
**LINCOLN CENTER'S
SUMMER
FOR THE
CITY**

JUNE 11 – AUGUST 9, 2025

FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA OF LINCOLN CENTER

JONATHON HEYWARD, RENÉE AND ROBERT BELFER MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**SATURDAY
JULY 19, 2025
7:30 PM**

Run Time: Approximately 1 hour 30 minutes

SYMPHONY OF CHOICE

A CROWD-COMPOSED CONCERT

WU TSAI THEATER, DAVID GEFFEN HALL

JONATHON HEYWARD, *conductor*

Tonight, you, the audience, will curate this concert's musical selections to create your own Symphony of Choice. To begin, the orchestra will play short excerpts from works featured during this summer's season. After hearing these selections, you can text our Symphony of Choice number to vote for which selection you want to hear in full. The orchestra will play the selections with the most votes as a special preview of what can be heard later this season.

Here's what you can expect:

- * The orchestra will play two musical excerpts.
- * Text VOTE to (718) 814-9686 (follow instructions as they are announced from the stage; standard message and data rates apply) and text us your choice.
- * We'll reveal the most popular choice from the stage and then play the chosen excerpt in full.
- * We'll repeat this process three more times to make up a full four-movement symphony of your choice.
- * Dedicated Wi-Fi is available. Network: vote1234 | Password: vote1234

Musical Excerpts You May Hear Tonight:

Michael Abels (b. 1962)	<i>More Seasons</i> (1999)	12 min
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)	Allegro con brio from Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92 (1812)	7 min
Georges Bizet (1938–1975)	Adagio from Symphony No. I in C major (1855)	9 min
Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)	Un poco allegretto e grazioso from Symphony No. I in C minor, Op. 68 (1876)	5 min
Louise Farrenc (1804–1875)	Overture No. I in E minor, Op. 23 (1834)	7 min
Iman Habibi (b. 1985)	<i>Jeder Baum spricht</i> (2020)	5 min
Emilie Mayer (1812–1883)	<i>Faust Overture</i> , Op. 46 (1880)	12 min
Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)	<i>Pavane pour une infante défunte</i> (1899, revised 1910)	6 min
Robert Schumann (1810–1856)	Scherzo: Lebhaft from Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120 (1841, revised 1851)	5 min

FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA OF LINCOLN CENTER

The Festival Orchestra of Lincoln Center is a chamber orchestra that comes together during Lincoln Center's *Summer for the City* to celebrate and share the beauty of classical music. The ensemble, formerly the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, is comprised of world class musicians who perform year-round as soloists, chamber musicians, and in other ensembles across Lincoln Center's campus and around the globe.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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SYMPHONY OF CHOICE

BY JAMES BENNETT II

Musical experiments can be risky. A composer is charting a course, raising a sail, and pressing into the unknown hopeful to introduce far-off delights to a listening public. Does it work all the time? No, but nothing does—taste is hardly universal. But it is undeniably exciting to at least sample something completely new. And you, hopefully, are feeling that excitement tonight.

There *is* a difference between this musical experiment and other risky journeys, though. Because tonight, you're on the ship as well—in fact, you're part of the crew. But the idea tonight isn't to traverse the unknown for new sounds, it's to locate treasures, known and unknown, and present them in new combinations. Kind of like a symphony, where you work together in a democratic process to assign an already extant piece of music to a movement. It's a Symphony of Choice... a designation that you probably are aware of thanks to the headers in this Playbill. But now you have the context, a heightened understanding of what it actually means. And also? A newfound appreciation for the powerful, warming delight that comes from listening to amazing music, live and together. Your involvement not only makes this symphony work, it is required. The resulting combination of music heard this evening is unique to you—truly a unique cultural experience that you'd be hard pressed to replicate, short of acquiring your own world-class ensemble and programming this specific set in the same sequential order.

Symphony of Choice, as Festival Orchestra of Lincoln Center Director Jonathon Heyward would describe it, was a successful experiment in the past. The concept was introduced at last year's festival, and now the aim is to learn from its previous iteration, bring listeners together, and create a new experience. We're demonstrating that the canonical classics and contemporary works are woven together in the same, dazzling musical fabric; that the performance of one doesn't present the other as incongruous.

"What [*Symphony of Choice*] has told us is that when we present this idea of new versus the canon we get a surprising interaction with our audience," says Heyward. "[When creating] a symphony without any preconceived ideas, it's really important I don't tell the audience what we're listening for, or listening to, before we play the pieces. They have to immediately feel and react to what they're feeling in the moment. And I think that sense of relatability helps demystify this concept and idea that there are so many differences between the traditions and the unknown."

An idea I hold dear is that a symphony is just like an extremely well-curated, thoughtful playlist. And while any playlist can contain banger after banger, hit upon hit, some of the most captivating ones are those that blend the karaoke and barroom staples with the kinds of songs and sounds that make you go, "run that back." Who made it? What's the story behind it? Is there anywhere else I can go to hear more music like that?

Unlike a playlist though, this experience exists beyond the digital world. It is present; it is here. You want to run it back? You want to hear more? By all means, learn about the piece you've fallen in love with tonight. Get to know the composer and the talent that turns the ink from the score into vibrations in the air. But to experience it again? And to hear it in context with its musical cousins, you just might have to return and surrender yourself, once again, to the hypnotic pull of the live, orchestral experience. I mean, one does not simply collaborate on a symphony together and walk away from the art form. You can't have (or hear) just one.

So, tonight, enjoy the experiment. Enjoy one another. Try something new. And don't worry about pushing your brain too hard; like Heyward said, feel and react in the moment. This is a symphony created in real time and performed in about 90 minutes. It's testament to your own collective greatness—it took Brahms over 20 years to write his first symphony, so at least you've got *something* over one of the greats.

Get to choosing!

MEET THE ARTISTS

PHOTO CREDIT: VINCENT TULLO



Jonathon Heyward, Renée and Robert Belfer Music and Artistic Director Festival Orchestra of Lincoln Center

Jonathon Heyward is forging a career as one of the most exciting conductors on the international scene. He currently serves as Music Director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, having made his debut with the BSO in March 2022 in three performances that included their first-ever performance of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15. In summer 2024, Jonathon became Renée and Robert Belfer

Music Director of the Festival Orchestra of Lincoln Center. This appointment followed a highly acclaimed Lincoln Center debut with the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra in summer 2022, as part of the Summer for the City festival. In 2025, it was announced that he will continue as the Renée and Robert Belfer Music Director of the Festival Orchestra of Lincoln Center through 2029, now with the added title and role of Artistic Director.

In 2024, Jonathon completed his four-year tenure as Chief Conductor of the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie. In summer 2021, he took part in an intense, two-week residency with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain which led to a highly acclaimed BBC Proms debut. According to *The Guardian*, Jonathon delivered "a fast and fearless performance of Beethoven's Eroica Symphony, in which loud chords exploded, repeating like fireworks in the hall's dome, and the quietest passages barely registered. It was exuberant, exhilarating stuff."

Jonathon currently resides in the United Kingdom, where his recent and future guest conducting highlights include debuts and re-invitations with the London Philharmonic, London Symphony, BBC Symphony, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra Ireland, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Royal Academy of Music, and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. In continental Europe, Jonathon recently made distinguished debuts with NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester and Danish National Symphony. Successful European highlights of recent seasons included collaborations with the Castilla y León Symphony, Galicia Symphony, Brussels Philharmonic, Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine, and MDR-Leipzig Symphony.

In high demand in the US, and in addition to his music director positions, Jonathon conducts prominent orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, the Atlanta, Detroit, Houston, Seattle, Dallas, and St. Louis symphonies, the Minnesota Orchestra, NSO Washington, and Chicago Symphony at Ravinia Festival.

Equally at home on the opera stage, Jonathon made his Royal Opera House debut with Hannah Kendall's *Knife of Dawn*, having also conducted a Kurt Weill's *Lost in the Stars* with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, as well as the world premiere of Giorgio Battistelli's new opera, *Wake*, in a production by Graham Vick for the Birmingham Opera Company.

Born in Charleston, SC, Jonathon began his musical training as a cellist at the age of ten and started conducting while still at school. He studied conducting at the Boston Conservatory of Music, where he became assistant conductor of the prestigious institution's opera department and of the Boston Opera Collaborative, and he received postgraduate lessons from Sian Edwards at London's Royal Academy of Music. Before leaving the Academy, he was appointed assistant conductor of the Hallé Orchestra, where he was mentored by Sir Mark Elder, and became Music Director of the Hallé Youth Orchestra. In 2023, he was named a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music; an honor reserved for Academy alumni.

Jonathon's commitment to education and community outreach work deepened during his three years with the Hallé and flourished during his post as Chief Conductor of the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie. He is equally committed to including new music within his imaginative concert programs.



Photo By Lawrence Sumulong

FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA OF LINCOLN CENTER

Jonathon Heyward, Renée and Robert Belfer Music Director

Violins

Ruggero Alliffranchini
(Concertmaster)

Emily Nebel
(Associate
Concertmaster)

Laura Frautschi
(Principal Second)

Martin Agee

Lilit Gampel

Michael Gillette

Suzanne Gilman

Amy Kauffman

Sophia Kessinger

Siwoo Kim

Katherine Livolsi-Landau

Kayla Moffett

Maureen Nelson

Ronald Oakland

Michael Roth

Deborah Wong

Violas

Shmuel Katz
(Principal)

Chihiro Allen

Meena Bhasin

Danielle Farina

Elzbieta Weyman

Cellos

Ilya Finkelshteyn
(Principal)

Ted Ackerman

Ann Kim

Alvin McCall

Double Basses

Jeffrey Turner
(Principal)

Lou Kosma

Flutes

Jasmine Choi
(Principal)

Tanya Dusevic Witek

Oboes

Ryan Roberts
(Principal)

Nick Masterson

Clarinets

Jon Manasse
(Principal)

Christopher Pell

Bassoons

Marc Goldberg
(Principal)

Tom Sečovic

Horns

Lawrence DiBello
(Principal)

Richard Hagen

Trumpets

Neil Balm
(Principal)

Timpani

David Punto
(Principal)

Librarian

Nishana Dobbek

Personnel Managers

Neil Balm

Jonathan Haas

Sean Statser

**Gemini Music
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LINCOLN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) is a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring the Lincoln Center campus is a destination that welcomes all—where every visitor, whether a native New Yorker or New Yorker for a day, can find inspiration, artistic innovation, and community in the creative achievements realized on campus. Year-round, we offer robust seasons of programming, representing a broad spectrum of performing arts disciplines and complementing the artistic and educational activities of the 10 fellow resident arts organizations with whom we share a home. LCPA presents hundreds of programs each year, offered primarily for free and Choose-What-You-Pay, helping ensure that the arts are at the center of civic life for all. [LincolnCenter.org](https://www.lincolncenter.org)

LINCOLN CENTER'S SUMMER FOR THE CITY

Summer for the City welcomes all New Yorkers and visitors from around the world to a season grounded in the city's global cultural traditions, innovative spirit, and deep sense of community—all for free or Choose-What-You-Pay. Now in its fourth year, this highly anticipated summer tradition has served more than 1 million people since launching in 2022. The 2025 festival offers a bold lineup of multidisciplinary performances across the Lincoln Center campus, including world and New York premieres, participatory events, and more—all within transformed outdoor spaces that are destinations for a range of artistic experiences and spaces for respite for New Yorkers during the summer months. [SummerfortheCity.org](https://www.summerfortheCity.org)