

CURTIS  
INSTITUTE OF MUSIC



# CURTIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JANUARY 2024

*Join us!*

CURTIS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC  
**SPRING GALA**

FEATURING CURTIS OPERA THEATRE'S PRODUCTION OF

*The Cunning Little Vixen*

FOLLOWED BY COCKTAILS AND DINNER

Join us at the annual spring gala for a festive celebration of Curtis's legacy of voice. Proceeds from the gala play a vital role in underwriting the unparalleled education of our students. Your participation today can help define the legacy of Curtis for generations to come.

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**2024 GALA CO-CHAIRS**

Mignon and Jim Groch

Robin and Mark Rubenstein

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**WHEN**

Saturday, May 4 at 3:00 p.m.

**WHERE**

Kimmel Center for Performing Arts

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To secure your place or for more information,  
visit [Curtis.edu/Gala](https://Curtis.edu/Gala)

2023-24 SEASON **TIME TO DISCOVER**

# 2023-24 SEASON TIME TO DISCOVER

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### **CURTIS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC**

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**CURTIS**  
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# WELCOME

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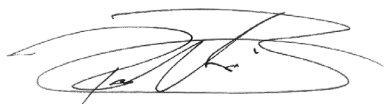
Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to our second Curtis Symphony Orchestra concert of the 2023–24 school year. These incredibly talented musicians are some of the most promising young artists from across the globe. But while their talent is unmistakable, what perhaps truly sets them apart is their unparalleled enthusiasm and excitement for playing music together, and we can't wait to share that joy with you this afternoon.

Today's concert features one of the repertoire's most popular and influential symphonies, Hector Berlioz's revolutionary *Symphonie fantastique*. In addition, you'll also hear the first symphony of Samuel Barber, an early graduate of Curtis and a composer dear to our hearts. And first on the program is the Philadelphia premiere of Gabriela Ortiz's *Kaayumari*, under the baton of Benoit Gauthier, conducting fellow. This concert truly exemplifies the invaluable experience our students gain through a range of repertoire, and they are excited to share their work with you today.

There are so many more Curtis performances ahead of us this year—we hope you can join us often! Of course, all of these performances are made possible thanks to the generous support of friends like you. We are immensely grateful for the time and resources that you invest in our students and our school. Thank you for all you do for Curtis.

All my very best,



**Roberto Díaz (Viola '84)**

PRESIDENT AND CEO

*Nina von Maltzahn President's Chair*

*James and Betty Matarese Chair in Viola Studies*



*At the Curtis Institute of Music, the world's most talented young musicians develop into exceptional artists, creators, and innovators.*

With a tuition-free foundation, Curtis is a unique environment for teaching and learning. Curtis is a small school by design, where students realize their artistic potential through intensive, individualized study with the most renowned, sought-after faculty.

Animated by a learn by doing philosophy, Curtis students share their music with audiences through more than 100 performances each year, including solo and chamber recitals, orchestral concerts, and opera—all free or at an affordable cost—offering audiences unique opportunities to participate in pivotal moments in these young musicians' careers.

In addition to a wealth of performance opportunities, Curtis students experience a close connection to the greatest artists and organizations in classical music, and innovative initiatives that integrate new technologies and encourage entrepreneurship—all within an historic campus in the heart of culturally rich Philadelphia.

In this diverse, collaborative community, Curtis's extraordinary artists challenge, support, and inspire one another—continuing an unparalleled 100-year legacy of musicians who have led, and will lead, classical music into a thriving, equitable, and multidimensional future.

Learn more at [Curtis.edu](https://www.curtis.edu).

### **CURTIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Combining outstanding talent with unparalleled enthusiasm for making music together, the Curtis Symphony Orchestra is a cornerstone of the Curtis Institute of Music experience and an essential part of Philadelphia's brilliant cultural landscape. For 100 years, our extraordinary students have honed their skills and expanded their musical horizons as they prepare for professional careers with the world's leading orchestras and chamber ensembles. Under the mentorship of internationally renowned conductors, including Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Osmo Vänskä, Marin Alsop, Simon Rattle, and Robert Spano, Curtis students present audiences with an array of inspiring programming, ranging from the time-honored to dynamic new works.

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# Curtis Symphony Orchestra

PRESENTS

## Berlioz, Ortiz, and Barber



Michael Stern ('86), *conductor*

Benoit Gauthier, *conductor*

**Saturday, January 27, 2024**  
at 3:00 p.m.

Verizon Hall, Kimmel Center

This concert runs approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes, including one intermission.

Guest conductor appearances for each Curtis Symphony Orchestra performance are made possible by the Rita E. and Gustave M. Hauser Chair in Conducting Studies.

Orchestral concerts are supported by the Pennsylvania Tourism Office, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and the Jack Wolgin Curtis Orchestral Concerts Endowment Fund.

Photographic and recording equipment may not be used in Verizon Hall.

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## PROGRAM

### GABRIELA ORTIZ

#### *Kauyumari*

Philadelphia premiere

Benoit Gauthier, *conductor*

### SAMUEL BARBER ('34)

#### First Symphony (In One Movement), Op. 9

Michael Stern, *conductor*

#### *Intermission*

### HECTOR BERLIOZ

#### *Symphonie fantastique*, Op. 14

Rêveries, Passions (Daydreams, Passions)

Un bal (A Ball)

Scène aux champs (In the Fields)

Marche au supplice (March to the Scaffold)

Songes d'une nuit du sabbat (Sabbath Night's Dream)

Michael Stern, *conductor*

*Kauyumari* by Gabriela Ortiz is used by arrangement with Boosey and Hawkes.

*First Symphony* by Samuel Barber presented under license from G. Schirmer Inc. and Associated Music Publishers, copyright owners.

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### *Kauyumari*

**Gabriela Ortiz** (b. 1964)

Among the Huichol people of Mexico, *Kauyumari* means “blue deer.” The blue deer represents a spiritual guide, one that is transformed through an extended pilgrimage into a hallucinogenic cactus called peyote. It allows the Huichol to communicate with their ancestors, do their bidding, and take on their role as guardians of the planet. Each year, these Native Mexicans embark on a symbolic journey to “hunt” the blue deer, making offerings in gratitude for having been granted access to the invisible world, through which they also are able to heal the wounds of the soul.

When I received the commission from the Los Angeles Philharmonic to compose a piece that would reflect on our return to the stage following the pandemic, I immediately thought of the blue deer and its power to enter the world of the intangible as akin to a celebration of the reopening of live music. Specifically, I thought of a Huichol melody sung by the De La Cruz family—dedicated to recording ancestral folklore—that I used for the final movement of my piece, *Altar de Muertos (Altar of the Dead)*, commissioned by the Kronos String Quartet in 1997.

I used this material within the orchestral context and elaborated on the construction and progressive development of the melody and its accompaniment in such a way that it would symbolize the blue deer. This in turn was transformed into an orchestral texture which gradually evolves into a complex rhythm pattern, to such a degree that the melody itself becomes unrecognizable (the imaginary effect of peyote and our awareness of the invisible realm), giving rise to a choral wind section while maintaining an incisive rhythmic accompaniment as a form of reassurance that the world will naturally follow its course.

While composing this piece, I noted once again how music has the power to grant us access to the intangible, healing our wounds and binding us to what can only be expressed through sound.

Although life is filled with interruptions, *Kauyumari* is a comprehension and celebration of the fact that each of these rifts is also a new beginning.

—Gabriela Ortiz

5 minutes



## First Symphony (In One Movement), Op. 9

Samuel Barber (1910-81)

In August of 1935, as a young Samuel Barber ('34) sojourned in Camden, Maine with fellow Curtis alumnus, composer, and life partner Gian Carlo Menotti ('33), he began the sketches of what he described as “an orchestra piece of ambitious tendencies.” Three months earlier, the 25-year-old had been honored with two prestigious awards—a Pulitzer travel scholarship and the American Prix de Rome—the latter of which would change the trajectory of his burgeoning career, sending him to the American Academy in Rome. There, at the arts institution and within his quaint yellow Italian music studio, with an annual stipend of \$1,400, he furthered his studies and continued to compose for the next two years.

On February 24, 1936, in Roquebrune, France, after traveling around Europe, he put the finishing touches on the manuscript of his First Symphony, and on December 13, the premiere was held at the Villa Aurelia with the Augusteo Orchestra under the baton of conductor Bernardino Molinari. The audience reaction was split down the middle, some praising the work and offering effusive applause and others audibly hissing in protest. Barber later remarked that he felt the Italians generally thought it was “too dark-toned, too Nordic,” but that didn't stymie its programmatic future. The following year, in 1937, the work was performed by the Cleveland Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra, and the Vienna Philharmonic at the Salzburg Festival, where it was warmly received and positively reviewed.

This soaring First Symphony is a muscular, tightly constructed, Neo-Romantic piece that packs a powerful wallop within the span of twenty minutes, condensing the dramatic intensity, delicacy, and sweeping grandeur of a traditional four-movement symphony into one. Igniting with a series of wide-open fifths, the work's *Allegro non troppo* section introduces the main theme, an apparent homage to Finnish composer Jean Sibelius's Seventh Symphony—Barber coincidentally analyzed that work alongside the original Maine sketches of this piece—which unfolds with an expansive octave leap, forming the groundwork for the entire symphony as it progresses in one continuous arc.

In the first of these interior “movements,” the main theme, wildly aggressive yet majestic, gives way to an angular, dance-like scherzo before a sustained B-flat in the tympani introduces a rapturous lyrical *allegro molto* theme. The cellos and harp accompany the English horns and violas as a sonorous oboe soars over a bed of gossamer muted strings and is augmented in a somber *Andante tranquillo*, appearing out of the ether. The rousing, brassy finale (*presto* in perpetual motion) begins with a quasi-Passacaglia introduced by the double basses and cellos, as the strings and brass fold into one another in a sense of heightened drama. All three themes ultimately unite, tying the Symphony's beginning to its explosive conclusion.

—Ryan Lathan

21 minutes

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### *Symphonie fantastique*, Op. 14

**Hector Berlioz** (1803-69)

Poor Berlioz: The only thing worse than harboring an unrequited love for a celebrity is having that love returned, and ending up locked in a frustrating marriage for twenty-one years with someone who was probably a mismatch in the first place. In Berlioz's case it was a gorgeous Irish actress named Harriet Smithson, whom he saw in Paris productions of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* in 1827. Though he barely understood a word of the English-language originals, by the third act of *Romeo* he was in love with Juliet. Or so he claimed, in his usual hyperbolic Romantic mode of expression.

“Half suffocated by emotion,” he wrote, “with the grip of an iron hand upon my heart, I cried out to myself, ‘I am lost! I am lost!’” They finally met two years later and spent several passionate years together; alas, their long, turbulent marriage ended in separation. The revolutionary *Symphonie fantastique* became the story of his life with and love for Harriet—thus the subtitle, “Episodes in the Life of an Artist.”

Berlioz composed with desperate speed, borrowing musical materials from his own previous works as he went along. It was the first full-blown programmatic symphony of the Romantic period; no previous piece had worked out a storyline in such relentless detail. To make certain his intentions were clear, Berlioz printed the tale and distributed it to the audience at the premiere on December 5, 1830.

“The composer's intention has been to develop various episodes in the life of an artist, insofar as they lend themselves to

musical treatment,” Berlioz wrote. “As the work cannot rely on the assistance of speech, the plan of the instrumental drama needs to be set out in advance. The following program must therefore be considered as the spoken text of an opera, which serves to introduce musical movements and to motivate their character and expression.”

Thus at its heart, the *Symphonie* is a dramatic work, an orchestral expression by a composer who had yet to score any genuine successes at the Paris Opéra, and who found, in this work, an outlet for his dramatic gifts. It also featured some of the most daring harmonic and orchestral effects to date, less shocking today but still remarkable to hear. At its musical core is what Berlioz had called the *idée fixe*, the chief melodic motif that represents Harriet. Below is a condensed version of the composer's own program note, which was published in the first printed edition of the symphony.

First Movement: Daydreams, Passions

The composer imagines that a young musician, troubled by that spiritual sickness which a famous writer has called “the emptiness of passions” sees for the first time a woman who possesses all the charms of the ideal being he has dreamed of, and falls desperately in love with her. . . . The beloved vision never appears to the artist's mind except in association with a musical idea, in which he perceives the same character—impassioned, yet refined and diffident—that he attributes to the object of his love. This melodic image

and its model pursue him unceasingly like a double “fixed idea.” That is why the tune at the beginning of the first Allegro constantly recurs in every movement of the symphony. ...

## Second Movement: A Ball

The artist is placed in the most varied circumstances: amid the hubbub of a carnival; in peaceful contemplation of the beauty of nature—but everywhere, in town, in the meadows, the beloved vision appears before him, bringing trouble to his soul.

## Third Movement: In the Fields

One evening in the country, he hears in the distance two shepherds playing a pastoral song; this duet, the effect of his surroundings, the slight rustle of the trees gently stirred by the wind ... all combine to bring an unfamiliar peace to his heart, and a more cheerful color to his thoughts. He thinks of his loneliness; he hopes soon to be alone no longer. ... But suppose she deceives him! This mixture of hope and fear, these thoughts of happiness disturbed by a dark foreboding, form the subject of the Adagio. At the end, one of the shepherds again takes up the song. The other no longer answers. ... Sounds of distant thunder ... solitude ... silence.

## Fourth Movement: March to the Scaffold

The artist, now knowing beyond all doubt that his love is not returned, poisons himself with opium. The dose of the narcotic, too weak to take his life, plunges him into a sleep accompanied by the most

horrible visions. He dreams that he has killed the woman he loved, and that he is condemned to death, brought to the scaffold, and witnesses his own execution. The procession is accompanied by a march that is sometimes fierce and somber, sometimes stately and brilliant. ... At the end of the march, the first four bars of the *idée fixe* recur like a last thought of love.

## Fifth Movement: Sabbath Night's Dream

He sees himself at the witches' sabbath, in the midst of a ghastly crowd of spirits, sorcerers, and monsters of every kind, assembled for his funeral. Strange noises, groans, bursts of laughter, far-off shouts to which other shouts seem to reply. The beloved tune appears once more, but it has lost its character of refinement and diffidence; it has become nothing but a common dance tune, trivial and grotesque; it is she who has come to the sabbath. ... A roar of joy greets her arrival. ... She mingles with the devilish orgy. ... Funeral knell, ludicrous parody of the *Dies irae*, sabbath dance. The sabbath dance and the *Dies irae* in combination.

—Copyright © 2009 Paul Horsley

50 minutes ♦ 5 movements



**Michael Stern**  
CONDUCTOR

Conductor Michael Stern has long been devoted to building and leading highly acclaimed orchestras known not only for their impeccable musicianship and creative programming, but also for collaborative, sustainable cultures that often include a vision of music as service to the community. Mr. Stern currently holds three music director positions: with the Kansas City Symphony, where he concludes his 19-year tenure at the end of this season; with the National Repertory Orchestra, a summer music festival in Breckenridge, CO; and with the newly rebranded Orchestra Lumos (formerly the Stamford Symphony). Mr. Stern was recently named artistic advisor of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. And, following a 22-year tenure as founding artistic director of Iris Orchestra in Germantown, Tennessee, he now serves the newly reimagined Iris Collective as artistic advisor.

As part of his ongoing activities to engage and mentor young musicians, he was asked by Yo-Yo Ma to be the music director of YMCG, Youth Music Culture Guangdong; he was also invited to the National Orchestral Institute, Music Academy of the West, and has been a regular guest at the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Mr. Stern's illustrious American conducting engagements have included the Boston, Chicago and Atlanta Symphonies; the New York Philharmonic; and the Minnesota Orchestra. Mr. Stern has also served as guest conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Internationally, he has led major orchestras in London, Stockholm, Paris, Helsinki, Budapest, Israel, Moscow, Taiwan, and Tokyo. He was chief conductor of Germany's Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra and principal guest conductor of the Orchestre National de Lyon and the Orchestre National de Lille, both in France.

Mr. Stern received his music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in 1986, where his primary teacher was the noted conductor and scholar Max Rudolf.

**Benoit Gauthier**  
CONDUCTOR

Benoit Gauthier, from Baie-Comeau, Quebec, entered the Curtis Institute of Music in 2023 and studies conducting with Yannick Nézet-Séguin. All students at Curtis receive merit-based, full-tuition scholarships, and Mr. Gauthier is the Rita E. Hauser Conducting Fellow.

Mr. Gauthier began his studies at the École de musique du Côte-Nord, where he studied classical singing, guitar, saxophone, flute, violin, viola, and cello. He earned a certificate in orchestral conducting under Gilles Auger from the Conservatoire de musique et d'art dramatique du Québec and completed his flute studies with Jacinthe Forand and Richard Lapointe.

Mr. Gauthier is the founder, conductor, and artistic director of the Orchestre symphonique de la Côte-Nord. He created the orchestra to provide his native region with a professional-level cultural experience. In 2023, he created two colorful youth shows: *L'histoire d'un casse-noisette* (*The Story of a Nutcracker*) and *Babar et quelques autres notes* (*Babar and some other notes*), the latter inspired by the work of composer François Poulenc and currently on tour in Quebec. He has benefited from the mentorship of composer and conductor Bramwell Tovey. Mr. Gauthier has conducted the Orchestre symphonique de Québec and the Orchestre symphonique de Laval, in addition to participating in the Berlin Opera Academy as an assistant conductor. Since 2021, he has been a member of the Orchestral Conducting Academy of the Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal under the direction of Yannick Nézet-Séguin.



# CURTIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Jinyoung Yoon  
John S. Price Fellowship

Himari Yoshimura  
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Mimi Lane and Robert  
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Hanxiao Deng  
Carrie L. Tolson Memorial  
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Alexander Heather<sup>oo</sup>  
Anthony B. Creamer III  
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Huldah Bender Kerner,  
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Anastasia Samsel  
Julius Baker Fellowship

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Gephart Family Fellowship

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Anderson and Daria Pew  
Fellowship

Cameron Slaton  
Laura and Bill Buck  
Fellowship

Oliver Talukder  
William S. Mulherin  
and Joseph F. Baker  
Fellowship

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#### CLARINET

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Felix Meyer Fellowship

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Ruth and Eugene Helmer  
Fellowship

Alexander Erlich-  
Herzog  
Arlene and Irving Tashlick  
Fellowship

Hwaseop Jeong  
Mark and Esther Kramer  
Fellowship

Tzu-Yi Yu  
Valerija and Ladislaus  
Medveckis Fellowship

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William Curtis Bok  
Bassoon Fellowship

Diego Peña  
Lester Henry Grundy  
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Kahlan Yenney  
Myer and Helen K.  
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Fellowship

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Vernon Fellowship

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Curtis Institute of Music  
Fellowship

Nicholas Ivy  
Alice Madge and William  
J. Middleton Fellowship

Christine Ott  
Bob and Caro Rock  
Fellowship

Marcus Shaw  
Bernard M. Guth  
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Franz Maury  
Louisa Knapp Curtis  
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Abigail Rebecca Zubrow  
Cohen Memorial  
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Chris Petrella  
Sandra G. and David G.  
Marshall Fellowship

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Curtis Institute of Music  
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Dorothy J. del Bueno  
Fellowship

Derek Gullett  
Edwin B. Garrigues  
Fellowship

Noah Urquidi,  
*bass trombone*  
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#### TUBA

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Dr. Bong S. Lee Fellowship

#### TIMPANI AND PERCUSSION

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Maxence Dauriat  
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Rogasner Fellowship

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L. Daniel Dannenbaum  
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#### CONDUCTING FELLOWS

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Rita E. Hauser Conducting  
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Micah Gleason  
Rita E. Hauser Conducting  
Fellowship

*The guest conductor for  
each Curtis Symphony  
Orchestra performance is  
made possible by the Rita  
E. and Gustave M. Hauser  
Chair.*

---

\* concertmaster  
+ principal second violin  
◇ principal  
◇◇ associate principal

# STUDENTS

---

## COMPOSITION

Leigha Amick  
Jimmy Brent Fellowship

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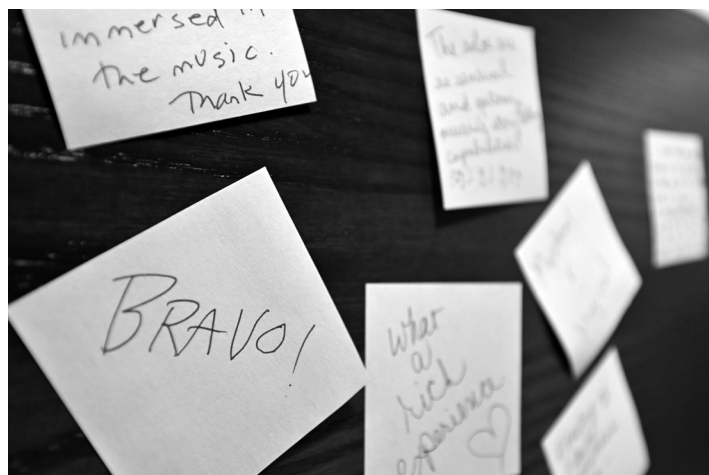
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# RA, MACKEY, AND TCHAIKOVSKY

MAR 9, 2024  
SAT AT 3 P.M.

ROBERT SPANO, CONDUCTOR  
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CURTIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

## Program

JAMES RA	<i>Te Deum</i> , premiere
STEVEN MACKEY	<i>Aluminum Flowers</i> , premiere
TCHAIKOVSKY	Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique")

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MAY 2-3 AT 7:30 P.M.  
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VINAY PARAMESWARAN, CONDUCTOR  
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