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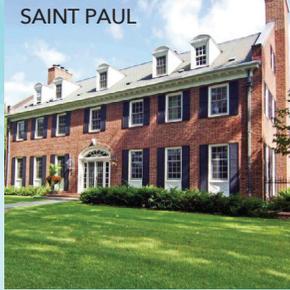
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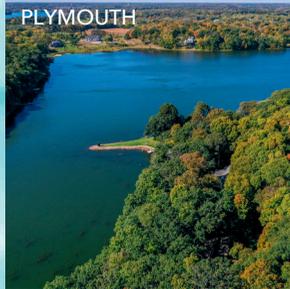
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ABOUT THE COVER: Music Director Thomas Søndergård, whose newly announced third season with the Minnesota Orchestra includes the return of the Nordic Soundscapes festival in January 2026. Photo: Travis Anderson

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PROFILE

THOMAS SØNDERGÅRD

Danish conductor Thomas Søndergård, who this past fall began his second season as music director of the Minnesota Orchestra, is a highly regarded conductor in both the orchestral and opera spheres. He has earned a reputation for incisive interpretations of works by composers from his native Denmark, a great versatility in a broad range of repertoire, and a collaborative approach with the musicians he leads.

Søndergård first conducted the Minnesota Orchestra in December 2021, establishing an immediate rapport with musicians and audiences; he was announced as the next music director in July 2022 and began his tenure in September 2023. Highlights of his 2024–25 season in Minnesota include season opening concerts with Yunchan Lim and Leila Josefowicz, performances of Mozart’s Requiem and Puccini’s *Turandot* and January’s festival of music from Nordic countries.

Since 2018 Søndergård has been music director of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO). Prior to joining the RSNO, he served as principal conductor and musical advisor to the Norwegian Radio Orchestra and then as principal conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales (BBC NOW). As a guest conductor he has led major European and North American orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Gewandhaus Orchestra,



London Symphony and New York Philharmonic. This season, in addition to a full slate of RSNO concerts, he leads Strauss’ *Elektra* with the Deutsche Oper Berlin and Grieg’s *Peer Gynt* with Den Norske Opera and Ballet, and appears as guest conductor with the City of Birmingham Symphony and Aarhus Symfoniorkesterlektra.

Søndergård began his music career as a timpanist, joining the Royal Danish Orchestra after graduating from the Royal Danish Academy of Music. He made his conducting debut in 2005, leading the Royal Danish Opera in the premiere of Poul Ruders’ *Kafka’s Trial* to wide acclaim; he has returned subsequently many times to the Royal Danish Opera. His discography includes Vilde Frang’s debut recording of violin concertos by Sibelius and Prokofiev with the WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne; numerous works by Poul Ruders; the Lutosławski and Dutilleux concertos with cellist Johannes Moser and the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra; Sibelius works with BBC NOW; and works by Prokofiev and Strauss with the RSNO.

For more information, visit minnesotaorchestra.org.

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- Jon Kabat Zinn

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SØNDERGÅRD'S THIRD SEASON BRINGS MA, MUPPETS AND MORE

It's often said that good things come in threes—and for Thomas Søndergård's newly announced third season as Minnesota Orchestra music director, good things will be abundant: star guest artists, symphonic favorites, blockbuster film scores and a lineup of holiday programs, to name a few high points.

The 2025–26 season, running from September 2025 to July 2026, will see the continuation of popular programs such as the multi-week Nordic Soundscapes festival; the Listening Project, which shines a spotlight on underrepresented composers; opera-in-concert performances of Béla Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*; and celebrations of Lunar New Year, Juneteenth and Pride.



Jason Bell

Yo-Yo Ma

Big-name guests gracing the stage include cellist Yo-Yo Ma, pianist Kirill Gerstein, and vocal stars Joyce DiDonato and Jamie Barton. The season

also features beloved classical works such as Beethoven's Fifth and Ninth symphonies; three new works spotlighting Orchestra musicians as soloists, including a world premiere by St. Paul composer Steve Heitzeg; and a year-long theme of American-made



Chris McDuffie

Thomas Søndergård

music in many forms, just in time for the nation's 250th birthday.

The Live at Orchestra Hall series, conducted primarily by Sarah Hicks, is back with pops, jazz and film favorites—including Dessa, Ben Rector, a Pink Floyd tribute and movies like *The Goonies*, *The Muppet Christmas Carol*, *The Princess Bride* and *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*—all with scores performed live-to-picture. Young listeners can enjoy a lineup of Family Concerts, including one led by Søndergård, as well as free tickets to select concerts for the under-18 set through the Hall Pass program.

Ticket packages are on sale now, while tickets to individual concerts will be available starting July 29. Visit minnesotaorchestra.org for full details—and we hope to see you back at the Hall soon!

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SAM BERGMAN'S ORCHESTRA HALL MEMORIES



Zoe Prinds-Flash

Sam Bergman

Throughout the 2024–25 season, we're celebrating Orchestra Hall's 50th birthday by sharing favorite memories from members of the Minnesota Orchestra family. This month's reminiscences come from Sam Bergman, an Orchestra violist from 2000 to 2024 who departed last fall to become executive director of New Hampshire's Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music.

"A concert hall belongs to its community first and foremost, but the musicians who occupy the stage day in and day out can perhaps be forgiven for thinking of it as our home. Orchestra Hall is a special place to us—vast and resonant; quirky and sometimes challenging; and most importantly, the space that makes it possible for us to share our craft with

countless thousands of Minnesotans young and old.

"I remember very well my first rehearsal on that stage, at age 23, in snowy mid-February of 2000. The enormity of the room, and of the job I'd somehow won, was overwhelming. I remember exactly which pieces were on that first rehearsal. I remember how uncertain I was of my ability to play them at the level the Minnesota Orchestra would demand. I also remember, later that same year, the first concerts we ever played with Osmo Vänskä, and how certain I was by the end of that week that he would be our next music director. I remember how the audience rose to their feet to greet him three years later as he took the podium for his first concerts in that role.

"And perhaps more strongly than any of these, I remember the immense privilege of working with conductor Sarah Hicks on our long-running Inside the Classics series of concerts. We had huge ambitions for bringing music and narrative together on that stage with the Orchestra as the centerpiece of every show, and no matter how far we pushed the envelope, our colleagues in the Orchestra and the folks in the audience embraced what we were doing. We made each other laugh, and cry, and feel the music so deeply every time we stepped through the stage doors. I will never do anything quite like it again."

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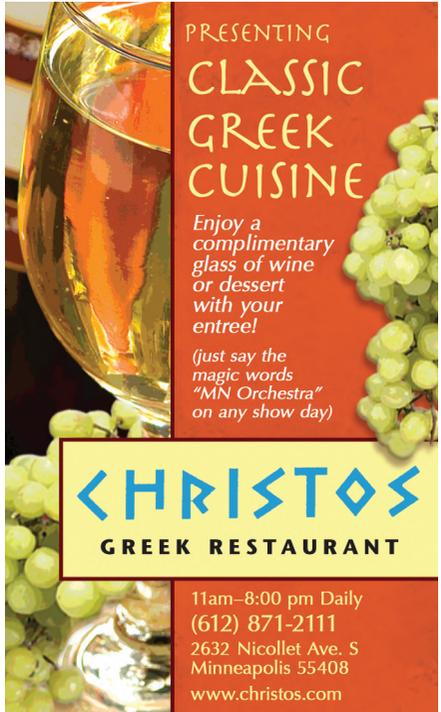
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OUR NEXT PRINCIPAL TRUMPET: JAMES VAUGHEN

— The last time the Minnesota Orchestra welcomed a new leader of its trumpet section, the year was 1981 and Orchestra Hall was only seven years old. This summer, Manny Laureano retires after an unprecedented 44-year tenure in this vital and high-visibility position, and in September the principal trumpet chair will be filled by James Vaughen.

“I am incredibly excited to be joining the Minnesota Orchestra in the fall and am honored to follow Manny Laureano’s impressive legacy,” says Vaughen. “Hearing the Orchestra live during my final audition round, I immediately felt at home with the warmth of the brass sound and inspired by the musical intensity and energy throughout the entire Orchestra. After my audition I was

met with such kindness from everyone in the Orchestra that I could not help thinking that ‘Minnesota nice’ must be true. I hope that I can contribute to this culture of kindness and musical excellence and cannot wait for the 2025–26 season.”

A native of Champaign, Illinois, Vaughen currently serves as assistant principal trumpet of the Detroit Symphony. In upcoming issues of *Showcase* we will continue to celebrate Laureano and welcome Vaughen.



James Vaughen

Cristina Cutts Dougherty

CRITICS’ CORNER: RECENT CONCERT REVIEWS

— “As part of the first program [of the Nordic Soundscapes festival], principal cello Anthony Ross gave eloquent voice to the solo part of ‘Air to Breath,’ the final movement of *Bow to String* by Daniel Bjarnason...On the first night of the festival, [Principal Clarinet] Gabriel Campos Zamora... gave a winning and animated account of Nielsen’s Concerto for Clarinet, the composer’s final work for orchestra and probably the most serious and intense of the Nielsen concertos.”

—Michael Anthony,
Classical Voice North America,
January 23, 2025

“[T]he Dvořák Sixth [Symphony]... benefited from the orchestra’s sublimely blended string sound and overflowed with exceptional solos from among the winds, particularly principal French horn Michael Gast. He expressed the urgency and open-hearted nature of romanticism with expert eloquence...”

—Rob Hubbard,
The Minnesota Star Tribune,
February 1, 2025

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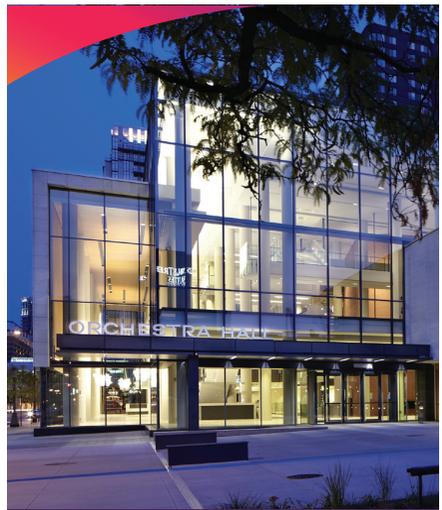
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 PUCCINI'S TURANDOT

Thomas Søndergård, conductor

THU MAY 1 7PM | SAT MAY 3 7PM

Giacomo Puccini *Turandot*, complete opera in concert

Acts I and II

CA. 80'

I N T E R M I S S I O N

CA. 25'

Act III

CA. 40'

Christine Goerke	Turandot
Limmie Pulliam	Calaf
Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha	Liù
Adolfo Corrado	Timur
Sean Michael Plumb	Ping
Brian Wallin	Pang
Daniel Montenegro	Pong
Benjamin Sieverding	A Mandarin
Errin Duane Brooks	Emperor Altoum

Minnesota Chorale
 Kathy Saltzman Romey, artistic director
 Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs
 Elizabeth Egger, director
 Robert Mollicone, rehearsal pianist

Surtitle translation by Cori Ellison.

Thomas Søndergård's profile appears on page 8.

Soloist and choir profiles and rosters begin on page 42.

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The May 3 concert will air live on [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#).

**GIACOMO PUCCINI**

B: December 22, 1858
Lucca, Italy

D: November 29, 1924
Brussels, Belgium

Turandot

PREMIERED: April 25, 1926

— Giacomo Puccini, who died 100 years ago last November 29 at age 65, composed 12 operas, an impressive seven of which remain in the standard repertoire. The last of them is the one we hear tonight, *Turandot*—which Puccini didn't live long enough to complete.

A FINAL MASTERPIECE

Turandot is set in ancient China, but despite its Asian setting, it is a very Italian opera, written by a very Italian composer—much like Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, which is set outside Nagasaki, Japan. Puccini was residing in Viareggio while composing *Turandot*, unaware of how ill he was with throat cancer, though he complained of “a sore throat and an obstinate cough.” When he died, his heirs and his publisher retained Franco Alfano to compose the opera's final minutes. He did so ably, but he was no Puccini.

Turandot premiered at La Scala in Milan, on April 25, 1926, with Arturo Toscanini conducting. At one point during the premiere, Toscanini laid down his baton and turned to the audience to announce: “Here the opera ends, because at this point the Maestro died.” Some musicologists and critics believe that if performances ended at this point, little would be lost—but it is nonetheless customary to include Alfano's work. Sadly, Puccini himself had anticipated the opera's last scene to be its musical and dramatic climax.

The text for *Turandot* is from Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni—and while Puccini's librettos are captivating, it's his melodies and orchestrations that make his operas a feast for a symphony orchestra. “When we started talking about opera in concert,” Minnesota Orchestra Music Director Thomas Søndergård recently said, “I immediately thought of the Minnesota Chorale and how wonderful they would sound in this piece. The chorus plays a huge part in Puccini's masterpiece.”

THE STORY AND MUSIC

ACT I. The opera opens with four haunting notes, followed by threatening chords. To the sound of xylophone and gong, a Mandarin announces to a

crowd that the princess Turandot will be the bride of the man, of “royal blood,” who solves the three enigmas she will put to him. “But whoever faces the trial and is defeated must bow his haughty head to the axe!” The crowd is excited into an uproar in which an old man, Timur, the defeated Tartar King, has fallen. Liù, his caretaker, calls for help, and Calaf (the Unknown Prince) responds and recognizes the dethroned king as his long-absent father who had thought his missing son dead. Thus we learn that Calaf is of “royal blood.”

When Timur gratefully says Liù saved his life, she reveals to Calaf that she saved Timur, “because one day in the palace you smiled at me.” An impatient crowd calls, “Hone the blade!” That is, until the Prince of Persia is led to his death by failing to answer the three enigmas. (He’s only the most recent.) The crowd then begs for mercy. Turandot appears on her balcony, but stoically says nothing. She only signals to proceed with the death of the prince. The anxious crowd awaits the moon’s appearance, as we hear the sounds of the clarinet, harp and vibraphone playing authentic Chinese music adapted by Puccini.

Calaf falls under Turandot’s spell, and he runs toward a gong to signify his acceptance of the enigmas’ challenge. Three Ministers, Ping, Pang and Pong, intercede, but to no avail. Liù also begs Calaf not to pursue the challenge, but he strikes the gong three times as the act ends.

ACT II. The second act opens as the three Ministers prepare for a wedding—or more likely, a funeral. They count the number of beheadings and they recall life before Turandot. The scene changes to a square inside the Palace walls, and the score between the two scenes is breathtaking, showcasing drums, trumpets and trombones.

Finally, we hear from Turandot: “In this palace” (In questa reggia), she explains, thousands of years ago an ancestor was dragged off by a man, “like you, stranger!” “Stranger,” she says to Calaf, “do not tempt Fate!” Calaf is a descendant of “the man like you.” Now comes the contest: “The enigmas are three,” she exclaims, “but death is one!” Calaf responds, in a raised pitch, “No! No! The enigmas are three and *life* is one.” And they repeat the dialogue twice, each time a pitch higher, and each trying to out-do the other.

One of Puccini’s master strokes is his underscoring as the Unknown Prince ponders his three responses. Puccini holds us in suspense. But ultimately, Calaf succeeds: “Hope,” “blood” and “Turandot” are the answers, each echoed by eight sages—eight bass voices—confirming the responses. Turandot tries to extricate herself from the bargain. Calaf offers her a

compromise: If she can solve just one riddle, she will be released. “Tell me my name before dawn and at dawn I will die,” as the curtain falls on Act II.

ACT III. The third and final act opens with the Heralds’ edict: “Under pain of death, the name of the stranger must be revealed before morning!” What follows is one of opera’s greatest arias, Calaf’s “Nessun dorma” (No one must sleep). It concludes with the words “At dawn, I will be victorious!” (Vinceró!)

The assembled crowd demands Calaf reveal his name, but he is steadfast: “I want Turandot!” The tattered and bloodied Liù and Timur are dragged in, as the Guards, pointing to her, proclaim, “Here is the name!” Liù can suffer the torture no longer, and, without revealing Calaf’s identity, she stabs herself to death with a dagger she has just seized from a soldier. Timur, Ping, Pang and Pong mourn to the pathetic sound of the piccolo.

At this point, “the Maestro died.”

Alfano made the best of Puccini’s notes, as Calaf seizes Turandot. In his arms, defeated and weakened, she asks, “What has become of me?” The Unknown Prince reveals, “I am Calaf, son of Timur!” Turandot’s response: “I know the stranger’s name. His name is Love!” With the orchestra playing the “Nessun dorma” motif, Turandot and Calaf embrace, and the crowd chants, “Love is the light of the world.” The curtain falls.

PROGRAM NOTE BY PHILLIP GAINSLEY.



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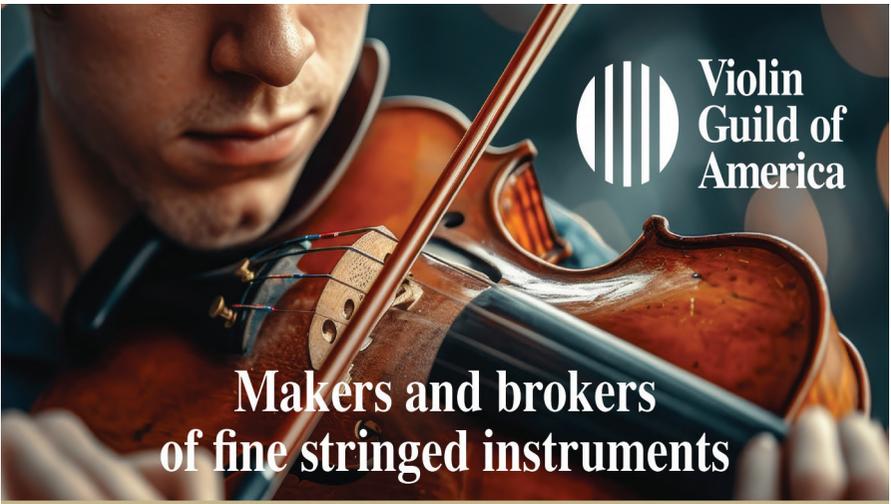
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SØNDERGÅRD, FLITER AND MOZART

Thomas Søndergård, conductor

Ingrid Fliter, piano

THU MAY 8 11AM | FRI MAY 9 8PM

Karim Al-Zand	<i>Luctus Profugis – Elegy for the Displaced</i>	CA. 5'
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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Concerto No. 17 in G major for Piano and Orchestra, K. 453 Allegro Andante Allegretto <i>Ingrid Fliter, piano</i>	CA. 32'
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I N T E R M I S S I O N CA. 20'

Dmitri Shostakovich	Symphony No. 11 in G minor, Opus 103, <i>The Year 1905</i> The Palace Square: Adagio The 9th of January: Allegro – Adagio – Allegro In Memoriam: Adagio The Tocsin: Allegro non troppo – Allegro	CA. 60'
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Conductor and soloist profiles appear on pages 8 and 43.
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KARIM AL-ZAND

B: 1970
Tunis, Tunisia

*Luctus Profugis –
Elegy for the Displaced*
PREMIERED: October 16, 2016

— The story of a massive ongoing humanitarian crisis—the displacement of millions of people from their homes or homelands—can be told in a number of ways. One is through numbers: the United Nations’ refugee monitoring and aid agency, UNHCR, estimated last year that over 122 million people are currently living under forced displacement. Another way is through images: few can forget a photo like that of a 2-year-old Syrian boy, Alan Kurdi, laid dead on a beach along the Mediterranean Sea after drowning while fleeing from his war-torn country. And a third way is through art, including Canadian-American composer Karim Al-Zand’s brief 2016 work for string orchestra and vibraphone, *Luctus Profugis – Elegy for the Displaced*, which responds to the refugee crisis in Europe that began around 2015—when large numbers of refugees arrived in Europe, many fleeing from violence in the Middle East.

MUSIC THAT SHINES A LIGHT

Al-Zand’s music, which receives frequent performances throughout North America and beyond, embraces a great range of instrumentations, topics and influences, and sometimes shines a light on difficult subject matters. Minnesota Orchestra audiences may be most familiar with his only work previously heard at Orchestra Hall, *The Prisoner*, which drew from the letters of Adnan Latif, a Yemini man imprisoned at Guantánamo Bay for a decade without being charged with a crime. However, not all of Al-Zand’s music is connected with current events—as he has also found inspiration from graphic art, myths, fables, folk music, film, spoken word, jazz and his Middle Eastern heritage.

Born in Tunisia to an Iraqi father and an American mother, Al-Zand earned music degrees from McGill University and Harvard University, has won major awards including the Arts and Letters Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and since 2000 has taught composition and music theory at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music.

THE COMPOSER'S NOTE

Al-Zand offers the following comments on *Luctus Profugis*:

“*Luctus Profugis* is a lament for string orchestra and percussion that reflects on the 2015–2019 European refugee crisis. The title translates roughly from Latin as ‘Grief for the Displaced.’ The word ‘profugis’ has a connection to the opening lines of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, which describes one of the earliest refugees: Aeneas fleeing the Trojan War to the shores of Italy. In *Luctus Profugis*, the percussionist at the heart of the ensemble plays a simple three-note motive that repeats for the duration of the piece. Its persistence symbolizes for me the refugees’ journey, their tenacity, courage and resilience.

“The European refugee crisis started in 2015, when tens of thousands of migrants began fleeing their war-ravaged homes to seek asylum in the West. Displaced families, primarily from Syria and other areas of conflict, endured perilous journeys to reach safe destinations in the E.U. The most dangerous routes have included crossings of the Eastern Mediterranean to ports in Greece and Italy. Thousands of migrants are estimated to have perished at sea.

“In the United States, which arguably has played the largest role in catalyzing the migration, the reaction to the crisis has been characterized politically by inaction and fear-mongering. Governors in 26 states (including Texas) have refused to settle Syrian asylum seekers. To date, the U.S. has settled 0.05% of the total number of refugees. Canada and Germany have settled over 19 times that number. It is my hope that *Luctus Profugis* serves as not only an elegy, but also a call to action.”

PROGRAM NOTE BY CARL SCHROEDER, WITH MUSICAL DESCRIPTION BY KARIM AL-ZAND.



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

B: January 27, 1756
Salzburg, Austria

D: December 5, 1791
Vienna, Austria

Concerto No. 17 in
G major for Piano and
Orchestra, K. 453
COMPOSED: 1784

— Not quite 250 years ago, when Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was in his prime as Vienna’s leading pianist, the fortepiano was in a stage of rapid development, changing by leaps and bounds. At a time when a clipped,

detached delivery was the norm, he astonished listeners with his “well-oiled” legato playing; in short, making the piano sing. The instrument so inspired him that, in his short life, he became the most prolific composer of piano concertos, generating 27 in all.

Some of Mozart’s most successful days began with the new year of 1784, and within the year’s first half he had composed no fewer than four piano concerts, two of them—Nos. 14 and 17—inscribed to the gifted Fräulein Ployer. It is believed by some historians, though not with certitude, that she introduced the Concerto No. 17 at a private concert in Döbling on June 10, 1784. Thereabouts, Mozart began playing it in Vienna’s most fashionable halls.

THE MUSIC

ALLEGRO. The Concerto No. 17 teems with splendid ideas ripe for both orchestral and keyboard development. The graceful opening strain is so Classical in its pose as to sum up the 18th-century European aesthetic. After a chattering response from the woodwinds, the orchestra continues to present the principal ideas. The contrasting subject is tinged with sadness.

When the piano at last enters the scene with a simple and eloquent statement of the first subject, the winds answer just as before. But now the solo elaborations uncover new facets of the ideas, and the impulse to explore outlying key territories suggests a troubled clouding of the skies. The reprise is no mere rehashing of what transpired before, for the composer illuminates his ideas rather than settling for a simple repetition of them. At the threshold of the cadenza the soloist is confronted with a choice, for Mozart wrote two, each revealing his insight into the instrument’s power and potentialities. Such music was ill-suited to the then-declining harpsichord, with its plucked rather than hammered strings.

ANDANTE. Every slow movement is the key to the profundity of the man himself, and the *Andante* of this concerto is one of the most intimate and stirring of all. Mozart shares a wealth of emotions—tender at first, but with a latent passion eager to erupt. A lyrical sigh is at the heart of the first string theme, perhaps continuing a similar thought uttered in the first movement. The sadness deepens as a woodwind trio, underpinned by strings and horn, emphasizes the gravity of the main theme and prophesies its companion.

Solitary, the piano at last comes forward with the penetrating thought that dominates this slow movement. Scarcely has it broken when the music plunges into G minor—a contrast to the concerto’s overall G-major

key—baring the anguish beneath. Nevertheless, the calm introspection of the opening theme will not be vanquished for good, and it returns like a haunting idea that persists in crossing the mind. Once again Mozart offers a choice of cadenzas.

ALLEGRETTO. In Mozart, where there are tears, or close to, do not be surprised if laughter follows. And thus the Concerto No. 17 uncorks one of his merriest finales, led off by a folkish tune. Because the theme is simply too lovable to be obscured, the composer is careful that it not be masked in a set of witty variations.

At first the piano spins off a lively variant that in no way alters its basic shape, and through the subsequent transformations—five in all, including a robust escapade in the minor mode—the genial subject is in no danger of losing ground. In the coda Mozart changes gears, shifting to *Presto*. Prodded by horn calls, the orchestra bounds ahead, with the piano joining the race. Like the concluding scene of one of Mozart’s comic operas, the closing bars sweep us along to an exhilarating finish, symbolic of the joyousness of the composer himself.

EXCERPTED FROM A PROGRAM NOTE BY MARY ANN FELDMAN.



DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH *Symphony No. 11 in*

B: September 25, 1906
St. Petersburg, Russia

D: August 9, 1975
Moscow, Russia

*G minor, Opus 103,
The Year 1905*

PREMIERED: October 30, 1957

— The 50th anniversary of Russia’s ill-fated October revolution of 1905 was to be celebrated in the Soviet Union officially in 1957. As the observance approached, Dmitri Shostakovich—whose entire creative life was profoundly affected by the turbulence of the Soviet Union—delivered an impressive gift to the Soviet citizens: a symphony in four continuous movements, each headed by a descriptive title programmatic enough to fire the imagination, and incorporating authentic music associated with the revolution.

The work is cyclic, with certain themes reappearing, especially in the finale, and even though the tunes were transformed by Shostakovich, they were

easily recognized by the Russian public. Listeners reacted ecstatically to the stirring symphony when it was premiered in Moscow on October 30, 1957, by the USSR State Symphony Orchestra.

THE STORY AND THE MUSIC

Musicologist Robert Dearling prepared a succinct digest of the musical events for a collection of critical essays, *Shostakovich: The Man and His Music* (1982), and much of his commentary follows.

THE PALACE SQUARE. “After many years of subjugation under the Czars’ iron rule, the Russian people were driven by despair to approach their oppressors and ask for mercy. In this first movement the people are depicted standing mutely pleading in the square before the Palace. A muted trumpet solo, later echoed by muted horn, petitions for compassion but is ignored. Taking up the triplet rhythm of the timpani, a solo flute sings the people’s song (‘Listen’). Other folk songs occur, each telling of the plight of the ordinary people, but the significance of each is disregarded by those within the Palace.

THE NINTH OF JANUARY. “The 9th of January 1905 is known in Russia as ‘Bloody Sunday.’ Here Shostakovich skillfully depicts a crowd of workers approaching the Winter Palace in unarmed protest, at first earnest and orderly but gradually giving way to indignation. A return to the music of the *Palace Square* movement renews their supplication to their Czar, but, tragically, he was absent from the Palace. Cossacks from the Romanov bodyguard, lacking direct orders from the Czar, moved amongst the crowd with guns and swords. In a passage of searing realism, the composer portrays the ensuing scene of agony and death with a truly remarkable display of endurance and vivid writing. Page after page of harrowing unisons alternate with savage percussion rhythms as massacred peasants fall into the snow. With shocking abruptness, the battle is over, the square is silent and lifeless. The flute melody ‘Listen’ now droops in grief.

IN MEMORIAM: ADAGIO. “The third movement commemorates the victims of that too-passive revolution. Its main burden is the song ‘You fell as victims,’ heard on muted violas after an introductory pizzicato figure that continues as an accompaniment. The song grows impassioned as other strings join in. A funeral scene slowly unfolds, recalling in its anguish that terrible day before subsiding to allow a repeat of the tragically lovely viola melody.

THE TOCSIN. “The finale, *The Tocsin* (the ringing of a bell), warns that the people will triumph just as certainly as the guilty will be punished. A

savage fanfare commands immediate attention, and the peasants are again on the march, gathering overwhelming support and crushing every obstacle. A ruthless display of violent resolve culminates in a mighty affirmation of the fanfare and a shattering *fff* stroke on cymbals and bass drum. We find ourselves once again in the Palace Square. The English horn chants a lament taken from the second movement. With tight-lipped determination and amid insistent percussion strokes, a bass clarinet hurls out the opening theme of that movement with utmost malevolence. Once again the music gathers power at a breathtaking rate, and in an unstoppable galloping coda the true tocsin sounds out: a warning bell that yet again recalls the massacre of the second movement.”

EXCERPTED FROM A PROGRAM NOTE BY MARY ANN FELDMAN, WITH MUSICAL DESCRIPTION BY ROBERT DEARLING.

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Edward Gardner, conductor

James Ehnes, violin

THU MAY 15 11AM | FRI MAY 16 8PM

George Walker	Folksongs for Orchestra Going to Lay Down My Sword And They Crucified My Lord My Lord, What a Morning O Peter, Go Ring Dem Bells	CA. 12'
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Antonín Dvořák	Concerto in A minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 53 Allegro, ma non troppo Andante, ma non troppo Finale: Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo <i>James Ehnes, violin</i>	CA. 31'
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I N T E R M I S S I O N CA. 20'

Bedřich Smetana	<i>Tábor</i> , No. 5 from <i>Má vlast</i> (My Homeland)	CA. 13'
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Leoš Janáček	Sinfonietta Allegretto Andante – Allegretto Moderato Allegretto Allegro – Maestoso	CA. 22'
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Conductor and soloist profiles appear on pages 43 and 44.
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**GEORGE WALKER****B:** June 27, 1922
Washington, D.C.**D:** August 23, 2018
Montclair, New Jersey**Folksongs for Orchestra****PREMIERED:** May 22, 1992

By the time of his death in August 2018 at age 96, Pulitzer Prize-winning pianist and composer George Theophilus Walker had enjoyed a trailblazing career that lasted just over 80 years. Born into a family of pianists in Washington, D.C., Walker began piano lessons at age 5, gave his debut recital at 14 and was admitted to Oberlin Conservatory the same year. After studying piano and organ at Oberlin, Walker enrolled at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, where he studied piano with Rudolf Serkin and composition with Rosario Scalerò.

A SERIES OF FIRSTS

The year 1945 brought a trio of “firsts” that quietly broke barriers for generations of Black musicians who followed Walker: he was the first Black artist to give a recital at New York’s Town Hall, to solo with the Philadelphia Orchestra and to graduate from the Curtis Institute. But despite these firsts (and years of touring), Walker’s performance career languished due to his race. At the encouragement of his father, Walker decided to turn his full attention to teaching composition. After completing a Ph.D. at the Eastman School, he was accepted as a Fulbright Scholar to study further with Nadia Boulanger in Fontainebleau, France. Once back in America, Walker held posts at several universities, including Rutgers University, where he retired as professor emeritus in 1992.

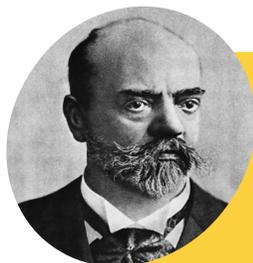
In 1996, Walker became the first Black composer to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music, for his voice-and-orchestra composition *Lilacs*. Despite breaking yet another barrier, Walker had complicated feelings about the recognition. “I’ve benefited from being a black composer in the sense that when there are symposiums given of music by black composers, I would get performances by orchestras that otherwise would not have done the works,” he said in a 1987 interview with broadcaster Bruce Duffie. “The other aspect, of course, is that if I were not black, I would have had a far wider dispersion of my music and more performances.”

All told, Walker composed more than 90 works and was working intently on new music at the time of his passing.

FRAMING THE MELODIES

Walker's musical style is strongly rooted in Western classical tradition while also sometimes drawing influence from jazz and African American spirituals. His *Folksongs for Orchestra* is a setting of four traditional spirituals. Of this music, Walker wrote that his intention was to "to set these melodies in an interesting way, in a respectful orchestral manner. They are wonderful melodies. The four spirituals are quoted intact, which is an unusual procedure for me, because I am much more in the habit of using only snippets from various sources [of] pop tunes or folk songs. The focus is to frame these melodies in a miniaturistic fashion; they should be easy for the listener to identify."

PROGRAM NOTE BY MICHAEL DIVINO.



ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

B: September 8, 1841
Nelahozeves, Bohemia
(now Czech Republic)

D: May 1, 1904
Prague, Bohemia
(now Czech Republic)

**Concerto in A minor for
Violin and Orchestra,
Opus 53**

PREMIERED:
October 14, 1883

Success came slowly for Antonín Dvořák—but then it arrived with a great rush. He had labored for years in obscurity, supporting his family as a teacher and an orchestral violist while working to become established as a composer. But Brahms noticed him and alerted his own publisher, Simrock, to this unknown Czech musician. In 1878, when Dvořák was 37, Simrock published his first set of *Slavonic Dances*, and they swept across the planet, being performed throughout Europe and even in distant America. Now Dvořák's music was in demand.

THE JOACHIM CONNECTION

Among those who took up his music was Joseph Joachim, the greatest violinist of the era. He played Dvořák's chamber music in Berlin and invited the composer into his home to hear the rehearsals. Dvořák resolved to write a concerto for Joachim, who had just given the first performance of Brahms' *Violin Concerto*. He drafted the concerto during the summer of 1879 and the following spring journeyed to Berlin to go over the manuscript with Joachim. Joachim liked the piece, went over it in detail with the composer,

made some suggestions that Dvořák accepted and was happy to accept the dedication. But he never played the concerto in public, despite the fact that he liked it (performances were scheduled but were postponed or canceled). Finally Dvořák turned to another violinist, and František Ondříček gave the first performance on October 14, 1883, in Prague.

AN IMMENSELY APPEALING WORK

Dvořák's Violin Concerto offers all the composer's considerable virtues: appealing tunes, energy and color, and a strong Czech flavor. It also presents some innovations.

ALLEGRO, MA NON TROPPO. Dvořák does away with the traditional orchestral exposition of themes at the opening: the orchestra offers a powerful opening gesture, and the soloist enters immediately with lyrical, almost rhapsodic material. This establishes the character of the concerto—essentially lyric and relaxed, though it can be brilliant as well. Dvořák offers secondary material, and the concerto appears to proceed in sonata form, but another surprise comes at the end of the movement when Dvořák does not recapitulate his themes. Instead of the traditional ending, he gives the soloist a cadenza-like passage and then goes on without pause into the slow central movement.

ADAGIO, MA NON TROPPO. The *Adagio* is also lyric in character, based on the violin's opening idea, which Dvořák marks *espressivo*. This theme is then varied, and at the center of this movement the music suddenly erupts in a great F-minor storm, full of brilliant violin writing: octaves, runs, trills and swirls. The storm passes, the opening mood returns, and the movement concludes serenely.

FINALE: ALLEGRO GIOCOLO, MA NON TROPPO. The finale, which Dvořák specifies should be *giocoso*, “happy,” is the most distinctly “Czech” movement in the concerto. Solo violin leads the way with a dancing, syncopated tune that has been compared to the Czech *furiant*, an old folk dance based on cross-rhythms. The idea is treated in a sort of rondo form, with extended episodes including a *dumka*, an expressive, dark interlude in D minor. But the dancing energy of the opening returns, driving the concerto to four powerful chords that bring it to a vigorous close.

PROGRAM NOTE BY ERIC BROMBERGER.

**BEDŘICH SMETANA**

B: March 2, 1824
Leitomyšl, Bohemia
(now Litomyšl,
Czech Republic)

D: May 12, 1884
Prague, Bohemia
(now Czech Republic)

Tábor, No. 5 from
Má vlast (My Homeland)

PREMIERED: January 4, 1880

Bedřich Smetana was born in a picturesque town in Bohemia when the land was subjected to the ironclad rule of the Austrian monarchy, and its administration was unconditionally German. Educated from his earliest days in the German language, the composer—who was to be recognized as the founder of Czech national music—struggled to express himself in the Czech tongue. He did, however, declare in words as well as his music, “My homeland means more to me than anything else.” And in the cycle of a half-dozen symphonic poems collectively known as *Má vlast* (My Homeland), he left an orchestral legacy inspired by his country’s landscape, legends and history.

Of this remarkable set of descriptive pieces, only *The Moldau*, which traces the course of the river Vltava as it flows northward through the Bohemian forest to the Elbe, is a staple of the repertory. The lesser-known *Tábor* is the fifth of the set, completed in 1878 and premiered on January 4, 1880, by the Prague Philharmonic, and continues the Czech theme of this week’s concerts.

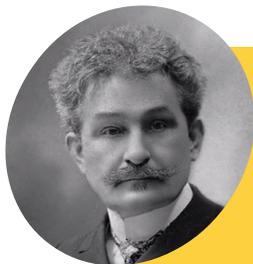
After the Czech theologian-philosopher John Hus was burned at the stake early in the 15th century, the *Táborites*—a faction of the Hussite Christian reform movement—rebelled against the powerful church of Rome and the Germanic domination of their land. *Tábor*, a city that lies some 50 miles south of Prague, was the stronghold of the revolt. Nos. 5 and 6 of Smetana’s *Má vlast* find their inspiration in this Hussite struggle.

Smetana composed *Tábor* toward the end of 1878. He had this to say about the music:

“Motto: *Ktož jsú boží bojovníci!* [Ye who are God’s warriors!] The whole structure of the work derives from this majestic song. At the main seat—at *Tábor*—this hymn assuredly resounded most mightily and most frequently. The work also depicts resolute will, victorious battles, perseverance, and the stubborn inflexibility with which the composition ends....[I]n general it encompasses the glory and fame of the Hussite wars and the invincible spirit of the Hussites.”

The spirit of the Hussite chorale on which the work is based permeates the entire episode; most of its musical elements are drawn from the chorale melody. The dominant idea is the rhythmic germ found in the repeated notes of the opening, a motive that epitomizes the stubborn determination of the puritan revolt. In the 19th century, the Hussite stance was regarded primarily as an assertion of national rather than religious rights. After a long period of consideration (nearly three years had elapsed since No. 4 of *Má vlast*), Smetana was conscious of the need to present the Hussite period in nationalist perspective.

PROGRAM NOTE BY MARY ANN FELDMAN.



LEOŠ JANÁČEK

B: July 3, 1854
Hukvaldy, Moravia
(now Czech Republic)

D: August 12, 1928
Ostrava, Czechoslovakia
(now Czech Republic)

Sinfonietta

PREMIERED: June 26, 1926

The year 1926 saw the premiere of Leoš Janáček's greatest orchestral composition—while the composer was nearly 72 and in the midst of his most vigorously creative years. Most known for his operas and vocal music, Janáček had thus far confined his instrumental writing to smaller ensembles, but a commission offered him in 1926 stirred him to attempt something larger.

Composed in the early months of 1926, the *Sinfonietta* received its first performance in Smetana Hall, Prague, on June 26 of that year—a decade after Prague performances of the composer's opera *Jenufa* had propelled him into international prominence. The late-blooming Janáček, energized by the post-World War I independence of his beloved Czechoslovakia, and in the throes of a passionate—if unrequited—love affair, completed not only this five-movement symphonic work, but also his *Glagolitic Mass*, a Second String Quartet and the opera *From the House of the Dead* during his final three years.

A MIX OF INSPIRATIONS

In 1917 Janáček had become infatuated with Kamila Stösslová, who was 27 years old and married, when Janáček and his wife struck up a friendship

with Stösslová and her husband. Although his love for her was never reciprocated in kind, Stösslová became Janáček's muse and inspiration until the end of his life. On one occasion, when Stösslová and the composer sat together listening to a band playing a public park concert, Janáček first formed the ideas for the military fanfares that underpin the *Sinfonietta*.

The other energizing factor, Janáček's love of country, manifested itself throughout his life, as he devoted himself to Moravian culture. He collected and published folk songs and dances, and he nourished his love of language through study of popular speech and its melodic and rhythmic patterns. Like other citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Janáček grew up speaking German, but he took pride in speaking only Czech as an adult and rejoiced in the non-German, Eastern-leaning languages and folk music of his native Moravia, in the eastern part of what we now call the Czech Republic.

Janáček composed the *Sinfonietta*, which he occasionally referred to as his "Military *Sinfonietta*," on a commission from the Sokol Gymnastic Festival in Prague. Completing it in a single month, March 1926, he dedicated the work to one of his most ardent supporters, Rosa Newmarch.

THE MUSIC IN BRIEF

The composer's aptly chosen title, *Sinfonietta*, tells us that we can expect something symphony-like—but upsized from four to five movements—yet not quite a symphony, since the music is arranged episodically, without "normal" symphonic development, and with shifting rhythms, tempos and tonalities. And the instrumentation! Twelve trumpets, six trombones and three tubas serve to create a whole new symphonic experience.

Hearing the *Sinfonietta*, one can easily imagine Janáček collecting Moravian folk dances and songs in the field, listening to a brass band in a park concert, and celebrating the end of war and the re-birth of his independent homeland. The fanfares of the first movement, which serve to introduce the work, return in the fifth movement, embracing the composer's enduring spirit of exuberance and passion.

The virtuosic writing for all the instruments—and not just for the brass—as well as the shifting moods and rhythms, the raucous and celebratory fanfares, and the contrast between passages of sweet longing and wild jubilation all contribute to the success that this 25-minute symphonic adventure has enjoyed.

PROGRAM NOTE BY SANDRA HYSLOP.

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CHAMBER MUSIC IN THE HALL WITH JAMES EHNES

SAT MAY 17 2PM

The Minnesota Orchestra's Chamber Music series is generously sponsored by Dr. Jennine and John Speier.*

Gabriella Smith	<p><i>Porcupine Wash</i> Mohavea confertiflora (Ghost Flower) Ferocactus cylindraceus (Barrel Cactus) Fouquieria splendens (Ocotillo) Cylindropuntia bigelovii (Teddy-bear Cholla) Sarah Grimes, violin Cecilia Belcher, violin Lydia Grimes, viola Sonia Mantell, cello</p>	CA. 15'
David Sterrett	<p><i>For the Angels Left Behind</i> (words by Holly Slocum) Karin Wolverton, soprano Rui Du, violin Rebecca Corruccini, violin Kenneth Freed, viola Anthony Ross, cello Kathryn Nettleman, bass Greg Milliren, flute Timothy Zavadil, clarinet J. Christopher Marshall, bassoon Brian Jensen, horn Cheryl Losey Feder, harp</p>	CA. 5'

* In remembrance
 Turn the page for remainder of the program.

MAY 17 — CHAMBER MUSIC IN THE HALL

Philip Glass String Quartet No. 3, *Mishima* CA. 18'

1957: Award Montage
November 25: Ichigaya
Grandmother and Kimitake
1962: Body Building
Blood Oath
Mishima/Closing (End Credits)
Susie Park, violin
Hanna Landrum, violin
Marlea Simpson, viola
Erik Wheeler, cello

I N T E R M I S S I O N

CA. 20'

Ludwig van Beethoven Septet in E-flat major, Opus 20 CA. 44'

Adagio – Allegro con brio
Adagio cantabile
Tempo di menuetto
Tema con variazioni: Andante
Scherzo: Allegro molto e vivace
Andante con moto alla marcia – Presto
James Ehnes, violin
Marlea Simpson, viola
Lukas Goodman, cello
Kristen Bruya, bass
Gabriel Campos Zamora, clarinet
Fei Xie, bassoon
Jaclyn Rainey, horn

A profile of James Ehnes appears on page 43.
Visit minnesotaorchestra.org/musicians for profiles of Minnesota Orchestra musicians performing in this afternoon's concert.

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ERRIN DUANE BROOKS,
TENOR (EMPEROR ALTOUM)

Grammy-winner Errin Duane Brooks is becoming one of the most sought-after tenors in the industry. Last season he covered Calaf in *Turandot* and reprised Adult Nathan in Terrence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, both with the Metropolitan Opera; sang Rodolfo in *La Bohème* with Port Angeles Symphony; and made his role début as Otello with Vashon Opera. Next season he returns to the Met to sing the First Priest/Armored Man in *The Magic Flute* and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*. He was part of *The Mile-Long Opera: a biography of 7 o'clock* by Pulitzer-winning composer David Lang and poets Anne Carson and Claudia Rankine. In concert he has performed such works as the Schoenberg arrangement of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with Washington Heights Chamber Orchestra. He earned the George London-Kirsten Flagstad Grand Prize Award for promising Wagnerian Singer in the George and Nora London Foundation Competition. More: uiatalent.com, errinduanebrooks.com.



ADOLFO CORRADO,
BASS (TIMUR)

Adolfo Corrado, the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World 2023, performs regularly at Europe's great opera houses and festivals, from the Teatro alla Scala in Milan and Arena di Verona to the Salzburger Festspiele and Festival della Valle d'Itria. Among his recent and upcoming productions are *La Bohème* at Fondazione Petruzzelli di Bari and Teatro La Fenice di Venezia; *La Cenerentola* and *Norma* at Théâtre du Capitole in Toulouse; *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* at Opéra Royal de Wallonie in Liège; *Il Trovatore* at Palau de les Arts de Valencia; *Turandot* at Teatro Massimo in Palermo; and *Loreley* at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Recent and upcoming concert appearances include Mozart's C-minor Mass at Teatro San Carlo and Beethoven's Ninth at the Teatro la Fenice di Venezia and Festival MiTo in Turin. He is a winner of the 2021 International Competition Toti Dal Monte and the 2022 International Competition As.Li. Co. More: nachtigallartists.cz.



JAMES EHNES,
VIOLIN

James Ehnes has established himself as one of the most sought-after musicians on the international stage. He has recently appeared with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, London Philharmonic Orchestra, NHK Symphony, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony and Cleveland Orchestra. Throughout the 2024-25 season he is artist in residence with the Melbourne Symphony and will tour to Asia, where he will perform the complete Beethoven sonatas at Kioi Hall, Tokyo, as well as performances with the Hong Kong Philharmonic and Singapore Symphony orchestras. He maintains a busy recital schedule, performing regularly at Wigmore Hall. As a chamber musician, he is the leader of the Ehnes Quartet and artistic director of the Seattle Chamber Music Society. He has an extensive discography and has won many awards, including two Grammys. He is professor of violin at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. He plays the "Marsick" Stradivarius of 1715. More: intermusica.com, jamesehnes.com.



INGRID FLITER,
PIANO

Argentine pianist Ingrid Fliter has won the admiration and hearts of audiences around the world for her passionate yet thoughtful and sensitive music-making played with an effortless technique. Winner of the 2006 Gilmore Artist Award, she divides her time between North America and Europe. Recent orchestral engagements include appearances with the Helsinki and Royal Stockholm philharmonics, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Ulster Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lyon and Norrköping Symphony Orchestra. She has appeared with most major North American orchestras and in recital at Carnegie's Zankel Hall, the Metropolitan Museum and many other major venues. She has recorded both Chopin concertos and the Mendelssohn and Schumann concertos with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra as well as the complete Chopin preludes and Chopin nocturnes. Her most recent recording is an all-Beethoven CD featuring the *Pathétique* and *Appassionata* sonatas. Her next recording project will feature the Chopin mazurkas. More: imgartists.com, ingridfliter.com.



EDWARD GARDNER,
CONDUCTOR

Edward Gardner is principal conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO) and music director of the Norwegian Opera and Ballet, which he leads this season in Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*, Mahler's Symphony No. 2, Verdi's *La Traviata* and Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*. He also serves as honorary conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra. Among his engagements this season are a U.S. tour with the LPO and guest conducting engagements with the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Frankfurt Radio, Dallas Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic and Sydney Symphony, among other ensembles. This spring he returns to the Royal Opera House to conduct the world premiere of Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Festen* and returns to Bayerische Staatsoper for *Rusalka*. His discography includes a Grammy-nominated Janáček *Glagolitic Mass* with the Bergen Philharmonic and, most recently, Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust* with the LPO. He founded the Hallé Youth Orchestra in 2002. More: askonasholt.com.



CHRISTINE GOERKE,
SOPRANO (TURANDOT)

Christine Goerke has sung much of the great soprano repertoire, beginning with the Mozart and Handel heroines and moving into dramatic Strauss and Wagner roles, in major opera houses of the world including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Royal Opera House, Paris Opera and Teatro alla Scala. She has also appeared with leading orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, BBC Symphony and Sydney Symphony. Her recording of Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* with Robert Spano and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra won the 2003 Grammys for Best Classical Recording and Best Choral Performance. Other albums include Britten's *War Requiem*, which won the 1999 Grammy for Best Choral Performance. She was the recipient of the 2001 Richard Tucker Award, the 2015 Musical America Vocalist of the Year Award and the 2017 Opera News Award. More: opus3artists.com, christinegoerke.com.



DANIEL MONTENEGRO,
TENOR (PONG)

A graduate of San Francisco's prestigious Adler Fellow Opera Program, American tenor Daniel Montenegro is recognized for his flexible and distinctive voice and a varied repertoire of bel canto, verismo and contemporary roles. He made his Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera and San Diego Opera debuts in 2015 as Luis—a role he created—in *El Pasado Nunca se Termina*. Recent and upcoming engagements include Alfredo in *La Traviata* at Lyric Opera of Kansas City, the Duke in *Rigoletto* at Nashville Opera and Rafael in *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* at Opera Santa Barbara. He also appeared as a featured soloist with Minnesota Opera at the 2021 Opera America annual conference. Recent seasons have included one of his signature roles, Giovanni, in *La Hija de Rappaccini* with Chicago Opera Theater. He is a featured soloist on *Great Voices Sing John Denver* alongside Plácido Domingo.



SEAN MICHAEL PLUMB,
BARITONE (PING)

American baritone Sean Michael Plumb has sung on major opera and concert stages around the world including the Metropolitan Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Salzburger Festspiele, Opéra national de Paris, Opéra national de Lyon, Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks and Heidelberger Frühling. This season he returns both to the Bayerische Staatsoper as Frank-Fritz in *Die tote Stadt* and to the Metropolitan Opera as Papageno in *The Magic Flute* and Schaunard in *La Bohème*. In concert he sings Schoenberg's *Die Jakobsleiter* in a performance led by Ingo Metzmacher at the Elbphilharmonie, *Carmina burana* with Osmo Vänskä and the Cleveland Orchestra, and Melot in the Second Act of *Tristan und Isolde* with the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks. He is the winner of a 2022 Career Grant from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation. More: etudearts.com, seanmichaelplumb.com.



LIMMIE PULLIAM,
TENOR (CALAF)

Rising dramatic tenor Limmie Pulliam has thrilled audiences with his captivating stage presence and beautiful sound. The 2024-25 season will feature a combination of exciting debuts and returns, including his role debut as Calaf in *Turandot* for a benefit concert for University of Houston's Moore School of Music, followed by further performances of the role in his debut with the Minnesota Orchestra. He makes his debut with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, with further performances next season with the Cleveland Orchestra. Following his successful 2022 Metropolitan Opera debut as Radamès in *Aida*, he joins the Baltimore Symphony in the same role and makes his debut with the Orchestre Métropolitain for Bruckner's *Te Deum*. Elsewhere, he makes his role and house debut as Samson in *Samson et Dalila* with New Orleans Opera, house debuts with Austin Opera for Verdi's Requiem and Arizona Opera as Radamès in *Aida*. More: fletcherartists.com, limmiepulliam.com.



**MASABANE CECILIA
RANGWANASHA,**
SOPRANO (LIÙ)

Rising star Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha won the Song Prize at the 2021 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition and most recently was awarded the 2024 Herbert von Karajan Prize. In 2024-25 she performs Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Munich Philharmonic, Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* with the Royal and London symphony orchestras, Verdi's Requiem at the Wiener Konzerthaus and Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony with The Hallé, in addition to performing at the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall, among other engagements. Last season, she made a string of debuts with Washington National Opera and the Hamburg State Opera as Liù in *Turandot*, a role she also performed with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden on tour in Japan. On the concert stage, she made her U.S. debut with Washington's National Symphony in Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*. More: intermusica.com.



BENJAMIN SIEVERDING,
BASS (A MANDARIN)

Benjamin Sieverding has launched a promising career that touches on more than three centuries of repertoire. This season he performs the Jailer in *Tosca* and covers José Tripaldi in *Ainadamar* with the Metropolitan Opera. He has covered several additional roles with the Met and performs frequently with Minnesota Opera, most recently as a soloist in its preview concert and as Colline in *La Bohème*. New and rare roles include Mr. Noble in *The Montana Mikado* with Intermountain Opera Bozeman, Max Kane in the premiere of Bolcom's *Dinner at Eight* with Minnesota Opera and Frère Filandro in the modern premiere of Pasquini's *Il Tirinto* with Consortium Carissimi. In concert, he has been soloist in Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* with the Brno Philharmonic and the Nunes Garcia Requiem at Carnegie Hall, among many other engagements. He is a four-time Regional Finalist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. More: stratagemartists.com, benjaminsieverding.com.



BRIAN WALLIN,
TENOR (PANG)

Praised for his finely focused voice, flair and commitment, tenor Brian Wallin this season makes a company debut with Salt Marsh Opera as Conte Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, is tenor soloist in Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* with the Rochester Symphony Orchestra, and sings Ralph Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore* with Opera Las Vegas and the Pacific Opera Project. Last season he returned to Arizona Opera as Conte Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Annapolis Opera as Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*. He also made debuts with Permian Basin Opera in Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied* and was tenor soloist in Orff's *Carmina burana* with the Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra. He previously appeared with such companies as Arizona Opera (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Annapolis Opera and Opéra de Montréal (*The Magic Flute*), Pacific Opera Project (*The Pirates of Penzance*) and Opera Baltimore (*Adriana Lecouvreur*). More: brianwallin.com.

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The Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs (ACYC), founded in 1980, is an award-winning children’s community choral program. ACYC offers ten ensembles serving youth from grades K-12, plus an adaptive class for singers with special needs and an alumni adult chorus. ACYC’s SATB High School choir was selected as the only Minnesota ensemble to perform at the prestigious 2025 National ACDA Conference in March 2025. ACYC singers performed at the 2018 Super Bowl and were named “Best Community Choir in MN” by WCCO-TV. More: angelicacantanti.org.

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Jadyn Harrison	Josephine Spott
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BARBARA BROOKS,
 ACCOMPANIST AND
 ARTISTIC ADVISER

The Minnesota Chorale, principal chorus of the Minnesota Orchestra since 2004, in 2023 marked the 50th anniversary of its first appearance with the Orchestra. Its recent collaborations with the Orchestra include performances of Mozart’s Requiem, Johannes Brahms’ *Schicksalslied* and the U.S. premiere of Eleanor Alberga’s *Rise Up, O Sun!*, as well as the world premiere of *brea(d)th* by Carlos Simon and Marc Bamuthi Joseph. During the Orchestra’s 2025-26 season, the Chorale will collaborate in performances of Brahms’ *A German Requiem* and Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. Founded in 1972 and led since 1995 by artistic director Kathy Saltzman Romey, the Chorale is Minnesota’s preeminent symphonic chorus and ranks among the foremost professional choruses in the U.S. More: mnchorale.org.

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 Elizabeth
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 Wendy
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 Amy Madson*
 Anna Maher
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 McInerney
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 Sara Ann Pogorely
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 Drew Brooks
 Jared Campbell*
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 Chris
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 Dominic Detwiler
 Mark Ertl
 Elwyn Alexander
 Fraser Jr.
 Thomas Jermann
 Andrew Kreye*
 Andy McCullough*
 Scott D. McKenzie
 David Mennicke*
 Geoff Michael
 Kevin Navis
 Jeffrey Nielsen
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 Larry Studt
 Walter Tambor*
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 Steven Hodulik*
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