his finest instrumental writing. The richly textured sonata-form Overture, as befits this story of gods and heroes, is grand in conception and serious in expression, and is a worthy counterpart to the wondrous operatic creations Mozart was to create in Vienna during the ensuing decade.

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda



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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Overture to *Le nozze di Figaro* (“The Marriage of Figaro”), K. 492

Composed in 1785–86. Premiered on May 1, 1786 in Vienna.

On April 12, 1782, Pietro Metastasio, dean of 18th-century Italian opera librettists, died in Vienna. The following year, the poet Lorenzo da Ponte, a Venetian-born Jew who converted to Catholicism as a young man and took priestly orders but lived a life profligate enough to be dubbed “a kind of minor Casanova” by Mozart’s biographer Eric Blom, arrived in the Imperial City to fill the void. He was so successful that he was named poet to the Imperial Theaters the following year by Emperor Joseph II, whose taste in opera ran more to the traditional Italian variety than to its more prosaic German counterpart.

Mozart, who claimed to his father to have searched through “hundreds of plays” to find a subject for a new opera, met da Ponte in 1783 and the writer agreed to furnish him with a new libretto. That promise bore no immediate fruit, but in 1785 Mozart approached da Ponte again with the idea that a recent satiric comedy of manners called *La Mariage de Figaro* by the French writer Beaumarchais might well make a fine *opera buffa*. The play in its original version was written around 1781 but was not given for some three years because of Louis XVI’s objections to the manner in which it attacked the aristocracy. (Napoleon described it as “the revolution already in action.”) Though Louis vowed, “*Cela est détestable, cela ne sera jamais joué,*” *La Mariage* was indeed staged in Paris in April 1784. It was a hit. Reportedly, some dozen German translations of the play appeared within a year, though the piece was banned in Austria for its anti-aristocratic stance. Mozart, however, thought the characterizations excellent, and he convinced da Ponte to join his plan to base an opera on it.

The pair set to work in the fall of 1785, not knowing if the result would be approved for production. Da Ponte continued the story in his *Memoirs*, written late in his life, after he had settled in the United States. (He died in New York in 1838.) “As fast as I wrote the words,” wrote da Ponte, “Mozart wrote the music, and it was all finished in six weeks. [The Overture, however, was completed only two days before the May 1, 1786 premiere.] The lucky star of Mozart willed an opportune moment and permitted me to carry the manuscript directly to the Emperor. ‘What’s this?’ said Joseph to me. ‘I have already forbidden the German company to give this play, *Figaro*.’ ‘I know,’ I replied, ‘but in turning it into an opera, I have cut

out whole scenes, shortened others, and been careful everywhere to omit anything that might shock the conventionalities and good taste. In a word, I have made a work worthy of the theater honored by His Majesty’s protection. As far as I can judge, it seems to me a masterpiece.’ ‘Very well,’ said the Emperor. ‘I trust your taste and prudence. Send the score to the copyists.’”

The premiere of *Figaro* was set for May 1, 1786 in Vienna’s Burgtheater. Opera was Mozart’s first love and his highest professional ambition, and he threw himself completely into the work’s preparations. Michael Kelly, the English tenor who sang the roles of Don Basilio and Don Curzio in the first performance, recalled that he would “never forget Mozart’s little animated countenance when lighted up with the glowing rays of genius; it is as impossible to describe as it would be to paint sunbeams.” The premiere went on as scheduled and it proved to be a fine success—the audience demanded the immediate encores of so many numbers that the performance lasted nearly twice as long as anticipated. “Never was anything more complete than the triumph of Mozart and his *Nozze di Figaro*,” reported Kelly. Intrigues against both Mozart and da Ponte, however, managed to divert the public’s attention to other operas, and *The Marriage of Figaro* was seen only eight times more during the year. It was not given in Vienna at all in 1787, though its stunning success in Prague led to the commissioning of *Don Giovanni* for that city. It was revived in Vienna in 1789 at the request of Emperor Joseph II (Mozart and da Ponte were commissioned to write *Così fan tutte* as a result of its success), by which time it had also been staged in Italy and Germany. Performances followed in Paris (1793), Amsterdam (1794), Madrid (1802), Budapest (1812), London (1812) and New York (1824), and *The Marriage of Figaro* became an integral part of the operatic repertory during the following years. In the biographical sketch of Mozart that the French novelist and music lover Stendhal published in 1815, he wrote of the essential quality that continues to distinguish *The Marriage of Figaro* as one of the supreme masterworks of musical theater: “Mozart, with his overwhelmingly sensitive nature, has transformed into real emotions the superficial inclinations that amuse Beaumarchais’ easy-going inhabitants of [Count Almaviva’s castle] Aguas Frescas.... All the characters have been filled with feeling and passion. Mozart’s opera is a sublime mixture of wit and melancholy that has no equal.”

The noted American critic Henry Edward Krehbiel (1854–1923) called the Overture to *The Marriage of*

Figaro “the merriest of opera overtures...putting the listener at once into a frolicsome mood.” It was the last part of the score Mozart wrote, and captures perfectly its aura of sparkling good spirits and fast action. Originally Mozart provided the Overture with a slow middle section based on a sentimental 6/8 tune for the solo oboe, but, feeling that this music detracted from the overall character of the piece, removed it before the premiere. The effervescent music that remained, in a compact sonatina form (sonata-allegro without development section), is one of the greatest and most apposite of all operatic curtain-raisers.

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Ave verum corpus, K. 618

Composed and premiered in 1791.

As the time for the delivery of the Mozarts' sixth child in their nine years of marriage drew near in the summer of 1791, Constanze was becoming increasingly uncomfortable in the city heat of Vienna. Late in May, Wolfgang took the coach to the nearby village of Baden, where he arranged a stay for Constanze through Anton Stoll, a local schoolteacher and the choir director of the parish church, who had often performed Mozart's sacred music for his congregations. With plans made and the pledge from Stoll that he would look after the young woman, Constanze left Vienna for Baden June 4. Wolfgang, busy in the city with preparations for *Die Zauberflöte*, visited her the following week, and again between June 15 and 23. On this second visit, Stoll asked him to write a new Eucharist hymn for his choir for the Feast of Corpus Christi on June 23. In gratitude for the kindnesses the director had extended to him and his wife, he responded with the luminous motet for chorus, strings and organ, *Ave verum corpus* (K. 618). Wolfgang returned to Baden on July 9 to take Constanze back to Vienna, where their last child, Franz Xaver, was born on July 26.

The radiant *Ave verum corpus* is among Mozart's best-known vocal works and is one of the most perfect musical miniatures ever created. Though modest in its length, technical demands, instrumental complement and texture, as befit the limitations of the little parish church for which it was written, this motet is illuminated by the rich and wondrous harmonic suavities, flawless compositional command and achingly beautiful purity that mark the music of Mozart's full maturity. Wrote John N. Burk, “The last works of Mozart, like those of Beethoven, sometimes give us the sense that the utmost in beauty can be the utmost

in melodic simplicity. Such beauty needs no adornment; it is a kind of expressive perfection arrived at by a refinement of sensitivity to the detail of the phrase.” In his classic study of the composer, Alfred Einstein concluded that the *Ave verum corpus*, like the best of Mozart's church music, does not impress by its grandeur and the lofty dignity of its expression, “but by its humanity, by its appeal to all devout and childlike hearts, by its directness.”

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Ave, verum corpus, natum de Maria Virgine;
Hail, true flesh, born of the Virgin Mary:

Vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro homine;
Who hath truly suffered, broken on the cross for man;

Cujus latus perforatum unda fluxit et sanguine.
from Whose pierced side flowed water and blood.

Esto nobis praegustatum in mortis examine.
Be for us a foretaste of the trial of death.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Exsultate, jubilate, K. 165

Composed in January 1773. Premiered on January 16, 1773 in Milan, with Venanzio Rauzzini as soloist.

On October 24, 1772, Mozart and Papa Leopold left Salzburg for Milan, at that time under Austrian domination, to oversee the production of Wolfgang's opera *Lucio Silla*, the Overture from which is being performed this evening (see page 45).

The outstanding vocalist at the premiere of *Lucio Silla* was the eminent Roman *castrato* Venanzio Rauzzini, whose singing of the role of Cecilio stirred Mozart's admiration. In appreciation, he wrote for Rauzzini the lovely motet *Exsultate, jubilate*. This delightful work, whose text is religious but not part of the regular liturgy, was first heard in the Theatine Church on January 16, 1773, six days before Mozart's 17th birthday.

The *Exsultate, jubilate* was written as a brilliant showpiece tailored to Rauzzini's considerable vocal talents, which boasted florid *fioritura*, easy flexibility of range and limpid lyricism. The opening movement, *Exsultate, jubilate* (“Exult, rejoice”), with its instrumental introduction and interludes, its contrasting but balanced thematic groups, and its technical display, supports biographer Alfred Einstein's evaluation that this work is a “vocal concerto.” Following a recitative (*Fulget amica dies*, “The friendly day glows bright”), there comes a sweet song to the Virgin (*Tu virginum corona*, “Thou, O crown of virgins”) imbued with Mozart's incomparable

elegance of expression. The sparkling finale, based on the single word *Alleluja*, is one of the most delightful and familiar movements from Mozart's sacred pieces,

and it provides a luminous ending to this wonderful work of the 16-year-old Salzburg prodigy.

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda

TEXT & TRANSLATION

I. Allegro

Exsultate, jubilate, o vos animae beatae.
Dulcia cantica canendo, cantui vestro respondendo,
psallant aethera cum me.

Recitative

Fulget amica dies,
jam fugere et nubila et procellae;
exortus est justis inexpectata quies.
Undique obscura regnabat nox.
Surgite tandem laeti, qui timuistis adhuc,
et jucundi aurorae fortunatae.
Frondes dextera plena et lilia date.

II. Larghetto

Tu virginum corona, tu nobis pacem dona,
tu consolare affectus unde suspirat cor.

III. Allegro non troppo
Alleluja!

Exult, rejoice, O happy souls.
With sweet music, let the heavens resound,
making answer, with me, to your song.

The friendly day glows bright,
now clouds and storms have fled.
A sudden calm has arisen for the just.
Everywhere dark night held sway before.
But now, at last, rise up and rejoice,
ye who are not feared, and happy is the blessed dawn.
With full hand, make offerings of garlands and lilies.

Thou, O Crown of Virgins, grant us peace,
and assuage the passions that touch our hearts.

Alleluia!

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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
Mass in C Minor, K. 417a [427], *The Great*

Composed in 1782. Left unfinished, but first performed in Salzburg on October 26, 1783.

The origins of what many consider Mozart's greatest choral work remain as mysterious as the origins of his last three symphonies.

As he had left the service of the Archbishop of Salzburg the year before starting work on the C Minor Mass, he was no longer required to write church music. Why, then,

did he undertake the composition of such a large piece? It is known that the composer began writing it in 1782 while courting his future wife, and one of his letters suggests that Mozart composed the mass in reciprocation for Constanze's promise to marry him. The letter also implies that he may have written the music to inspire her recovery from an illness. In either case, it remains hard to understand why a massive liturgical work in an archaic and contrapuntally learned style would be appropriate for Constanze.

The biggest mystery is why the composer left the work unfinished. There is no evidence to suggest that it was ever complete, yet it probably was performed for the first time in Salzburg on October 26, 1783. For the premiere, were portions of earlier Mozart masses inserted in the places where the C Minor Mass provided no music? The composer completed 12 sections of the text, but he apparently never set the final two portions of the Credo or any of the Agnus Dei. Furthermore, the completed parts of the Credo lack various instrumental and vocal parts.

Mozart certainly had sufficient time to complete the work. He and Constanze went to Salzburg some three months before the scheduled premiere, in order to try to win for the composer's wife the affections of his father and sister. Constanze probably sang the mass's soprano II solos at the premiere, in order to impress her new family. Since neither father nor sister warmed up to Wolfgang's bride, the composer may have felt it was futile to finish the piece in time for Constanze to perform in it. Another possibility is that the work's contrapuntal style, which Mozart had learned from recent acquaintance with choral music of Bach and Handel, never became second nature to the young composer and thus he abandoned his attempt at composing a large-scale work in the tradition of the baroque masters. At this time in his life Mozart also began but did not complete several fugues and other works inspired by baroque counterpoint.

The origins of what many consider Mozart's greatest choral work remain as mysterious as the origins of his last three symphonies.

The day after the performance, the young Mozarts left Salzburg, never to return. The composer took the mass with him, but he never again worked on it. Several years after his death, Constanze sold most of the mass, along with nearly 300 other works, to publisher Johann Anton André. When André found another copy of much of the work in a German monastery, he

was able to piece together what is probably all that Mozart ever composed of the mass. After publishing the work, André apparently lost some of the manuscript pages. Here the story becomes more

confusing. An 1882 publication by musicologist Philipp Spitta relied on a combination of the remaining manuscript pages and André's edition, and in 1901 a version was issued that included portions of other Mozart masses and a mass movement thought to be by Mozart but actually composed by Johann Ernst Eberlin. This version was circulated and performed widely but is now discredited.

In 1956 musicologist H.C. Robbins Landon prepared a new version without the benefit of seeing Mozart's manuscript, which was owned by the Prussian State Library and thought to have perished from its supposedly safe location at the Benedictine Monastery of Grüssau during World War II. Landon had to rely on the old André and Spitta editions, but was able to fill in some missing instrumental and vocal parts. However, he made no effort to provide music for totally nonexistent passages. The Landon publication, despite its having been made without consulting the manuscript, is actually closer to the original.

We know this because the Grüssau manuscripts were in fact not destroyed. At the end of the war, various "safe" sites where the Prussian State Library's holdings were hidden fell into the possession of both West and East Germany. The Grüssau site remained under East German control, and the State Library refused to enumerate the holding it had regained. Thus, scholars in the West had no idea which of the remaining manuscripts were in the East and which had been truly lost.

In 1961, the East German Library finally published some incomplete information about manuscripts in its possession. When the list was made available in the West in 1968, it contained some astonishing findings: manuscripts of great importance in many fields, including nearly 200 manuscripts by 22 of Germany's greatest composers. Mozart was represented by 98 items, fully a quarter of all his music known to have survived in manuscript, including the C Minor Mass

and the *Jupiter* and *Prague* symphonies. (These were not, of course, previously unknown works, but rather pieces that had come down to us in unreliable editions.)

At last scholars gained access to the collection, and in 1983 a facsimile of Mozart's manuscript was published. Not all of the score of the C Minor Mass was in the Grüssau collection, but those parts that did turn up showed what Mozart's intentions had been. Unfortunately, the newly rediscovered materials offered no new insights into why the composer never finished the mass. A new performing edition, based on the manuscript wherever possible, was issued in 1987; this version will be performed tonight.

Mozart's overriding influence while working on the C Minor Mass was Bach's B Minor Mass. Like Bach's work, the C Minor Mass divides each large section of the liturgy into several distinct movements. Also like the B Minor Mass, Mozart's work contains several fugues. The arias, on the other hand, are distinctly operatic, which has led some critics to accuse the work of stylistic inconsistency. Possibly Mozart left the work unfinished because he sensed an irreconcilable conflict between his natural homophonic language and the contrapuntal rigors he had borrowed from Bach.

—Jonathan D. Kramer

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy,
Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.
Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus. Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe.
Cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest.
And on Earth peace to men of good will.
We praise You. We bless You.
We worship You. We glorify You.
We give You thanks for Your great glory.
Lord God, heavenly king, God the Father almighty,
Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
You, Who take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
You, Who take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
You, Who sit at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy upon us.
For You alone are holy. You alone are the Lord.
You alone, O Jesus Christ, are most high.
With the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Credo

Credo in unum Deum,
Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem coeli et terrae,
visibilem omnium, et invisibilem.
Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
Filium Dei unigenitum.
Et ex Patre natum ante omni saecula.
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero.
Genitum, non factum,
consubstantialem patri:
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines,
et propter nostram salutem
descendit de caelis.
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine: Et homo factus est.

I believe in one God,
The Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, and
of all things visible and invisible.
And I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God.
Born of the Father before all ages.
God of God, Light of Light,
true God of true God.
Begotten, not made,
of one substance with the Father:
By whom all things were made.
Who for us men and
for our salvation
came down from heaven.
And He became flesh by the Holy Spirit
of the Virgin Mary: And was made man.

Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are filled with Your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.



James Conlon,
Music Director

Robert Porco,
Director of Choruses

Cincinnati Symphony
Orchestra

JAMES CONLON conductor
GREGORY KUNDE *Otello*
TAMARA WILSON *Desdemona*
EGILS SILINS *Iago*
BEN BLISS *Cassio*
SARA MURPHY *Emilia*
RODRICK DIXON *Roderigo*
JOHN CHEEK *Lodovico, Montano and The Herald*
CINCINNATI CHILDREN'S CHOIR *Robyn Lana, artistic director*
MAY FESTIVAL CHORUS *Robert Porco, director*
The May Festival Chorus is endowed by the Betsy & Alex C. Young Chair

VERDI
(1813–1901)

Otello, Opera in Four Acts
Act I: Open square on the shore of the island
Act II: A pavilion of the palace

INTERMISSION

Act III: The great hall of the palace
Act IV: *Desdemona's* bedchamber

Tonight's concert is sponsored by Harry and Linda Fath.

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The appearance of the Cincinnati Children's Choir in this evening's performance is made possible in part by a generous gift from Kathy and Craig Rambo.

The Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza is the official hotel of the May Festival.

Steinway Pianos, courtesy of Willis Music, is the official piano of the May Festival.

Tonight's concert will end at approximately 10:45 p.m.

This concert will be broadcast on WGUC-FM on October 9, 2016 at 8 p.m.

The use of photographic and recording devices at these concerts is prohibited.

PROGRAM NOTES

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GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813–1901)

Otello, Opera in Four Acts

Composed in 1884–87. Premiered on February 5, 1887 at La Scala, Milan, conducted by Franco Faccio.

Verdi intended to retire from the theater after premiering *Aida* in 1871. He was 58, had amassed a considerable fortune since composing his first opera,

Oberto, 33 years before, and felt that perhaps his traditional, set-piece concept of the genre was being supplanted by the spectacular grand operas of Paris and, especially, the through-composed, orchestrally opulent music dramas of Richard Wagner, whose *Lohengrin* introduced his music to Italy when it was produced in Bologna on November 1, 1871, just seven weeks before *Aida* was premiered in Cairo on Christmas Eve. In 1873–74, Verdi broke his retirement on his beloved farm at Sant'Agata, 50 miles southeast of Milan, to write the Requiem in memory of the revered

Italian poet and novelist Alessandro Manzoni, but then settled again into the life of a gentleman farmer in the Piacenza countryside.

While Verdi was satisfied with this situation, his publisher in Milan, Giulio Ricordi, was not, believing that the composer's creative genius had not nearly been expended (and that his profits would suffer with no new operas from his firm's most lucrative composer), so he devised a plan with Arrigo Boito, the gifted librettist, critic, poet, journalist and composer of the opera *Mefistofele* ("Mephistopheles"), to entice him to return again to the stage. Knowing of Verdi's life-long interest in the plays of Shakespeare (he had set *Macbeth* in 1847 and considered *King Lear* as a subject for 30 years), they settled on *Othello* and first floated the idea of writing an opera on the tragedy to Verdi in June 1879. Verdi had known Boito since 1862, when he supplied the text for the *Inno delle Nazioni* ("Hymn of the Nations") commissioned for the upcoming London Exhibition, but their relationship cooled soon thereafter when Boito published a satirical poem criticizing the stale traditions of Italian opera. Verdi remained aware of Boito's accomplishments, however, most notably the libretto for Ponchielli's successful *La Gioconda* in 1876, but he was not only reluctant to return to opera composition but also uncertain of working with the young poet, 29 years his junior. Boito had drafted a libretto for *Otello* by the end of 1879, however,

and Verdi, persistently urged by Ricordi, offered to consider the project. As a trial for both Boito's talents and their ability to work together, Verdi arranged for him to help revise *Simon Boccanegra* the following year. The new version's successful premiere at La Scala in March 1881 finally convinced Verdi to accept Ricordi's offer, though the opera's composition had to wait for his year-long task of reworking of *Don Carlo* in 1882–1883 and for the extensive demands for changes that Verdi made as Boito submitted drafts of the libretto for the new opera. Verdi set down the first notes of *Otello* early in 1884, worked on it in bursts for the next two and a half years, and continued to revise the score until shortly before the premiere at La Scala on February 5, 1887.

Word of Verdi's return to the theater sparked huge interest throughout the opera world, and *Otello*'s first performance did not disappoint the expectations. He was called to the stage 20 times after the final curtain, a huge crowd outside his Milan hotel shouted "Viva, Verdi! Viva, Verdi!" far into the night, and requests to perform the work poured in—by the end of 1887, it had been staged in Rome, Venice, Brescia, Parma, Turin and Mexico City (though from a pirated vocal score that the conductor, Paolo Villane, orchestrated himself); it was first produced in New York in April 1888, in London in July 1889, and in Paris in 1894 (somewhat belatedly there because the libretto had to be translated into French and a ballet interpolated



May Festival expresses special thanks to
LINDA & HARRY FATH
 for their generous support
 of the May 21 Verdi *Otello* concert.

into the tautly constructed plot). The triumph of *Otello* led to a second Verdi-Boito Shakespeare collaboration—an adaptation of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. *Falstaff*, premiered at La Scala in February 1893, crowned Verdi’s remarkable life’s work.

“His greatest opera?” asked Charles Osborne of *Otello* in his study of Verdi’s works. “Yes, I think so, though to debate the point would be meaningless at such a level of achievement.... What an incredibly fresh, youthfully inspired score for a man in his seventies to create—how Verdi sustains the melodic, harmonic and dramatic level of achievement from the first shattering chord to the final stillness, and what psychological acumen the musical characterization reveals. The opera’s combination of those Elizabethan qualities of tenderness, violence and sensuality never fails to astonish me. And Verdi’s musical language and style are really beyond praise: the melody as glorious as in his more youthful days, but now freed from the harmonic constrictions and able to range where it will, the numbers merging skillfully and subtly into one another.... While I am experiencing it in the theater, I am usually convinced that *Otello* is the finest of all operas.”

SYNOPSIS. The action takes place at the end of the 15th century in a seaport on the island of Cyprus, then ruled by Venice.

Act I: Night. The harbor adjacent to a castle

An anxious crowd of Cypriots waits in a violent storm for the return of the ship of Otello, the Moorish general of the Venetian army and governor of the island, from a battle with the Turkish enemy. Montano (the former Cypriot governor), Cassio (Otello’s captain) and Iago (Otello’s ensign) comment on the vessel’s difficult progress. When the ship arrives safely in the harbor, Otello disembarks and proclaims his victory over the Turkish fleet. As the tempest subsides, he enters the castle to the acclamations of the crowd. Iago, plotting revenge against Otello because he believes Cassio was promoted to captain instead of himself, approaches Rodrigo (a Venetian gentleman), who secretly loves Desdemona, Otello’s wife. Iago tells Rodrigo to be patient because Desdemona will soon tire of the Moor’s love and he will be able to enjoy her favors. The townsfolk light a bonfire and break out the wine to celebrate Otello’s safe return. Iago presses Cassio to join in the drinking and offers a toast to Otello and Desdemona. Cassio extols the beauty and virtues of the Moor’s wife as he becomes increasingly drunk. The crowd laughs at him, but Iago convinces Roderigo that Cassio is a rival for Desdemona’s affection and urges him to pick a fight with the inebriated captain. Roderigo draws his sword on Cassio. Montano tries to intervene and is wounded. The uproar that ensues summons Otello from the castle, followed soon by Desdemona. He quells the riot, sees Cassio drunk and



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Montano wounded, and strips the captain of his rank. Iago exults as Otello orders the crowd to disperse. Left alone, Otello and Desdemona sing a rapturous love duet in which they recall their original attraction to each other—“She loved me for the dangers I had passed, and I loved her that she did pity them.” Otello leads his wife back into the castle as stars and moon appear from behind the clouds.

Act II: A chamber in the castle looking out on a garden

Iago suggests to Cassio that he ask Desdemona to intercede with her husband to restore his position. When Cassio goes into the garden to wait for her, Iago reveals his innate wickedness in a demonic soliloquy that perverts the traditional Christian profession of faith: *Credo in un Dio crudel*—“I believe in a cruel God.” Desdemona can be seen entering the garden with Emilia (her maid and Iago’s wife), and Cassio engages her in ardent conversation. When Otello comes into the chamber and observes Cassio leaving, Iago asks the Moor if Desdemona had known Cassio earlier in her life. Otello responds that he entrusted Cassio with gifts and messages to deliver to her on his behalf early in their relationship. Iago says that there is yet no proof that Desdemona has been unfaithful and warns Otello to beware of jealousy. Townspeople arrive to serenade Desdemona in the garden. After they leave, she enters the chamber and pleads Cassio’s case with Otello. Otello grows agitated and claims that his brow has become feverish. Desdemona tries to comfort him by binding his head with her flower-embroidered handkerchief, the first token the Moor had given her of his love, but he grabs it from her and throws it to the floor. Emilia picks it up. Desdemona asks if she has done something to offend Otello and begs his pardon if so, but he only muses gloomily. Iago demands that Emilia, wary and suspicious of her husband’s motives, give him Desdemona’s handkerchief and to be silent about it. She does and leaves with Desdemona. Otello is wracked by jealousy over the infidelity Iago has implied and orders him to furnish proof. Iago replies that one night he heard Cassio talking in his sleep about making love to Desdemona, and adds that he saw him just the day before holding her handkerchief. Otello becomes enraged and joins Iago in an oath to the “god of vengeance” as the curtain falls.

Act III: The great hall of the castle

Otello and Iago are conversing when a herald enters to announce the arrival of ambassadors from Venice. After the herald leaves, Iago confides a plan to have Cassio reveal his feelings while Otello eavesdrops. Iago departs as Desdemona enters and warmly greets her husband. Otello complains that his head hurts again and asks for her handkerchief, but when she produces a different one he inquires about the one he gave her. She says it is in her rooms and that

his request is just a distraction to avoid discussing Cassio. When Otello angrily accuses Desdemona of infidelity she proclaims her innocence, but he drives her from the hall. Otello, left alone, sings of his shame and grief. Iago returns and tells Otello to conceal himself behind a pillar when Cassio arrives to hear their conversation. Iago coaxes Cassio to speak about his mistress, Bianca, but Otello cannot hear clearly and he mistakenly thinks they are talking about Desdemona. Cassio takes from his pocket an elaborately embroidered handkerchief that he found in his room, though he has no idea how it got there—since Iago has secretly planted it. Iago draws attention to the handkerchief so that Otello can recognize it as his gift to Desdemona. Trumpets sound outside to signal the arrival of the Venetian ambassadors. Cassio departs and Otello, now convinced of Desdemona’s guilt, emerges from his concealment to vow murderous revenge against her. Lodovico, the ambassador, enters with Roderigo and the rest of his entourage, and Iago goes to summon Desdemona and Emilia; Lodovico greets them when they return. Lodovico hands Otello a parchment recalling him to Venice and appointing Cassio governor of Cyprus, but that news is overshadowed by the Moor’s cruel treatment of his wife. All express horror at Otello’s behavior while Desdemona, in complete innocence and incomprehension, despairs of her plight. Iago urges Otello to carry out his murderous plan before he has to leave for Venice in the morning. Otello furiously orders everyone out of the hall and then falls senseless to the floor. Iago triumphantly plants his foot on his commander’s chest.

Act IV: Desdemona’s bedroom

Emilia is helping Desdemona prepare for bed. Desdemona comments that Otello seemed calmer and bade her wait for him in her room, but she is still troubled by ominous thoughts and sings the sorrowful “Willow Song” that she learned as a child, about a young girl who died of a broken heart. Emilia embraces her mistress and leaves. Desdemona kneels before an image of the Madonna to recite the *Ave Maria*. She rises as Otello enters. He asks if she has said her prayers and is prepared before heaven to die. She again professes her innocence and pleads for her life, but her entreaties are in vain and he strangles her. When Emilia rushes in with the news that Cassio has murdered Roderigo, she sees her mistress’ lifeless form on the bed. Otello confesses he has killed her. Emilia raises an alarm and Lodovico, Cassio, Montano and Iago enter. Emilia, now aware of the use her husband made of Desdemona’s handkerchief, exposes his ghastly plan. Iago flees. Otello is inconsolable when he comprehends the fatal result of his jealousy. He stabs himself and expires beside Desdemona as the music of their Act I love duet sounds in the orchestra.

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda

THIRD EVENING CONCERT | SUN MAY 22, 8 pm
Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption



James Conlon,
Music Director

Robert Porco,
Director of Choruses

Members of the
Cincinnati Symphony
Orchestra

*There will be no
intermission during
this evening's concert.*

JAMES CONLON conductor
RODRICK DIXON tenor
MAY FESTIVAL YOUTH CHORUS James Bagwell, director
MAY FESTIVAL CHAMBER CHOIR Robert Porco, director
The May Festival Chorus is endowed by the Betsy & Alex C. Young Chair

MOZART *Regina Coeli* in C Major, K. 276 [K. 321b]
(1756–1791) *Soloists: Lauren Peter, Amy Perry,
Matthew Swanson, Armando Linares*

JULIA ADOLPHE *Sea Dream Elegies* WORLD PREMIERE
(b. 1988) *Between Calm and Thunder
A Thousand Splintered Shards
For Whom Does Your Heart Despair?
The Dance of Moon and Sea*

ALVIN SINGLETON *Prayer* WORLD PREMIERE
(b. 1940)

MOZART *Ave verum corpus*, K. 618

*Tonight's concert is sponsored by Bartlett & Co. and Christopher and Beth Canarie.
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The appearance of Maestro Conlon in this evening's performance is made possible in part
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The Pre-Concert Organ Prelude performance is made possible by a generous gift from
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The Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza is the official hotel of the May Festival.
Steinway Pianos, courtesy of Willis Music, is the official piano of the May Festival.
Tonight's concert will end at approximately 9 p.m.
The use of photographic and recording devices at these concerts is prohibited.*

*Sea Dream Elegies and Prayer were commissioned in honor of Music Director James Conlon and
generously supported by the following Board Chairs of the May Festival. Festival years are in parentheses.*

Adolphe Commission

Melanie Chavez, (Chair-Elect 2018, 2019)
Nancy Heffner Donovan (1994, 1995)
Kelley Downing (2012, 2013)
J. Mark Holcomb (2016, 2017)
Glenn Jeffers (2000, 2001)

Susan S. Laffoon (Stanley) (1980)

Sherie Marek (2006, 2007)
Carole Rigaud (2002, 2003)
J. Shane Starkey (2014, 2015)
Timothy E. Stautberg (2008, 2009)

Singleton Commission

Melanie Chavez (Chair-Elect 2018, 2019)
Nancy Heffner Donovan (1994, 1995)
J. Mark Holcomb (2016, 2017)
Sherie Marek (2006, 2007)
Carole Rigaud (2002, 2003)
Timothy E. Stautberg (2008, 2009)

PROGRAM NOTES

(all notes for this concert by Dr. Richard E. Rodda)
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MOZART

(1756–1791)

Regina Coeli in C Major, K. 276 [K. 321b]

Composed in 1779 or 1780.

On September 27, 1778, Mozart left Paris, where he had failed to obtain the permanent position he so

much desired, to return, humiliated, to his “slavery,” as he injudiciously called it, in provincial Salzburg. His father, Leopold, drew up a petition for his son to be reinstated as a musician in the service of the Archbishop, which Wolfgang signed when he returned home in January 1779:

I most submissively beg that I may be graciously assigned the post of Court Organist in your Exalted Service; to which end, as for all other high favors and graces, I subscribe myself in the most profound submission, *Wolfgang Amadé Mozart*.

The archiepiscopal reply came six weeks later:

Whereas We by these presents have graciously admitted and accepted the supplicant as Our Court Organist, he shall carry out his appointed duties with diligent assiduity and irreproachability, and shall as far as possible serve the Court and the Church with new compositions made by him.

Mozart settled into a bored routine of accompanying church services, little inspired even by composition. The two final years in Salzburg are among the leanest that he experienced creatively, though even they yielded up three symphonies (Nos. 32, 33 and 34), two sonatas for organ and strings (K. 328 and 336) and the wonderful Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola. The most significant sacred work he produced at the time was the Mass in C Major, “Coronation,” (K. 317), to which the *Regina Coeli*, K. 276 (given the later number 321b in Alfred Einstein’s revisions of Köchel’s catalog) may have been conceived as a musical pendant. Mozart had twice earlier set the words of this Marian antiphon: C Major (K. 108, May 1771) and B-flat Major (K. 127, May 1772). Each of the four Marian antiphons—*Alma Redemptoris Mater*, *Ave Regina Caelorum*, *Regina Coeli* and *Salve Regina*—is specific to one of the four seasons of the church year, with *Regina Coeli*’s verses of rejoicing and resurrection making it appropriate for the festive post-Easter time from Holy Saturday to Pentecost (or

Whitsuntide). Mozart’s brilliant setting for soloists, chorus, organ and orchestra, with its joyous shouts of “Alleluia,” perfectly captures the jubilant spirit of the words. “It has the same blend of sacred and secular as the greatest creations of the architect Fischer von Erlach,” wrote Alfred Einstein in comparing Mozart to the builder of Vienna’s magnificent Karlskirche and Schönbrunn Palace. “This music would burst asunder the little holy shrine churches of the Rococo; it has grown too much in scope and breadth.”

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Regina Coeli, laetare, Alleluia.
Bright Queen of heaven! rejoice. Alleluia.

Quia quem meruisti portare, Alleluia,
For He, whom you deserved to bear, Alleluia,

Resurrexit sicut dixit. Alleluia.
Is, as He prophesied, arisen. Alleluia.

Ora pro nobis Deum. Alleluia.
Pray for us. Alleluia.

JULIA ADOLPHE (b. 1988)

Poems by Nahal Navidar (b. 1983)

Sea Dream Elegies

Composed in 2015–16 on commission from the Cincinnati May Festival. The work is receiving its world premiere this evening by the Cincinnati May Festival Chamber Choir, conducted by James Conlon.

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Among the greatest distinctions for a composer is the performance of a major work by one of the world's leading orchestras. Julia Adolphe registered that honor at age 25, when her *Dark Sand, Sifting Light* was one of three pieces by young composers chosen for the New York Philharmonic's 2014 "NY Phil Biennial." In addition to glowing reviews of the work, Adolphe also took from that experience a 2016 Lincoln Center Emerging Artists Award and a commission for a concerto for the Philharmonic's Principal Violist, Cynthia Phelps, which she will premiere at a subscription concert in November 2016 with the orchestra's Music Director-Designate Jaap van Zweden. The New York performances are a homecoming for Adolphe, who was born there in 1988. She received her baccalaureate from Cornell and took her master's degree at the Thornton School of Music at USC, where she is currently pursuing a doctorate; her teachers include Stephen Hartke, Steven Stucky and Donald Crockett. Julia Adolphe is also an active writer, teacher and producer: in 2014,

the website *NewMusicBox* published her articles on teaching music in an all-male maximum security prison; in 2013, she was co-producer of *The Prodigal Son*, conducted by James Conlon, for the LA Opera Britten Centennial; and she also served as the Primary Research Assistant for Conlon's Orel Foundation, which is dedicated to reviving music suppressed during the Third Reich. In addition to her orchestral compositions, Adolphe has written choral music, chamber works, songs and a one-act opera titled *Sylvia*, which was developed in 2012 at the Lost Studio Theatre in Los Angeles, excerpted for performance at the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust as part of the Yom HaShoah Commemoration, and heard complete at New York City's Bargemusic in March 2013; she is currently collaborating with poet and librettist Nahal Navidar on *So Donia Speaks*, a chamber opera set in present-day Iran that is in development at Boston Court in Los Angeles and National Sawdust's Ferus Festival in New York. In addition to her Lincoln Center Award, Julia Adolphe has received the Charles

Q&A WITH JULIA ADOLPHE & NAHAL NAVIDAR



Julia Adolphe, Photo: Merrin Chafflor



Nahal Navidar, Photo: Kevin Vasquez

Q: Tell us about your relationship with James Conlon and how he came to ask you to write a work for the May Festival.

Julia Adolphe: I began working for James Conlon and LA Opera as a student intern in 2012 during my doctoral degree at USC Thornton School of Music.... During the time that I worked for James, he was always extremely supportive of my artistic aspirations and even listened to my compositions. When I applied to be his student intern, I always hoped and dreamed that I would one day receive a commission from Maestro Conlon, but I never expected it would

be only four short years later!

Q: Where did you find inspiration during the composition process?

JA: My inspiration comes from Nahal Navidar's exquisite words. They are visceral and inherently musical. In my experience, she is the only writer whose words jump from the page and demand that I set them to music. When I read her poetry, I am immediately filled with ideas. I try to capture her evocative imagery with the music as well as listen to

the natural rhythm of her language. I also turn inward when I write, striving to express my own emotional reality and imagination and give this world to the audience.

Q: What inspired the poetry you wrote for *Sea Dream Elegies*?

Nahal Navidar: In the early stages of writing the poems, Julia and I had many conversations about spirituality and the journey one undergoes when experiencing loss or death. The relationship between spirituality and loss immediately stirred up images from the Pacific Ocean and Micronesian Island of Saipan where I resided for several years. In writing, images of nature's shifting unpredictability can have a potent impact on the reader. This is particularly true of the ocean, which is constantly in motion and can evoke a variety of moods depending on the viewer's relationship with its state. With the images of the Pacific Ocean palpable in my mind and the journey of loss present in my heart, I discovered a visceral way to convey the journey of loss and transition in a metaphorical way.

Q: How did you approach writing poetry that will be used in music for chorus?

NN: Coming from a playwriting background, I approach every text from a character's perspective. My goal is that each poem can be self-contained with its own individual narrative, but also attribute to the larger emotional trajectory of the piece as a whole....

Please visit mayfestival.com/Adolphe to read the full interview.

Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Theodore Front Prize from the International Alliance for Women in Music, Jimmy McHugh Composition Prize, John James Blackmore Prize, John S. Knight Prize, and grants from New Music USA, American Composers Forum and League of American Orchestras.

Playwright, poet and librettist Nahal Navidar was born in Tehran, Iran in 1983, raised in upstate New York, and completed her bachelor's degree in English and theater at the University of Albany in 2005. Navidar met composer Julia Adolphe at USC when she was working on her Master of Fine Arts in Dramatic Writing degree there; their collaborations include *Sea Dream Elegies* and the chamber opera *So Donia Speaks*. Navidar's plays have been performed and developed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., University of Albany, and theaters from Los Angeles and San Francisco to New York and Valdez, Alaska. Her full-length play *Pairi Daiza* was featured in Ensemble Studio Theatre LA's Diversity Showcase, read at the 2015 Williamstown Theatre Festival, and was a finalist for the 2015 Bay Area Playwright's Festival in San Francisco. Her upcoming projects include a full-length play about Middle Eastern identity in a post-9/11 world, which will be developed in July 2016 at Silk Road Rising in Chicago. Nahal Navidar, a member of the Dramatists Guild of America, said that her work, with her multi-cultural background, is "motivated by the exploration of social issues while employing magical elements to awaken the expanse of human emotion." Her plays investigate issues of cultural identity and often feature characters who feel misplaced and yearn for a proverbial home. In 2005, while teaching speech and drama in the Micronesian Islands, she founded the Fabulous Invalid Theatre Company on Saipan to promote the diverse voices of the Marianas.

Julia Adolphe and Nahal Navidar collaborated closely on *Sea Dream Elegies*, and have kindly shared their thoughts on the work.

Ms. Navidar:

Sea Dream Elegies utilizes nautical imagery to represent the journey from love and comfort, pain and loss, to peace and acceptance. Each movement shifts between the varied mercurial temperaments of the sea to evoke the emotional state of the protagonist. Within the ocean's ability to captivate, entice, torment, overwhelm, and finally, to soothe, each movement offers an evolving perspective from the protagonist. In the action of gathering the smooth sea glass—once a whole bottle filled with dreams, once tiny bits of painful shards—the emotional arch of the piece is realized as dreams are reborn in an unexpected form offering strength and resilience.

Ms. Adolphe:

The music paints the changing landscape of Navidar's sea dreams. The bright sound of the oboe captures the

sunlight shimmering on the water's surface while the cello evokes the depths and darkness of the turbulent ocean. The vocal writing similarly reflects the duality of nature, capable of great creation and destruction. The chorus shifts from the calm, tonal stability of the first movement [Between Calm and Thunder] to agitated clusters and dissonances in the second movement [A Thousand Splintered Shards]. The third movement [For Whom Does Your Heart Despair?] features a solo voice, perhaps an angel or voice from beyond, with music evocative of religious chant. In the final movement [*The Dance of Moon and Sea*], the chorus sings a hymn-like melody while the oboe and cello trace the paling colors of the evening sky.

TEXT

I. Between Calm and Thunder

The space between calm and thunder
Is of no concern
As ocean waves swell and sweep.

We watch the glint and luster
Of dancing sunshine
On the placid sea.
The surging wave swallows our glass jar
Filled with hopeful dreams.

The salty breeze whispers a cosmic hymn:
Hush, hush, hush,
And your eyes deliver a universe of love
As the ocean wave recedes.

II. A Thousand Splintered Shards

Palm leaves quake
In the howling wake
Of the mournful wind.

Frightened sand unsettles in search of comfort
beneath our feet.
A noxious wave engulfs us out to sea.
Into the raging rush you ease
A shadow as you drift away from me.

Withered and wilted I lie
Among a thousand splintered shards.
Close my eyes to the shivering light
As the shoreline whispers echoes
Of our abandoned dreams.

III. For Whom Does Your Heart Despair?

For whom does your heart despair
When I offer thee Creation?

Listen to the beating rain around you
As flowers grow and bloom
The storm will fade
As will your pain.

For whom does your heart despair?
Let My love in.
Give thy heart peace
Peace through the storm.

I will give thee love and peace.

IV. The Dance of Moon and Sea

The tender shore embraces
The beaming fire orb
Whose dancing light awakens
My tired, breathless soul.

Rays catch the deep-cast colors
Where sea-glass crowns the shore
As the sun descends into the sky
Delivering the moon.

The moonlight cools my skin
As I walk the speckled shore
Gathering polished sea-glass
Worn smooth through the turbulent storm.

The ocean whispers a lullaby
To the breezy sleeping palm.

A calm stillness lives between
The dance of moon and sea.
I hold the glass in hopeful prayer
Renaming all my dreams.

ALVIN SINGLETON (b. 1940)

Prayer

Composed in 2016 on commission from the Cincinnati May Festival. The work is receiving its world premiere this evening by the Cincinnati May Festival Chamber Choir, conducted by James Conlon.

Alvin Singleton, born in 1940 in Brooklyn, New York, received his undergraduate training in composition and music education at New York University (B.M., 1967) and later studied composition with Mel Powell and Yehudi Wyner at Yale (M.M.A., 1971); he continued his studies at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome with Goffredo Petrassi on

a 1971 Fulbright Fellowship. Singleton settled in Graz, Austria as a freelance composer in 1973 and had his works performed at several leading festivals while living in Europe during the following decade. Since returning to this country, he has served as Composer-in-Residence with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (1985–1988), Spelman College in Atlanta (1988–1991), Detroit Symphony Orchestra (1996–1997), Ritz Chamber Players of Jacksonville, Florida (2002–2003) and the cultural organization Eurynome Corporation of Tirana, Albania (2008); he has also been Visiting Professor of Composition at the Yale University School of Music. Among Singleton's distinctions are a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Guggenheim Fellowship, Kranichsteiner Musikpreis of the City of Darmstadt (Germany), Musikprotokoll Kompositionpreis of the Austrian Radio, Mayor's Fellowship in the Arts Award from the City of Atlanta, and commissions from the Serge Koussevitsky Music Foundation,

Q&A WITH ALVIN SINGLETON



Alvin Singleton, Photo: Martin Popescu

Q: Tell us about your relationship with James Conlon and how he came to ask you to write now two works for the May Festival.

A: He and I have known each other since the 60s. I used to work with his brother at the New York Public Library (the one on Fifth Avenue). His brother, Philip, and I worked

in the music division of that library. I met James through Philip. I also spent 13 years in Austria, and during part of my stay James was Music Director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic; he invited me to send a work ("A Yellow Rose Petal") to be performed. He's commissioned and toured other works of mine with various orchestras over the years. For this commission he just called me up and asked me if I would do it. Considering the size and space of the Basilica, which I had not seen, we worked together on the instrumentation for this piece. I had only seen a picture of it online and thought, "That's really beautiful; I have to find a way to fill it with my music." I feel like I've known James my whole life; I'm just honored he asked me to do this.

Q: What should audiences listen for in this piece? What made you decide to use spirituals?

A: I believe that someone should accumulate a lot of experience in life, and therefore you can work intuitively. I don't know what brought me to use the spiritual, but it just came out. The main text of the piece is a Christian prayer, which is universal. The spirituals are mostly done a cappella as one does in church or singing the national anthem all in unison or in octaves.

Q: Where did you find inspiration during the composition process?

A: The text itself, and what it really meant in a broad sense. It's a text that I found in a Unitarian book. It's like a modern "Kyrie." It begins with "save us, teach us, help us to love our enemies, not concerned with their sins but remembering our own."

Q: Did knowing this piece would receive its world premiere in this Basilica have an impact on your composition process?

A: The Covington Basilica didn't impact my process other than James and I going over the instrumentation and me doing some research about the Basilica. The organ kind of frightened me. All organs are different and I didn't want the organ to overpower anything. The instruments in this piece are used like individuals in a church service. There are no stars, not even the tenor solo. Throughout the piece, all the parts rarely come together—it's usually solos, duos and trios; there are only a few tutti sections.

Q: What are some of the rewards & challenges of writing choral music?

A: It's very inspiring because everyone sings. There are professional singers, but also the average person who just does it in the shower. When I'm writing choral music, I try never to write something I cannot sing myself. When I can do that, then I know a professional singer could do it.

Q: What's next on the horizon for you?

A: I've been working on an opera for a very long time that I will get back to, and then I have a lot of editing to do with other works.

American Composers Orchestra and many other noted orchestras, chamber ensembles and foundations. In 2014, Alvin Singleton was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Lorain, Ohio-born composer, educator, critic, conductor and author Carman Moore (b. 1936), who studied at Oberlin, Ohio State and Juilliard, co-founded the Society of Black Composers, taught at Yale, Queens College, Brooklyn College, Carnegie Mellon University and New York University, and written for *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*, *Saturday Review* and other leading publications, has long been associated with the music of Alvin Singleton. (He provided the text for Singleton's 2005 "choral ballet," *Truth*.) At Singleton's request, Moore prepared the following program note for *Prayer*, commissioned for the 2016 Cincinnati May Festival:

"In *Prayer*, Alvin Singleton takes the listener deep into the sense of the spiritual, both in its metaphysics and in the literal meaning of the African-American Slavery-period song form. Scored for tenor soloist, choir, solo trumpet, organ, harp and solo cello, the work's unusual instrumentation would seem to pose any composer a significant scoring challenge. What does one do with all the traditional expectations of these instruments? Singleton seems to accept it as a sonic opportunity. In solution, for example, he only occasionally writes passages wherein all play together.

Instead he tends to apply their colors in individual solo, duo or trio passages, creating a procession of unique worlds which talk to each other variously. The choir often sings *a cappella*.

"*Prayer* is one of the composer's most original and sophisticated works. The typical African-American church service seems to be a source for this piece with its interplay of sections and colors, yet the work in form and rhythmic choices is clearly 'classical' and never breaks out into easy imitations of, for example, gospel music.

"The work opens with the choir singing the spiritual 'My Lord, What a Mornin'" in octaves, sung flat-out *a cappella*, as might happen in church. The instrumental section following this opening feels very much like a thoughtful response by the congregation. Instruments seem to behave like individual churchgoers, colorfully dressed and answering various episodes with individual thoughts. As for any fears that the mighty organ might drown out the proceedings, Singleton puts that to rest by employing it almost like another choir or section of the choir. The trumpet soloist does not blast us into heaven, it tends to sing and, we find out later, is preparing us for the spiritual 'Where Shall I Be When the Firs' Trumpet Soun'?' Even the tenor soloist behaves much like just another (but still important) instrument.

"The composer has chosen to not only feature spirituals, but also to set a poetic text called *A Chris-*



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tian Prayer, whose main message, almost like some modern-day *Kyrie*, calls out ‘save us ... teach us ...’ and extols the importance of humility and the defeat of violence. Singleton has always been a composer who has simultaneously answered the call to carry out what he feels is his duty to his fellow humans while using the finest of his art to do so, and *Prayer* finds him at the top of his game.”

TEXT

My Lord, what a mornin’,
When the stars begin to fall.
O Lord, my Lord.

Save us from weak resignation to violence.
Teach us that restraint is the highest expression of power.

It’s me, it’s me, it’s music, O Lord,
Standin’ in the need of prayer.

Teach us that restraint is the highest expression of power,
That thoughtfulness and tenderness are the mark of the strong.

Save us ... Teach us ...

Help us to love our enemies,
Not by countenancing their sins,
But remembering our own.

O, my Lord, what a mornin’ ...

Help us ... Save us ... Teach us ...

Where shall I be when de firs’ trumpet soun’,
O, Brethren. O, Sistern.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART***Ave verum corpus*, K. 618**

Notes and text for the *Ave Verum Corpus* are on page 49 of this program book.

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The May Festival congratulates **MORIAH SLAUGHTER**, this year’s recipient of the John Hauck Foundation May Festival Youth Chorus Scholarship.

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DVOŘÁK Stabat Mater, Op. 58
(1803–1869)

Tonight's concert is sponsored by HORAN and Neyer Holdings Corporation.

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The appearance of Maestro Conlon in this evening's performance is made possible in part by a generous gift from Katherine and Tim Stautberg.

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The appearance of Anthony Dean Griffey in this evening's performance is made possible in part by a generous endowment gift from Dr. Tom Leshner.

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The Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza is the official hotel of the May Festival.

Steinway Pianos, courtesy of Willis Music, is the official piano of the May Festival.

Tonight's concert will end at approximately 9:45 p.m.

This concert will be broadcast on WGUC-FM on October 16, 2016 at 8 p.m.

The use of photographic and recording devices at these concerts is prohibited.

PROGRAM NOTES

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ANTONIN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904) Stabat Mater, Op. 58

Composed in 1876–77. Premiered on December 23, 1880 in Prague, conducted by Adolf Čech.

In his biography of Dvořák, John Clapham titled the chapter concerning 1876–1877, the time of the *Stabat Mater*, “A Genius Emerges.” Only three years before, Dvořák’s income from his compositions and as organist at St. Adalbert’s Church in Prague had been so meager that the city officials certified his poverty, thus making him eligible to submit his work for consideration to a committee in Vienna awarding grants to struggling artists. The members of the selection committee were a distinguished lot—Johann Herbeck, Director of the Court Opera; the renowned critic Eduard Hanslick; and that titan of Viennese music himself, Johannes Brahms. Their report noted that Dvořák possessed “genuine and

original gifts,” and that his music displayed “an undoubted talent, but in a way which as yet remains formless and unbridled.” They deemed his work worthy of encouragement, however, and, on their recommendation, the Minister of Culture, Karl Stremayer, awarded the young musician 400 gulden, the highest stipend bestowed under the program. It represented Dvořák’s first recognition outside his homeland and his initial contact with Brahms and Hanslick, both of whom proved to be powerful influences on his career through their example, artistic guidance and professional help. An excited burst of compositional activity followed during the months after Dvořák learned of his award, in February 1875: the G Major String Quintet, the Moravian Duets for Soprano and Tenor, the B-flat Piano Trio, the D Major Piano Quartet, the Fifth Symphony and the Serenade for Strings all appeared with inspired speed.

Dvořák’s rapidly accumulating good fortune of the mid-1870s was not unalloyed, however, since he suffered the death of a new-born daughter, Josefa, in December 1875, a distressing and painful experi-

ence for this deeply pious man who was devoted to family life. During the following weeks, he found solace in the liturgical words describing the pity of the Mother of Christ at the cross, the *Stabat Mater*, and on February 16, 1876, he began a musical setting of the text for soloists, chorus and orchestra to vent his grief. The *Stabat Mater*, Dvořák's first important sacred work, was largely sketched by May 7th, when he had to put it aside to return to more pressing projects, including the Moravian Duets (which he needed to help secure a renewal of his Viennese stipend), the Piano Concerto, the comic opera *The Cunning Peasant* and the Symphonic Variations. It was another tragedy in Dvořák's life—a double one, this time—that compelled him to again take up his *Stabat Mater*. The composer and his wife had lost their two other children within the space of just three weeks: Ruzena, their 11-month-old daughter, accidentally swallowed phosphorous and died on August 13, 1877, and three-year-old Otakar succumbed to smallpox on September 8th. Dvořák, now childless, worked feverishly on the score of the

It was another tragedy in Dvořák's life—a double one, this time—that compelled him to again take up his *Stabat Mater*. The composer and his wife had lost their two other children within the space of just three weeks...

Stabat Mater and, by November 13th, he had rounded out the sketches of 18 months before and completed the orchestration.

The *Stabat Mater* was one of the two principal vehicles—the Slavonic Dances, published by Fritz Simrock at Brahms's insistence in 1879, was the other—by which Dvořák established his international reputation. The work was successfully

premiered in Prague on December 23, 1880, under the direction of Adolf Čech, one of the composer's staunchest champions, and given its second performance in Brno on April 2, 1882, by Leoš Janáček, whom Dvořák had met in 1876 and regularly accompanied on walking tours of southern Bohemia during the summers thereafter. These performances, however, did little to prepare Dvořák for the unstinting acclaim that greeted the *Stabat Mater* in Britain following its London premiere by Joseph Barnby on March 10, 1883. So great was the demand to hear this new choral masterpiece that Dvořák himself was brought to England the following year to lead an orchestra of 150 and a chorus of 900 in its



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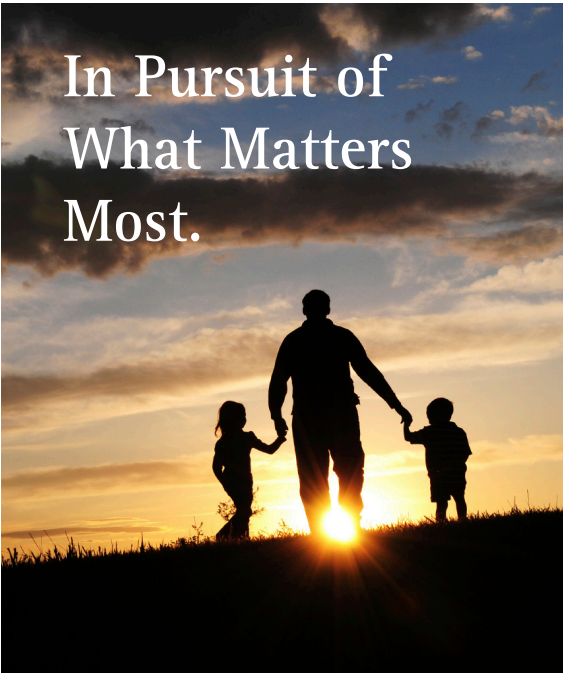
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performance at the Albert Hall on March 13, 1884. "I had the most tremendous success," he reported to Simrock. "Everywhere I appear, whether in the street or at home or even when I go to a shop to buy something, people crowd round me and ask for my autograph. There are pictures of me at all the booksellers, and people buy them just to have some memento." He returned in September to conduct the Stabat Mater as part of the celebrations marking the 800th anniversary of the founding of Worcester Cathedral, and thereafter became a frequent and welcome visitor to the country. The Stabat Mater's American premiere, conducted by Theodore Thomas at New York's Steinway Hall on April 3, 1884, laid the foundation for Dvořák's renown in this country, which culminated with his tenure as director of the National Conservatory in New York City from 1892 to 1895. When he was awarded a doctorate *honoris causa* by Cambridge University in June 1891, Dvořák conducted the Stabat Mater and the Symphony No. 8 in G Major at the investiture ceremony. "It was all frighteningly solemn," he recalled, "nothing but ceremonies and deans, all solemn-faced and apparently incapable of speaking anything but Latin. When it dawned upon me that they were talking about me, I felt as if

I were drowning in hot water, so ashamed was I that I could not understand them.... However, when all is said and done, that Stabat Mater of mine is more than just Latin."

The Stabat Mater is a 13th-century sequence (i.e., a sacred Latin poem with most of its lines paired in end-rhyme), usually attributed to the Franciscan monk Jacopone da Todi, which tells of the piteous anguish of the Mother of Christ as she stands before the Cross. Though regularly used for personal and communal devotions from the time of its creation, the Stabat Mater was not officially accepted into the Roman Catholic liturgy until 1727. In addition to the setting by Dvořák, the text has also been treated by Josquin, Palestrina, Lasso, Pergolesi, Vivaldi, Haydn, Rossini, Schubert, Verdi, Poulenc, Dohnányi, Thomson and others. Dvořák's setting, spread across 10 expansive movements, takes as its dominant mood the expression of the grief of the Mother for her lost Son, but tempers this melancholy emotion with passages of brighter countenance that suggest the optimism of the composer's personal religious beliefs. Indeed, such balancing of emotions provides for the grand organizational plan that underlies the Stabat Mater: four movements (Nos. 1-4) of solemn grieving music, four (Nos. 5-8) of consolation, and

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two (Nos. 9-10) that round out the cycle by returning to the mood and even the music of the opening. This tripartite structure, affirmed by tonality (major in the central movements, minor at the beginning and end) and by vocal scoring (the brighter voices of soprano and tenor soloists in Nos. 6 and 8, the darker bass and alto in Nos. 4 and 9), arises from the flow of sentiment across the text, which focuses on the event of the Crucifixion in its opening stanzas, and Judgment Day and the death of the individual at its end, while seeking consolation in shared sorrow (“let me

weep beside you”; “let me share His passion”) in its middle verses. Informing this sweeping architectonic design is Dvořák’s melodic abundance, harmonic richness and darkly beautiful scoring expressed with his characteristic sincerity of utterance. The *Stabat Mater* is one of the great monuments of 19th-century vocal music—a work grand in scale yet intimately poignant in effect, a composition that transcends sectarian bounds to touch on the universal truths that bind us all in a common humanity.

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda

TEXT & TRANSLATION

I. STABAT MATER DOLOROSA (Quartet and Chorus)

Stabat Mater dolorosa
juxta crucem lacrimosa
dum pendebat Filius.

The sorrowful Mother stood
weeping by the cross
where her Son was hanging.

Cujus animam gementem,
contristatam et dolentem,
pertransiuit gladius.

Her spirit cried out,
full of anguish and sorrow,
as if pierced by a sword.

O Quam tristis et afflicta
fuit illa benedicta
Mater Unigeniti!

O how sad and distressed
was that blessed Woman,
Mother of the only-begotten Son!

Quae moerebat et dolebat
Pia Mater, cum videbat
Nati poenas incliti.

How She grieved and suffered
this Holy Mother, as she saw
the agonies of her Son.

II. QUIS EST HOMO QUI NON FLERET (Quartet)

Quis est homo qui non fleret
Matrem Christi si videret
in tanto supplicio?

What man would not weep
to see the Mother of Christ
in such torment?

Quis non posset contristari
Christi Matrem contemplari
dolentem cum Filio?

Who would not be saddened
seeing Christ’s Mother
grieving for her Son?

Pro peccatis suae gentis
vidit Jesum in tormentis,
et flagellis subditum.

For the sins of the world,
She saw Jesus in torment
and beaten down with whips.

Vidit suum dulcem Natum
moriendo, desolatum,
dum emisit spiritum.

She saw her sweet Son
dying in desolation,
giving up His spirit.

III. EIA MATER, FONS AMORIS (Chorus)

Eia Mater, fons amoris,
me sentire vim doloris
fac, ut tecum lugeam.

Ah Mother, fountain of grief,
let me feel thy grief
so that I can mourn with you.

IV. FAC UT ARDEAT COR MEUM (Bass and Chorus)

Fac ut ardeat cor meum
in amando Christum Deum,
ut sibi complaceam.

Let my heart burn
with the love of Christ, my God,
so that I may please Him.

Sancta Mater, istud agas,
crucifixi fige plagas
cordi meo valide.

Holy Mother, grant this:
fix the wounds of Him who is crucified
firmly in my heart.

V. TUI NATI VULNERATI (Chorus)

Tui Nati vulnerati,
tam dignati pro me pati,
poenas mecum divide.

With thy injured Son,
who suffered so to save me,
let me share His pains.

VI. FAC ME VERE TECUM FLERE (Tenor and Chorus)

Fac me vere tecum flere,
crucifixo condolere,
donec ego vixero.

Let me weep beside you,
mourning the crucified One,
as long as I shall live.

Juxta crucem tecum stare,
te libenter sociare
in planctu desidero.

To stand by the cross with you,
and to willingly join you
in weeping is my desire.

VII. VIRGO, VIRGINUM PRAECLARA (Chorus)

Virgo, virginum praeclara,
mihi jam non sis amara,
fac me tecum plangere.

Virgin, most famed of all virgins,
do not be severe with me now,
let me weep with thee.

VIII. FAC UT PORTEM CHRISTI MORTEM (Soprano and Tenor)

Fac ut portem Christi mortem,
passionis fac consortem
et plagas recolorere.

Let me bear Christ's death,
let me share His passion
and remember His wounds.

Fac me plagis vulnerari,
cruce hac inebriari,
ob amorem Filii.

Let me be wounded with His blows,
inebriated with the Cross
and your Son's love.

IX. INFLAMMATUS ET ACCENSUS (Alto)

Inflammatum et accensum,
per te, Virgo, sim defensus
in die iudicii.

All my heart, inflamed and burning,
Savior, now to Thee is turning;
Shield me in the Judgment Day.

Fac me cruce custodiri,
morte Christi praemuniri,
confoveri gratia.

By Thy Cross may I be guarded,
meritless, yet be rewarded
through Thy grace, O living way.

X. QUANDO CORPUS MORIETUR (Quartet and Chorus)

Quando corpus morietur,
fac ut animae donetur
paradisi gloria.
Amen!

When my body dies
let my soul be granted
the glory of heaven.
Amen!

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ANTHONY DEAN GRIFFEY tenor
EGILS SILINS bass-baritone (Elijah)
KRISTINN SIGMUNDSSON bass-baritone
ABBY SHERRARD treble soloist, member of Cincinnati Children's Choir
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MENDELSSOHN *Elijah*, Op. 70
(1809–1847) Part I

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Part II

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The encore performance of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah is given in memory of Betty Wohlgemuth, with funds generously provided by The Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation.

The Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza is the official hotel of the May Festival.

Steinway Pianos, courtesy of Willis Music, is the official piano of the May Festival.

Tonight's concert will end at approximately 10:45 p.m.

This concert will be broadcast on WGUC-FM on October 23, 2016 at 8 p.m.

The use of photographic and recording devices at these concerts is prohibited.

PROGRAM NOTES

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FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847)

Elijah, Op. 70

Composed 1845–46. Premiered on August 26, 1846 in Birmingham, England.

Although Mendelssohn first thought of composing an Elijah oratorio as far back as 1836, and although he worked with several librettists over a period of several years, he did not actually begin to compose the work until he received a commission in June 1845.

The music was finished by July 1846. He subsequently revised the work. Mendelssohn introduced the revision in London on April 16, 1847.

It is ironic that the grandson of Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn should become a composer of such statements of Christian faith as the Te Deum, the oratorio *St. Paul*, the Magnificat, the *Reformation* Symphony, plus several hymns, motets, and cantatas. Moses Mendelssohn was considered by many to be the greatest Jew of his century. He was largely responsible for German Jews being able to break through religious and class barriers and to participate in

European intellectual life. He was a philosopher who became a close friend of dramatist Gotthold Lessing, who based his best-known play *Nathan the Wise* on the elder Mendelssohn. German intellectuals were at first astounded but then intrigued by the fact that Lessing became closely involved with a Jew and wrote a play about him around the themes of freedom and tolerance. As a result, Mendelssohn was accepted by the intelligentsia. His essay on immortality, written in German rather than Yiddish, was widely read; it made him a more respected philosopher than even Kant. He translated the Old Testament into German for the sake of Jews whose Hebrew was not fluent. He believed that his people were foremost Germans and only secondarily Jews, and he felt that all religious rites should be conducted in the language of the people rather than in Hebrew. The main focus of Moses Mendelssohn's life and work was to help his people leave their ghettos and join society as the equals of Protestants and Catholics. He did not live to see the actualization of this dream: he died in 1786, and the emancipation of Jews in Germany was officially decreed in 1812. But even then prejudice remained rampant.

One of the nine children of Moses Mendelssohn was Abraham, father of Felix. Although Abraham was only ten when Moses died, he accepted his father's Jewish liberalism. Thus at the age of sixteen he joined the Society of Friends, dedicated to combating orthodoxy. Many of the members went so far as to have themselves baptized. When the official emancipation of Jews in Germany failed to rid the country of anti-Semitism, Abraham saw no contradiction in protecting his children by having them baptized as Protestants. Abraham's wife, in fact, had been a strong advocate of conversion for years. He even followed the expediency of having himself baptized several years later, but he continued to think of himself as a Jew.

Although Felix was raised a Lutheran, he was proud of his Jewish heritage. Thus he felt no contradiction in basing the sequel to his successful oratorio *St. Paul* on an Old Testament theme. (Actually, he considered a work about Saint Peter before settling on Elijah.) The composer worked intermittently on ideas for an Elijah oratorio over a period of ten years. The impetus to complete the work came in the form of a commission from the Birmingham Music Festival. Mendelssohn sought the help of various librettists before settling on German theologian Julius Schubring. Schubring, who felt none of the composer's affinity for the Old Testament, wanted to insert Christian elements. Mendelssohn rejected as ludicrous Schubring's idea that Christ should appear to Elijah. The librettist also

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tried to insert passages from the New Testament (including a final chorus intended to proclaim the theological unity of the entire Bible), and he tried to convince the composer to use well-known Christian chorales. Even after the composer rejected these suggestions, Schubring tried to close the oratorio with a trio sung by Peter, John and James.

The differences between composer and librettist went deeper than their orientations toward Old vs. New Testament texts. Schubring saw the work as a pure and uplifting liturgical statement, while Mendelssohn wanted to create music that was at once religious and dramatic. By inserting New Testament passages, the librettist tried to portray Elijah as a forerunner of Christ. But for Mendelssohn, Elijah was the powerful prophet of Israel. Yet Schubring's view prevailed in part. Thus we find the work ending with biblical verses that have nothing to do with Elijah.

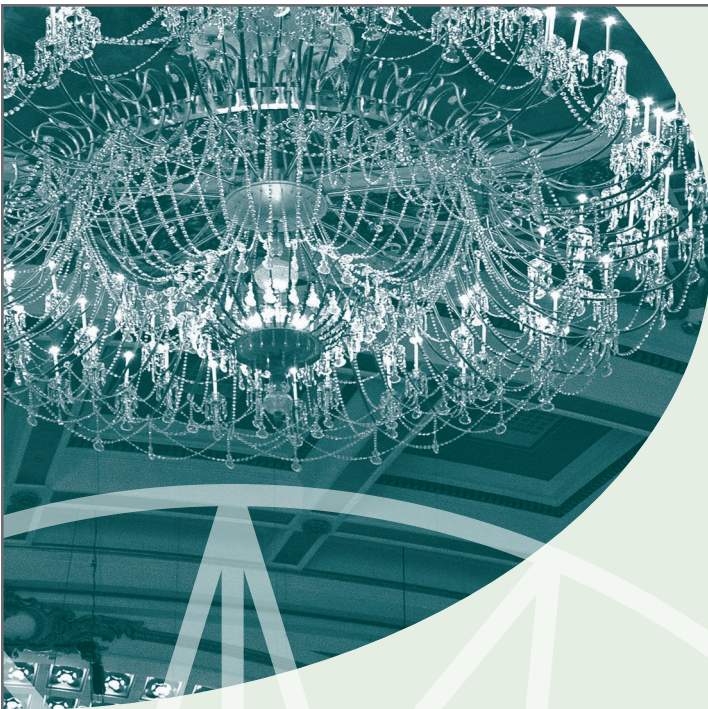
"With such a subject as Elijah...the dramatic element must predominate," Mendelssohn wrote to Schubring. "The people must be introduced speaking and acting as living persons.... All should come

across to us through the mouths and manner of the participants." Schubring followed this dramatic requirement almost too well. It is sometimes difficult to tell who is speaking or singing without consulting a written synopsis (such as that provided below), since many soloists assume more than one role. "I cannot stand

the half-epic character of most oratorio texts (where the authors help themselves out with generalized figures, as, for instance, 'an Israelite,' 'a maiden,' etc.," Mendelssohn wrote, "I consider this weak and will have none of it. But really, the eternal 'he said,' etc., is not the right thing either." Thus the composer rejected the typical oratorio's role of a narrator who tells the story.

Mendelssohn and Schubring agreed to fashion a dramatic work with only a few consistent characters and without narration. For the sense of drama they turned to a series of individual scenes from the Bible. They worked with Luther's translation of the Old Testament, yet the composer—true to the principles of his grandfather—felt that the work should be sung in the language of its listeners. A translation into

"With such a subject as Elijah...
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—Mendelssohn



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English was therefore necessary for the premiere.

The first performance of the original German version was given some months after the English premiere. Mendelssohn was in addition scheduled to conduct the oratorio with a chorus of one thousand on November 14, 1847 in Vienna.

His death ten days before that performance turned it into a grandiose memorial concert. The work subsequently became extremely popular, particularly in England and America, where it has been performed countless times by amateur as well as professional forces. It was chosen to inaugurate New York's Carnegie Hall. On May 6, 1891, a chorus of 600 sang it on the hall's second concert. To commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Carnegie Hall, Jesús López-Cobos, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the May Festival Chorus were invited to recreate this concert at Carnegie Hall.

The task of translating Schubring's German text, based on Luther's version of Scriptures, fell to William Bartholomew, a painter and chemist who had previously translated many other Mendelssohn

works into English. Bartholomew faced a formidable challenge. Since the Old Testament was known in

England through the King James Version of the Bible, he had to remain as faithful as possible to that text. Yet the English had nonetheless to fit the music Mendelssohn had composed for Lu-

ther's German words. The composer was particularly concerned that the words should be understood, and he frequently criticized Bartholomew's work when it did not follow the accentuation of the music.

The problem of translation is exemplified at the opening of the work, where Elijah declares God's curse of drought. This brief introduction is followed by the overture, which represents the ravages of the three-year famine on the people of Israel. The quiet horn motive that accompanies the main subject of the fugal overture was supposed to echo the final line of the introduction: "Ich sage es denn." When he composed the overture, Mendelssohn was not aware of the sanctity of the King James Version in England. The King James translation of the line — "but according to my word" — has consider-

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ably different rhythm from the original German. Yet the composer insisted on preserving the King James translation, in deference to English tastes, rather than alter it to fit the music. As a result, the introduction's sung line and the overture's horn motive have somewhat different rhythms when the work is performed in English.

The turbulent fugue depicts the tragedy of the curse. In the ensuing plaintive chorus (No. 1), the people beg again and again for God's help. The intensity is as great as in the fugue, with the counterpoint letting up only as the people ask in desperation, "Will then the Lord be no more God in Zion?" Two sopranos sing an elegiac melody, "Zion spreadeth her hands for aid," in alternation with the chorus's plea, "Lord, bow Thine ear to our prayer" (No. 2). After a recitative (No. 3) and aria (No. 4), sung by Elijah's friend Obadiah, the people bemoan God's jealous wrath and then, as the chorus shifts from minor to major, praise His forgiveness (No. 5).

Elijah goes to Cherith's brook, where he drinks the water and is fed by ravens (No. 6). He is protected by a double quartet of angels (No. 7). Once the brook dries up, one angel (alto recitative) tells Elijah to find a widow, who will sustain him until the end of the drought. In a moving soprano solo (No. 8), the widow bemoans her dead son and begs Elijah to bring him

back to life. The prophet entreats God three times. In an almost operatic fashion, the music moves from the plaintive to the triumphant as the boy revives. A pastoral chorus (No. 9) praises God and those who fear Him.

The next scene begins with a restatement of the opening plague music. Elijah stands accused of causing Israel's troubles (No. 10). He responds that the people have brought their problems on themselves by worshipping false gods. Elijah challenges the priests of the god Baal. In a duel of the gods, they pray to Baal (No. 11) as Elijah prays to his God. Baal's failure to answer is symbolized by dramatic silences. Elijah mockingly demands that the priests pray louder (No. 12). Ironically, Elijah taunts them with the same musical motive they use to implore Baal (No. 13). Still there is no answer. When Baal fails to appear and to end the drought, Elijah exhorts the people of Israel to turn their prayers to the one true God (No. 14). Elijah orders the priests of Baal slain (No. 16). An alto reproaches those who have forsaken God (No. 18). Elijah turns away from the bloodbath to join the people in praying to God (No. 19). Three times he sends a youth to see if rain clouds have appeared. Three times there are none. Finally the boy sees a little cloud in the distance. By denouncing false gods and accepting the one true God, the people of Israel

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have been saved. Elijah has led them to their father and hence their salvation. The rains at last come. In the mighty final chorus of Part I (No. 20), the people sing thanks to the one true Lord.

Part II of Elijah alternates scenes that further the plot with those that present Bible passages, including sayings of the prophets. The first scene begins with a soprano aria of comfort and dignity (No. 21), followed by a chorus expressing similar sentiments (No. 22). The story continues when Elijah appears before King Ahab and Queen Jezebel (No. 23). Elijah accuses the king of having angered God by worshipping Baal. The queen in turn accuses Elijah of treachery against the people of Israel and of trying to usurp King Ahab's power. With mounting fury Queen Jezebel tells the people that Elijah must perish because he destroyed the priests of Baal. She even convinces the Israelites that Elijah was responsible for the famine. The mob (chorus) goes after Elijah (No. 24).

The prophet's friend Obadiah tells him to flee for his life (No. 25). Elijah goes into the wilderness, where he longs for death. The aria "It is enough" (No. 26) beautifully portrays his despondency with a poignant melody accompanied by a cello. The prophet's anger at the people of Israel flares up, but his despair returns. An unaccompanied trio, sometimes performed by a boychoir, portrays angels comforting the prophet (No. 28).

An angel (alto) summons Elijah to arise and journey 40 days to Mount Horeb, where the Lord will reveal Himself (No. 30). In the emotional climax of the oratorio, Elijah cries out that all his efforts have

been in vain. He has failed to make the people of Israel accept God. Elijah's faith falters, as he asks God why He created His own adversaries and hardened their hearts against Him. The angel returns to comfort Elijah, telling him again and again in a beautiful aria to wait for God and not be concerned with evil doers (No. 31). The final time, the alto lingers on the word "wait," thus symbolically showing that Elijah's one remaining task is his hardest: to be patient. The chorus sings a chorale that states the lesson Elijah must learn: "He that shall endure to the end shall be saved" (No. 32).

The appearance of the Lord is heralded with stunning music which vividly depicts first a tempest, then an earthquake, and finally fire—in none of which can God be found (No. 34). Rather, He is "a small, still voice," set beautifully with pure arpeggios. The chorus sings of the holiness of God (No. 35), who finally appears and commands Elijah: "Go, return upon thy way" (No. 36). Elijah accepts God. He has waited for the Lord and receives his peace: "Thy kindness shall not depart from me, neither shall the covenant of Thy peace be removed" (No. 37). The chorus sings of Elijah's ascent into heaven (No. 38).

Here ends the story of Elijah. Mendelssohn had originally intended to bring the oratorio to a close here as well, but Schubring convinced him to add an aria (No. 39), recitative (No. 40), and several choruses (Nos. 41-43) that do not bear directly on the story or the personality of Elijah. The final chorus (No. 43), which glorifies God, is a brilliant fugue that forms a powerful conclusion to this massive work.

—Jonathan D. Kramer

TEXT

PART I

Introduction

Elijah
As God the Lord of Israel liveth, before whom I stand,
there shall not be dew or rain these years, but according
to my word.
I Kings 17:1

Overture

1. Chorus and Recitative
The People

Help, Lord! wilt Thou quite destroy us? The harvest now
is over, the summer days are gone, and yet no power
cometh to help us! Will then the Lord be no more God in
Zion?

Chorus

The deep affords no water, and the rivers are exhausted!
The suckling's tongue now cleaveth for thirst to his mouth;
the infant children ask for bread, and there is no one
breaketh it to feed them!

I Kings 17:7; Lamentations 4:4

2. Duet with Chorus

The People
Lord! bow Thine ear to our prayer!

Soprano and Alto

Zion spreadeth her hands for aid, and there is neither
help nor comfort.

Psalm 86:1; Lamentations 1:17

3. Recitative

Obadiah

Ye people, rend your hearts, and not your garments;
for your transgressions the prophet Elijah hath sealed
the heavens through the word of God. I therefore say
to ye: "Forsake your idols, return to God; for He is slow
to anger, and merciful, and kind, and gracious, and
repenteth Him of the evil."

Joel 2:12,13

4. Aria

Obadiah

"If with all your hearts ye truly seek me, ye shall ever
surely find me." Thus saith our God. Oh! that I knew
where I might find Him, that I might even come before
His presence.

Deuteronomy 4:29; Job 23:3

5. Chorus

The People

Yet doth the Lord see it not. He mocketh at us; His curse
hath fallen down upon us; His wrath will pursue us, till
He destroy us! For He, the Lord our God, He is a jealous
God, and He visiteth all the fathers' sins on the children

to the third and the fourth generation of them that hate Him. His mercies on thousands fall—fall on all them that love Him, and keep His commandments.

Deuteronomy 28:22; Exodus 20:5,6

6. Recitative

An Angel (Alto)

Elijah! Get thee hence, Elijah, depart and turn thee eastward; thither hide thee by Cherith's brook. There shalt thou drink its waters, and the Lord thy God hath commanded the ravens to feed thee there: so do according unto His word.

1 Kings 17:3,4

7. Double Quartet and Recitative

Chorus

For He shall give His angels charge over thee: that they shall protect thee in all the ways thou goest; that their hands shall uphold and guide thee, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Psalms 91:11,12

An Angel

Now Cherith's brook is dried up, Elijah, arise and depart, and get thee to Zarepath; thither abide: for the Lord hath commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. And the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

1 Kings 17:7,9,14

8. Recitative, Aria and Duet

The Widow

What have I to do with thee, O man of God? Art thou come to me to call my sin unto remembrance? To slay my son art thou come hither? Help me, man of God, my son is sick! And his sickness is so sore that there is no breath left in him! I go mourning all the day long; I lie down and weep at night. See mine affliction. Be thou the orphan's helper! Help my son! There is no breath left in him!

Elijah

Give me thy son. Turn unto her, O Lord my God, oh, turn in mercy; in mercy help this widow's son! For Thou art gracious, and full of compassion, and plenteous in mercy and truth. Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return, that he again may live!

The Widow

Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? There is no breath in him!

Elijah

Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return, that he again may live!

The Widow

Shall the dead arise and praise thee?

Elijah

Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return, that he again may live!

The Widow

The Lord hath heard thy prayer, the soul of my son reviveth!

Elijah

Now behold, thy son liveth.

The Widow

Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that His word in thy mouth is the truth. What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?

Elijah and the Widow

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, love Him with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Oh, blessed are they who fear Him!

1 Kings 17:17-19, 21-24; Job 10:15;

Psalms 38:6, 6,6, 10:14, 86:15, 16, 88:10,

116:12, 128:1; Deuteronomy 6:5

9. Chorus

Blessed are the men who fear Him: they ever walk in the ways of peace. Through darkness riseth light to the upright. He is gracious, compassionate: He is righteous.

Psalms 128:1; 112:1,4

10. Recitative

Elijah

As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth, before whom I stand: three years this day fulfilled, I will show myself unto Ahab; and the Lord will then send rain again upon the earth.

Ahab

Art thou Elijah? Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

The People

Thou art Elijah, he that troubleth Israel!

Elijah

I never troubled Israel's peace; it is thou, Ahab, and all thy father's house. Ye have forsaken God's commands, and thou hast followed Baalim! Now send and gather to me the whole of Israel unto Mount Carmel; there summon the prophets of Baal, and also the prophets of the groves, who are feasted at Jezebel's table. Then we shall see whose god is the Lord.

The People

And then we shall see whose god is God, the Lord.

Elijah

Rise then, ye priests of Baal; select and slay a bullock, and put no fire under it; uplift your voices, and call the god ye worship; and I then will call on the Lord Jehovah: and the god who by fire shall answer, let him be God.

The People

Yea, and the god who by fire shall answer, let him be God.

Elijah

Call first upon your god; your numbers are many. I, even I only remain one prophet of the Lord! Invoke your forest gods and mountain deities.

1 Kings 18:1, 15, 17-19, 22-25

11. Chorus

Priests of Baal

Baal, we cry to thee; hear and answer us! Heed the sacrifice we offer! Baal, oh, hear us, and answer us! Hear us Baal! Hear, mighty god! Baal, let thy flames fall and extirpate the foe! Baal, oh, hear us!

12. Recitative and Chorus

Elijah

Call him louder, for he is a god! He talketh, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey; or, peradventure, he sleepeth; so awaken him: call him louder.

Priests of Baal

Hear our cry, O Baal! Now arise! Wherefore slumber?

13. Recitative and Chorus

Elijah

Call him louder! He heareth not. With knives and lancets cut yourselves after your manner; leap upon the altar ye have made: call him and prophesy! Not a voice will answer you: none will listen, none heed you.

Priests of Baal

Baal! Hear and answer, Baal! Mark how the scorner derideth us! Hear and answer!

1 Kings 18:26-29

14. Aria

Elijah

Draw near, all ye people, come to me! Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, this day let it be known that Thou art God, and I am Thy servant! Oh, show to all this people that I have done these things according to Thy word! Oh, hear me, Lord, and answer me, and show this people that Thou art Lord God and let their hearts again be turned!

1 Kings 18:30, 36, 37

15. Quartet

Soloists

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee. He never will suffer the righteous to fall: He is at thy right hand. Thy mercy, Lord, is great, and far above the heavens. Let none be made ashamed that wait upon Thee.

Psalms 55:22, 16:8, 108:4, 25:3

16. Recitative and Chorus

Elijah

O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits; Thou whose ministers are flaming fires, let them now descend!

Psalms 104:4

The People

The fire descends from heaven; the flames consume his offering! Before Him upon your faces fall! The Lord is God: O Israel, hear! Our God is one Lord; and we will have no other gods before the Lord!

I Kings 18:38, 39; Deuteronomy 5:7, 6:4

Elijah

Take all the prophets of Baal, and let not one of them escape you; bring them down to Kishon's brook, and there let them be slain.

The People

Take all the prophets of Baal, and let not one of them escape us; bring all, and slay them!

I Kings 18:40

17. Aria

Elijah

Is not His word like a fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock into pieces? For God is angry with the wicked every day; and if the wicked turn not, the Lord will whet His sword; and He hath bent His bow, and made it ready.

Jeremiah 23:29; Psalm 7:11, 12

18. Arioso

Alto

Woe unto them who forsake Him! Destruction shall fall upon them, for they have transgressed against Him. Though they are by Him redeemed, yet they have spoken falsely against Him, even from Him have they fled.

Hosea 7:13

19. Recitative

Obadiah

O man of God, help thy people! Among the idols of the Gentiles, are there any that can command the rain, or cause the heavens to give their showers? The Lord our God alone can do these things.

Elijah

O Lord, Thou hast overthrown Thine enemies and destroyed them. Look down on us from heaven, O Lord; regard the distress of Thy people; open the heavens and send us relief: help, help Thy servant now, O God!

The People

Open the heavens and send us relief: help, help Thy servant now, O God!

Elijah

Go up now, child, and look toward the sea. Hath my prayer been heard by the Lord?

The Youth

There is nothing. The heavens are as brass, they are as brass above me.

Elijah

When the heavens are closed up because they have sinned against Thee, yet if they pray and confess Thy name, and turn from their sin when Thou dost afflict them, then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin! Help, send Thy servant help, O God!

The People

Then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin. Help, send Thy servant help, O Lord!

Elijah

Go up again, and still look toward the sea.

The Youth

There is nothing. The earth is as iron under me!

Elijah

Hearst thou no sound of rain? Seeth thou nothing arise from the deep?

The Youth

No; there is nothing.

Elijah

Have respect to the prayer of Thy servant, O Lord, my God? Unto Thee I will cry, Lord, my rock; be not silent to me, and Thy great mercies remember, Lord!

The Youth

Behold, a little cloud ariseth now from the waters; it is like a man's hand! The heavens are black with clouds and with wind: the storm rusheth louder and louder!

The People

Thanks be to God, for all His mercies!

Elijah

Thanks be to God, for He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for evermore!

20. Chorus

The People

Thanks be to God! He laveth the thirsty land! The waters gather, they rush along; they are lifting their voices! The stormy billows are high, their fury is mighty. But the Lord is above them, and almighty!

Jeremiah 14:22; II Chronicles 6:19, 26, 27;

Deuteronomy 28:23; Psalms 28:1, 106:1, 93:3-4;

I Kings 18:43-45

PART II

21. Aria

Soprano

Hear ye, Israel; hear what the Lord speaketh: "Oh, hadst thou heeded my commandments!" Who hath believed our report? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to him oppressed by tyrants; thus saith the Lord: "I am He that comforteth; be not afraid, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee. Say, who art thou, that thou art afraid of a man that shall die; and forgettest the Lord thy maker, who hath stretched forth the heavens and laid the earth's foundations? Be not afraid, for I, thy God, will strengthen thee."

Isaiah 48:1, 18, 53:1, 49:7, 41:10, 51:12, 13

22. Chorus

"Be not afraid," saith God the Lord. "Be not afraid! Thy help is near." God the Lord thy God, saith unto thee, "Be not afraid!" Though thousands languish and fall beside thee, and tens of thousands around thee perish, yet still it shall not come nigh thee.

Isaiah 41:10; Psalms 91:7

23. Recitative

Elijah

The Lord hath exalted thee from among the people, and o'er His people Israel hath made thee king. But thou, Ahab, hast done evil to provoke Him to anger above all that were before thee, as if it had been a light thing for thee to walk in the sins of Jeroboam. Thou hast made a grove and an altar to Baal, and served him and worshipped him. Thou hast killed the righteous, and also taken possession. And the Lord shall smite all Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and He shall give Israel up, and thou shalt know He is the Lord.

I Kings 14:7, 9, 15, 16:30-33

Queen Jezebel

Have ye not heard he hath prophesied against all Israel?

Chorus

We heard it with our ears.

Queen Jezebel
Hath he not prophesied also against the king of Israel?

Chorus
We heard it with our ears.

Queen Jezebel
And why hath he spoken in the name of the Lord? Doth Ahab govern the kingdom of Israel, while Elijah's power is greater than the king's? The gods do so to me, and more, if, by tomorrow about this time, I make not his life as the life of one of them whom he hath sacrificed at the brook of Kishon!

Chorus
He shall perish!

Queen Jezebel
Hath he not destroyed Baal's prophets?

Chorus
He shall perish!

Queen Jezebel
Yea, by sword he destroyed them all!

Chorus
He destroyed them all!

Queen Jezebel
He also closed the heavens!

Chorus
He also closed the heavens!

Queen Jezebel
And called down a famine upon the land.

Chorus
And called down a famine upon the land.

Queen Jezebel
So go ye forth and seize Elijah, for he is worthy to die; slaughter him! Do unto him as he hath done!

24. Chorus

Woe to him, he shall perish: he closed the heavens! And why hath he spoken in the name of the Lord? Let the guilty prophet perish! He hath spoken falsely against our land and us, as we have heard with our ears. So go ye forth; seize on him! He shall die!

Jeremiah 26:9,11; I Kings 18:10, 21:7;
Ecclesiasticus 48:2,3

25. Recitative

Obadiah
Man of God, now let my words be precious in thy sight. Thus saith Jezebel, "Elijah is worthy to die." So the mighty gather against thee, and they have prepared a net for thy steps, that they may seize thee, that they may slay thee. Arise, then, and hasten for thy life, to the wilderness journey. The Lord thy God doth go with thee; He will not fail thee. Now be gone, and bless me also.

Elijah
Though stricken, they have not grieved! Tarry here, my servant; the Lord be with thee. I journey hence to the wilderness.

II Kings 1:1,3; Jeremiah 5:3, 26:11;
Psalms 59:3; I Kings 19:3,4; Deuteronomy 31:6; Exodus 12:32; I Samuel 17:37

26. Aria

Elijah
It is enough; O Lord, now take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers! I desire to live no longer; now let me die, for my days are but vanity! I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts! For the children of Israel have broken Thy covenant and thrown down Thine altars and slain all Thy prophets, slain them with the sword; and I, even I, only am left, and they seek my life to take it away.

Job 7:16; I Kings 19:4,10

27. Recitative

Tenor
See, now he sleepeth beneath a juniper tree in the wilderness; and there the angels of the Lord encamp round about all them that fear Him.
I Kings 19:5; Psalms 34:7

28. Trio

Lift thine eyes to the mountains, whence cometh help. Thy help cometh from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He hath said, "Thy foot shall not be moved; thy keeper will never slumber."
Psalm 121:1-3

29. Chorus

Angels
He, watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor sleeps. Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish. He will quicken thee.
Psalms 121:4, 138:7

30. Recitative

An Angel (Alto)
Arise, Elijah, for thou hast a long journey before thee. Forty days and forty nights shalt thou go to Horeb, the mount of God.
I Kings 19:7,8

Elijah
O Lord, I have labored in vain. Yea, I have spent my strength for naught! Oh, that Thou wouldst rend the heavens, that Thou wouldst come down; that the mountains would flow down at Thy presence, to make Thy name known to Thine adversaries, through the wonders of Thy works! Lord, why hast Thou made them err from Thy ways, and hardened their hearts, that they do not fear Thee? Oh, that I now might die!
Isaiah 49:4, 64:1,2, 63:17; I Kings 19:4

31. Aria

An Angel (Alto)
O rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him, and He shall give thee thy heart's desires. Commit thy way unto Him, and trust in Him, and fret not thyself because of evil doers.
Psalm 37:1,4,7

32. Chorus

He that shall endure to the end shall be saved.
Matthew 24:13

33. Recitative

Elijah
Night falleth round me, O Lord! Be Thou not far from me! Hide not Thy face, O Lord, from me; my soul is thirsting for Thee, as a thirsty land.

An Angel (Soprano)
Arise, now! Get thee without. Stand on the mount before the Lord; for there His glory will appear and shine on thee! Thy face must be veiled, for He draweth near.
Psalm 143:6,7; I Kings 19:11,13

34. Chorus

Behold! God the Lord passed by! And a mighty wind rent the mountains around, brake in pieces the rocks, brake them before the Lord; but yet the Lord was not in the tempest. Behold! God the Lord passed by! And the sea was upheaved, and the earth was shaken; but yet the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake there came a fire; but yet the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there came a still small voice, and in that still voice onward came the Lord.
I Kings 19:11,12

35. Recitative and Chorus

Alto and Chorus

Above Him stood the Seraphim, and one cried to another: "Holy, holy, holy is God the Lord—the Lord Sabaoth! Now His glory hath filled all the earth."
Isaiah 6:2,3

36. Chorus and Recitative

Chorus

"Go, return upon thy way!" For the Lord yet hath left Him seven thousand in Israel, knees which have not bowed to Baal. "Go, return upon thy way." Thus the Lord commandeth.

I Kings 19:15,18

Elijah

I go on my way in the strength of the Lord. For Thou art my Lord, and I will suffer for Thy sake. My heart is therefore glad, my glory rejoiceth, and my flesh shall also rest in hope.

Psalms 71:16, 16:9

37. Arioso

Elijah

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but Thy kindness shall not depart from me, neither shall the covenant of Thy peace be removed.

Isaiah 54:10

38. Chorus

Then did Elijah the prophet break forth like a fire; his words appeared like burning torches. Mighty kings by him were overthrown. He stood on the mount of Sinai and heard the judgements of the future; and in Horeb, its vengeance. And when the Lord would take him away to heaven, lo! there came a fiery chariot, with fiery horses; and he went by a whirlwind to heaven.

Ecclesiasticus 48:1,6,7; II Kings 2:1,11

39. Aria

Tenor

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in their heavenly Father's realm. Joy on their head shall be for everlasting, and all sorrow and mourning shall flee away for ever.

Matthew 13:43; Isaiah 51:11

40. Recitative

Soprano

Behold, God hath sent Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children unto their fathers, lest the Lord shall come and smite the earth with a curse.

Malachi 4:5,6

41. Chorus

But the Lord, from the north, hath raised one, who, from the rising of the sun, shall call upon His name and come on princes. "Behold, my servant and mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth! On him the spirit God shall rest: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of might and of counsel, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Thus saith the Lord: "I have raised one from the north, who, from the rising, on my name shall call."

Isaiah 41:25, 42:1, 11:2

42. Quartet

Soloists

O come, everyone that thirsteth, O come to the waters. O come unto Him. O hear, and your souls shall live for ever.

Isaiah 55:1,3

43. Chorus

And then shall your light break forth as the light of morning breaketh, and your health shall speedily spring forth then, and the glory of the Lord ever shall reward you. Lord, our Creator, how excellent Thy name is in all the nations! Thou fillest heaven in Thy glory. Amen.

Isaiah 58:8; Psalm 8:1

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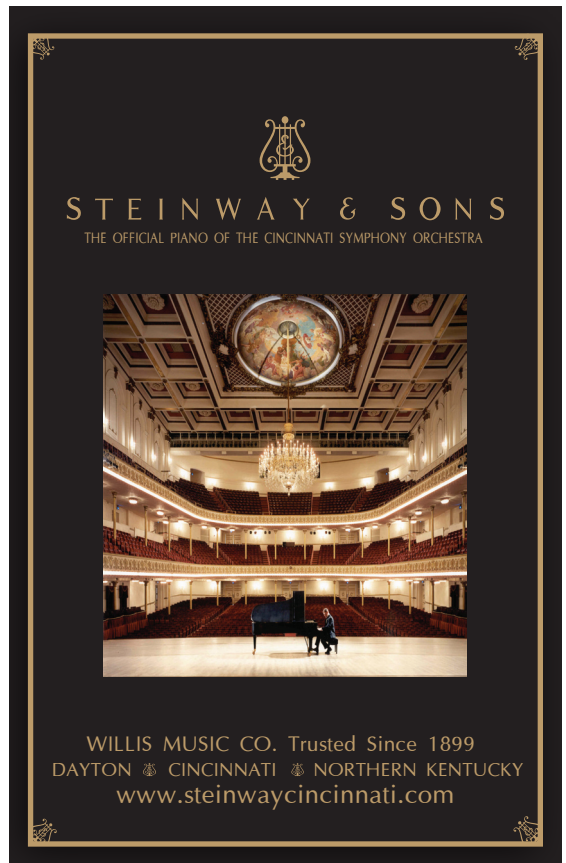
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