



JAAP VAN ZWEDEN
MUSIC DIRECTOR

THE MARCH TO LIBERATION

**Presenting Sponsors
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Thursday, March 2, 2023, 7:30 p.m.
16,861st Concert

Saturday, March 4, 2023, 8:00 p.m.
16,862nd Concert

Leslie B. Dunner, Conductor
Tazewell Thompson*, Director
Rasean Davonté Johnson*, Video Artist
Robert Wierzel*, Lighting Designer

Ryan Speedo Green*, Bass-Baritone
Simon Estes, Speaker
Ebony Spicer*, Treble
Janinah Burnett*, Soprano
Rodrick Dixon*, Tenor
New York Philharmonic Chorus
Malcolm J. Merriweather, Director

Wu Tsai Theater
David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center
Home of the New York Philharmonic

Major support for these concerts is
provided by **Dr. Kathryn Beal**.

These concerts are part of the
Wu Tsai Series Inaugural Season.

This program will last approximately two hours,
which includes one intermission.



March 2 & 4, 2023

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Courtney BRYAN (b. 1982) &
Tazewell THOMPSON
(b. 1948)

Gathering Song (2022; World Premiere—
New York Philharmonic Commission)

RYAN SPEEDO GREEN, Bass-Baritone

STILL
(1895–1978)

Symphony No. 2, Song of a New Race
(1937)

Slowly
Slowly and deeply expressive
Moderately fast
Moderately slow

Intermission

Adolphus HAILSTORK
(b. 1941)

Done Made My Vow, A Ceremony
(1985; rev. 2009)

SIMON ESTES, Speaker
EBONY SPICER, Treble
JANINAH BURNETT, Soprano
RODRICK DIXON, Tenor
NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC CHORUS

PRODUCTION

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Associate Projections Designer: Parker Langvardt
Associate Lighting Designer: Xiangfu Xiao
Assistant Stage Manager: Melissa Arnaud
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* New York Philharmonic debut

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In the Director's Words

The times are uncertain and forbidding on many levels for most of us these days.

Today — when America is dangerously fragmented racially and socially; xenophobia once again raising its ugly head; a rise of all kinds of “isms”; attacks on religious differences and whom we choose to love — it can be necessary and informative for us to reflect on our history, the bitterly fought-for, hard-won basic rights that far too many take for granted or would cavalierly deny others. These others are branded as “them,” to distinguish these fighting for freedom from the supposedly inclusive “us.”

With music, it can be positively healing to celebrate our differences without losing our individualism, or forgetting what we all share in common: the ability to go about the business of living, loving, laughter, raising children; the ability to collectively dream of a better life going forward; to commit to building another kind of world, a world of intentionality and wholeness and beauty and reverence and respect for the differences among peoples that add richness, variety, and diversity to our lives. A rich tapestry.

We should never deprive ourselves the opportunity to see ourselves reflected in each other's eyes. Nor mistake a great music gathering for particular love, respect, and inclusion. Embrace it. Not in a dream nostalgia, but real, and finite.

Tonight's musical offerings are not chance, but chosen especially for you:

- Courtney Bryan — the young, rising, very promising composer — and the World Premiere of her aria *Gathering Song*, a blues-, jazz-, and gospel-infused work for bass-baritone.
- Symphony No. 2, *Song of a New Race*, by William Grant Still, the dean of African American composers, a landmark work featuring silky strings answering brass, suggesting a call and response tone poem introduction of the “New Negro.”
- Adolphus Hailstork's magnificent oratorio *Done Made My Vow*, a ceremonial homage to African American culture featuring speaker, soprano, tenor, treble, a massive choir, and orchestra using Black sacred and secular music.

Allow the specificity of these unique Black composers to give yourselves permission to gather together and enter this music world from before and from this moment. Allow these Black music genres to strike some mutual chord that lies deep inside us. Allow yourselves to be reminded somewhere deep inside that we are still the family of man–woman, whatever covers our skin. Allow yourselves, after witnessing / hearing *The March to Liberation*, to imagine. It is my hope that you experience an expansion of the mind, a connection to the heart, and a curiosity for the kingdom of Black composers.

— Tazewell Thompson



Notes on the Program

Gathering Song

Courtney Bryan & Tazewell Thompson

Composer and pianist Courtney Bryan has been recognized in various ways that signal a luminous career on the rise. She has garnered degrees and professorships at venerable academic institutions, had her work performed by major ensembles at preeminent venues, and earned coveted awards, including a highly prestigious fellowship from the American Academy in Rome. When she received the Herb Alpert Award in Music in 2018, however, Bryan reflected on the singularity of her path: “I just feel like I’m on a unique journey to myself.”

Bryan’s distinctive journey began in her place of birth, New Orleans, a city whose soundscape indelibly stamped her as a musician. She remembers being immersed in the music of omnipresent second-line parades, learning clarinet so she could join the marching band, accompanying services at her childhood Anglican church, and piano lessons that cultivated a love for both classical music and jazz — and encouraged her to embrace her identity as a composer. Even as Bryan’s reputation has expanded to international proportions, she has maintained and, indeed, solidified her bonds with her hometown. In 2019 her orchestral piece *Rejoice* was commissioned and premiered by the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, whose concerts her parents took her to as a child, and Bryan currently holds an endowed chair as Professor of Music and Jazz Studies at Tulane University in Uptown New Orleans.

But Bryan has also been driven by the goal of building bridges to places all

her own. As an undergraduate at Oberlin Conservatory, she felt obligated to choose among majors in classical piano, jazz piano, and composition. Even after deciding against pursuing a career as a classical pianist, she didn’t realize that she didn’t need to accept the either-or of performer or composer until she worked with composer-trombonist George Lewis as a graduate student at Columbia University. Bryan has released two albums that showcase her talents as a jazz pianist and creative artist, *Quest for Freedom* (2006) and a collection of inventive African American spiritual arrangements, *This Little Light of Mine* (2010). Her music continuously navigates fluid boundaries between tradition and experimentation, notation and improvisation, acoustic and recorded sound, sacred and secular music, and topical, historically situated subject matter and compositions with a more perennial and panoramic outlook.

Collaboration and social justice have always informed Bryan’s compositional practice. For these concerts, the NY Phil commissioned a new work that explores

In Short

Born: Bryan in 1982, in New Orleans, Louisiana; Thompson in Harlem, New York City

Reside: Bryan in New Orleans; Thompson in Harlem

Work composed: 2022, on a commission by the New York Philharmonic

World premiere: these performances

Estimated duration: ca. 15 minutes

LIBERATION — a touchpoint of the Orchestra’s 2022–23 season — partnering Bryan with the eminent director and playwright Tazewell Thompson, who has written an original text, and bass-baritone Ryan Speedo Green, as soloist.

Bryan and Thompson wanted *Gathering Song* to celebrate Black culture, and some musical gestures, like the bamboula rhythm, as it is known in New Orleans, were included for symbolic reasons, to invoke Congo Square (the New Orleans spot famous for its influence on African American music, especially jazz) and the text’s theme of gatheredness. Jazz influences can be heard in harmonies inspired by Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, and

Alice Coltrane, and Bryan also calls attention to the strong reverberations of Stevie Wonder — particularly the song *Pastime Paradise* from his album *Songs in the Key of Life* — and Scott Joplin, who, along with Chopin, was one of the first composers Bryan “was really obsessed with as a child.” Aware that she was writing for the New York Philharmonic, Bryan “wanted to have some big moments for the orchestra and also feature certain instruments, like the harp and the clarinet, along with the voice.”

Beyond its eclectic soundscape, *Gathering Song* reflects how Bryan’s various creative projects over the years have repeatedly returned to the theme

In the Composer’s Words



Courtney Bryan

When the New York Philharmonic asked me to collaborate with Tazewell Thompson on a new piece, I knew that it was a great opportunity. It was a lovely process between the two of us. Tazewell knew from the beginning that he wanted it to be a piece of welcome, and after he came up with a text in the summer of 2022, I reached out to the bass-baritone soloist Ryan Speedo Green, and we talked about his voice — some technical things, but also just getting an idea of what he would like to feature with his voice. Just like any instrument, you think from that sound. It was really great to work with Speedo’s sound because he has such a powerful voice. And then I orchestrated the piece and finished it in December 2022. The title, *Gathering Song*, was determined after an initial brainstorming conversation with Tazewell and conductor Leslie B. Dunner.



Tazewell Thompson

I’ve always liked working with great poets because it makes you think differently as a musician. Part of the reason that I was able to complete the first draft of *Gathering Song* so quickly is that the poetry really resonated with me. Tazewell’s text is very musical already as far as the rhythm of his words, and there is so much imagery to work with. For the lines about carousels, I started thinking about what sounds in the orchestra I wanted to represent that image. Some parts of the libretto inspired instrumentation, and other parts inspired harmonies or rhythms just from looking at the rhythm in the text. So, there were a lot of places to enter creatively.

— Courtney Bryan

of liberation. Her forthcoming recording is titled *Sounds of Freedom*. Staying the course on a journey to oneself while remaining open to unexpected communion with others may represent the truest form of liberation. Bryan says:

I'm a Black woman in the classical world. A lot of times it would seem the thing to do is not to bring attention to that, but I don't think hiding ever helps. Whatever matters to you, go for it, and know that some will lose interest in you, though you also might find a community of people interested in the same things.

Instrumentation: flute, alto flute, piccolo, two oboes and English horn, clarinet, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, metal shakers and egg shaker, cymbals, crash cymbals, bongos, tambourine, triangles, claves, caxixi, tom-toms, bass drum, congas, orchestra bells, snare drum, mark tree, cowbell, harp, celesta, and strings, in addition to the bass-baritone soloist.

— Mark Burford, R.P. Wollenberg
Professor of Music at Reed College;
the author of Mahalia Jackson and the
Black Gospel Field, he writes about
African American popular music,
European concert music, and opera.

The Work at a Glance

Gathering Song is a continuous, single-movement piece with subtly differentiated sections reflecting Bryan's elegantly nuanced reading of Thompson's poem. A sweeping, curtain-raising introduction by the orchestra yields to the quiet of sustained strings and embellishments by the ever-important harp, as the bass-baritone seemingly addresses and convenes the audience directly with the opening line: "We see / Each other."

The darker, almost ancestral shading of the brass ("My name / Griot") cues up what is perhaps the most insistent section of the piece: an infectious new riff in the strings and an Afro-Cuban triplet in the percussion that bring the orchestra to life, music that conveys the urgent necessity of storytelling and story-hearing in a march toward liberation that turns its back on fictive divisions.

A central section, skillfully guided by delicate shifts in tempo and texture, features the bass-baritone orator's extended call for gatheredness and abdication to laughter and liberatory child's play. Arriving at a conspicuous pause, a new meter kicks off a convivial dance of welcome and renewal. The final minutes of the piece feel like a relaxation but also a rhetorical elevation, bringing us to a shimmering, open-ended "divine dais" where we can see each other, sing freedom songs, and become one with the stars.

Text

Gathering Song

By Tazewell Thompson

We see
Each other
You and me.
And we feel
We've known
Each other
Our entire lives,
You and me.

Have we not
Met before?

So familiar...

No matter,
We are here now.

We are at a place
Where we belong
A place called:
Together.

My name
Griot
A teller of tales
A tale bearer
A spinner of yarns
A fabulist.

May I approach?

We ourselves
All,
All
Storytellers.
Essential
Workers
Moved by a necessity
From within
To tell
Our stories.

Must fight
Up
And down
Around
Outside and in.

Inside.

For our common cause:
Liberation.

Draw
Then and
Now apart.
Taking a step
Back
Taking a step
Forward
Inside ourselves
Seeking a future of
Liberation.

Endless continuing
March toward
Liberation.

Liberate
Ourselves
From tyrannous
Misinformation
Disinformation
Confusion
Deceptions
Indifference
Enmity
Shameful things
Designed
To divide us.
Beholding
While we are all still
Upright

Side by side
This side of the grass
Let us engineer
Construct
Assemble
Erect
And raise
A shrine
A divine dais
A platform
To ourselves.

To our new
Gatheredness.

Taking turns
Showing out
Outdistancing
Ourselves,
Like race hounds,
Dragging ourselves
Through the streets
On a chariot
Of roses.

Moving forward
Let us say
Never.
Ever.
Let us
Prefer
Rather
To take
An eternal abundance
Of the balm
Of laughter.

A face splitting
Shared
Hurting
Laughter.

A noisy cacophony
Of laughter.
Our sweet
Guffawing
Convulsive
Joyous faces
Like distorted images
In fun house mirrors.

During this duration,
Summersaulting away
From dénouement,
No surrender
No farewells
No eulogies.
No collapsing
The children's
Carousel calliopes.
Let the children ride
The painted peony ponies
Liberated!

Not victims
We
Victors
Us
All of us.

In this my house
I house four chambers
In my heart.

One has a
A sign
To let you enter
To set up house
To renovate
Revolve
Renew
Revive
And to remember.

(Please turn the page quietly.)

Remember
You've been here before
In my heart.

Welcome home.

I'm stepping back now
To take you
All in.

Hold.
Hold.
Let me take
A portrait picture
That my memory
Is taking.

Hold.
Ah, there
I have it.

I will continue
To see you
As you are now
Forever
Behind my closed eyelids.

Beholding
Let me sing those songs,
Songs
Of freedom.
Songs
Of the angels.
To guide those songs
I sing to join
Your songs,
Our songs.
Marching
To liberate
And free
All songs
That join our beacon
To the stars.

Symphony No. 2 in G minor, *Song of a New Race*

William Grant Still

William Grant Still composed almost 200 classical works while also making major contributions to jazz, musical theater, radio, film, and television. His Symphony No. 2, *Song of a New Race* — the third work in a trilogy exploring the Black experience — reflects the aesthetics of both the Harlem Renaissance, of which Still was the leading composer, and American music of the period between the two World Wars.

Music surrounded him from his childhood. Four months after his father died, Still and his mother moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, where she taught school and played piano, and William studied violin. There she married a postal clerk who introduced her son to opera and concerts. Still's formerly enslaved maternal grandmother sang spirituals to him. He attended the historically Black Wilberforce University, in Ohio, where he immersed himself in music, directing the band, playing in the college string quartet, and composing. Leaving in 1915, shortly before graduation, he worked in bands and dance orchestras in Ohio.

Still's first break came in the summer of 1916, when he began work in Memphis as composer W.C. Handy's cellist, arranger, and songwriter. Two years later he began music studies at Oberlin. He returned to those studies following his Navy service during World War I, and in 1919 moved to New York to rejoin Handy. From 1921 to 1924 Still worked for Black Swan Records's parent company, Pace Phonograph Corporation, founded by Handy's former business partner, Harry H. Pace. After its demise, Still arranged for musical theater and New York nightclubs.

Throughout the 1920s Still began a parallel career in classical music. While

on tour in Boston with the musical revue *Shuffle Along* in 1922, he studied composition with the New England Conservatory's George W. Chadwick. From 1923 to 1925, while working for Pace, Still studied with the eminent experimental composer Edgard Varèse, whose influence can be heard in Still's use of modernist elements such as dissonance and atonal harmonies. At the same time, his music's grounding in the blues and spirituals reflects Still's African American roots and status as the leading composer of the Harlem Renaissance (see sidebar, page 26E).

In the late 1920s and '30s, as Still's reputation as composer and arranger grew, he worked in radio, becoming staff arranger for bandleaders Paul Whiteman (alongside Ferde Grofé) and Willard Robinson. He would compose most of his works in Los Angeles, which he first visited in 1929–30, working for Whiteman. During that time Still met Verna Arvey, a White Russian–Jewish pianist and writer, whom he married in Mexico (interracial marriage was illegal in California), and who became his secretary and artistic collaborator. He

In Short

Born: May 11, 1895, in Woodville, Mississippi

Died: December 3, 1978, in Los Angeles, California

Work composed: 1937, in New York City

World premiere: December 10, 1937, by The Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, conductor, at the Philadelphia Academy of Music

New York Philharmonic premiere: these performances

Estimated duration: ca. 30 minutes

returned to the East Coast in 1930, where he completed the ballet *Sahdji* (1930) and the *Afro-American Symphony* (1930).

In 1934 Still received a Guggenheim Fellowship to compose *Blue Steel* (1934) and permanently moved to Los Angeles. He composed classical works and provided music for movies such as *Pennies from Heaven* (1936) and *Lost Horizon* (1937). His 1940 arrangement of *Frenesi* for clarinetist-bandleader Artie Shaw topped the charts. He briefly worked on the film *Stormy Weather* (1943), until he resigned in protest over its racial stereotypes.

During the 1930s and '40s Still developed professional relationships with leading conductors Howard Hanson (Eastman

School of Music), Leopold Stokowski (The Philadelphia Orchestra), and Eugene Goossens (Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra), and his works were performed internationally and recorded by leading orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic and London Symphony Orchestra. In 1939 Still collaborated with Langston Hughes on his second opera, *Troubled Island*, produced by New York City Opera in 1949 — the first opera by an African American to be produced by a major company. He went on to compose seven additional operas.

Beginning in the 1950s, as Serialism and experimentalism became dominant, Still's lyrical style was deemed old-fashioned.

The Work at a Glance

Still's *Symphony No. 2, Song of a New Race*, caps his trilogy that musically traces African American history from Africa to 20th-century America.

The first movement evokes the finale of Still's *Afro-American Symphony*, its precursor in the trilogy, but while the latter is reverential, invoking spirituals, the first movement is lyrical, lilting, and dance-like.

In his oeuvre Still fuses the European classical symphony with African American idioms. He doesn't just add the occasional dash of a bluesy melody or a syncopated rhythm; he combines symphonic sonata form with jazz and blues forms (such as 12-bar blues and 32-bar popular song form), albeit freely modified. So it is that in this symphony's second movement he embeds a Tin Pan Alley-esque ballad — expressive and serious in tone — and modifies it to fit the larger sonata form.

The joyful third movement evokes both Classical-era *scherzos* and popular 1920s and '30s Black jazz dances, bringing together past and present.

4 *mf* < > *mf* < > *mf* < >

12 *mf* < > *mf* < > *mf*

The symphony closes with the lyrical fourth movement, introduced by a triumphant fanfare featuring a theme that again evokes spirituals. Like many a classical symphony, it offers a theme and variations, with each recurrence of the melody accompanied by a varying countermelody.

Performances, recordings, and publications of his work declined, and he turned to conducting and speaking. Nevertheless, his accomplishments as a composer were recognized with honorary doctorates, and he received accolades for surmounting racial barriers. He continued to compose into the 1970s.

Instrumentation: three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes and English horn, three clarinets and bass clarinet,

two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, suspended cymbals, crash cymbals, vibraphone, harp, celesta, and strings.

— Gayle Murchison, PhD, associate professor of music history at the College of William and Mary and an award-winning historical musicologist specializing in 20th-century American and African American music

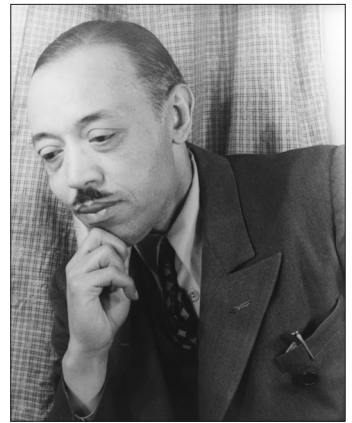
Still and the Harlem Renaissance

William Grant Still — considered the Dean of African American composers — was the foremost classical composer of the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural movement that flourished between 1920 and 1935. He collaborated with its leading writers: Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Howard University philosophy professor Alain Locke.

Locke and sociologist and NAACP co-founder W.E.B. Du Bois outlined the movement's principles. Du Bois understood race as *the* problem of the 20th century, noting that African American identity centered around being both American (promised democracy and freedom), and Black (subject to racial oppression that denied both). Locke identified the younger generation as the vanguard of The New Negro Movement, having developed a new consciousness and urban culture through The Great Migration north. Both believed African American art could promote interracial understanding and fight racism, envisioning a Black classical music built upon spirituals — which, in Du Bois's view, represented the voice of the enslaved — and other Black idioms.

Still's works fulfill this artistic vision, drawing not only on spirituals but also on blues and jazz. Many bear titles, programs, and plots engaging with African American history and culture. The grandson of a formerly enslaved woman, born one year before the Supreme Court decision *Plessy v. Ferguson* (which sustained state-mandated segregation based on the principle of "separate but equal"), he sought to create works that showed the beauty and depth of African American music to white American and international audiences.

His works also illuminate Black history. His Symphony No. 2, *Song of a New Race*, culminates a symphonic trilogy beginning with *Africa* and continuing with *Afro-American Symphony*. (Originally, part one was *Darker America*, which the New York Philharmonic performed in December 2022.) The first, he wrote, depicted pre-Emancipation "sons of the soil"; the second depicted the modern, 20th-century African American. Thus the trilogy traces the African American experience from Africa through enslavement and Emancipation to the Harlem Renaissance.



Still in 1949

Done Made My Vow, A Ceremony

Adolphus Hailstork

The recent surge of programming of works by Adolphus Hailstork, which came precisely as the concert world began casting a more inclusive musical net, faced a particularly pandemic-era challenge. Though his extensive catalogue includes works for orchestra, chamber ensemble, and solo instruments, some of his most famous pieces — indeed, recent commissions such as *Knee at the Neck*, a requiem for George Floyd, and *Tulsa 1921*, a concert aria commemorating the centennial of the notorious race massacre in that city — feature vocalists, which for a time presented logistical obstacles amid changing COVID protocols. This is certainly the case in *Done Made My Vow*, an oratorio for narrator, soprano, tenor, treble, chorus, and orchestra. At its core the work is about coming together.

Perhaps the most telling message of Hailstork's *Done Made My Vow* is how long that spirit of inclusiveness has been ingrained in the composer's consciousness. If his early musical experience in the Episcopal church choir at Albany's Cathedral of All Saints initially distanced him from African American musical traditions, it also dissuaded him from an overly modernist vocabulary when he turned to composition. Though he also played piano and violin — his earliest works were written for his high school orchestra — it was the voice that most shaped his musical vision. "Singers don't often sing in 12-tone technique," he has said. "And because I came up as a singer, words had meaning; a piece had meaning."

At Howard University, where he studied with Mark Fax, Hailstork's musical comedy *The Race for Space* was performed in 1963, during his senior year.

After studying with Nadia Boulanger for a summer at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, he enrolled at the Manhattan School of Music, where his teachers included David Diamond and Vittorio Giannini. His master's thesis, *Statement, Variation and Fugue*, was performed by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in 1966.

Although he had followed the Civil Rights Movement since the mid-1950s, it was the 1968 murders of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy that convinced Hailstork (newly enrolled in Michigan State University's doctoral program after a term of military service) that the powder keg of racial politics called for musical response. His choral work *Mourn Not the Dead*, written while completing his PhD in 1971, won that year's Ernest Bloch Award, and it set the tone for many socially conscious works to come, including the King-inspired *Epitaph for a Man Who Dreamed* (1979), *Joshua's Boots* (1999, a recounting of Black cowboys in the Wild West), and *Rise for Freedom: The John P. Parker Story* (2007, about abolitionism and the Underground Railroad).

In Short

Born: April 17, 1941, in Albany, New York

Resides: in Virginia Beach, Virginia

Work composed: 1985, revised in 2009

World premiere: December 1985, in Norfolk, Virginia, by an ad-hoc orchestra and choir conducted by the composer, with Emma Goldman, soprano, and William Brown, tenor

New York Philharmonic premiere: these performances

Estimated duration: ca. 45 minutes

Hailstork's teaching career began at Michigan State (1969–71) and continued at Youngstown State University in Ohio (1971–76), before he settled into long-time positions as professor and composer-in-residence at Virginia's Norfolk State University (1977–2000) and professor and eminent scholar at Norfolk's Old Dominion University, from which he retired and took the title of professor emeritus in early 2021.

It was at Norfolk State where, tasked with composing a piece to celebrate the historically Black institution's 50th

anniversary in 1985, Hailstork wrote *Done Made My Vow*. Being of African, European, and Native American heritage, Hailstork sought an array of verbal and musical elements that reflected his place in the spectrum of American experience. Within a lyrical orchestral fabric, the composer weaves a short original anthem, "My Name Is Toil," with the gospel song "This Little Light of Mine" and the spirituals "We Shall Overcome" and "Done Made My Vow."

Many listeners, as well as Hailstork himself, have identified Dvořák as his

About the Dedicatee

Adolphus Hailstork composed *Done Made My Vow* as "a ceremony" marking the 50th anniversary of Norfolk State University, a public, historically Black university in Norfolk, Virginia, that is a member of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund and Virginia High-Tech Partnership. The university's website describes its history:

Norfolk State College was founded September 18, 1935. The College, brought to life in the midst of the Great Depression, provided a setting in which the youth of the region could give expression to their hopes and aspirations. At this founding, it was named the Norfolk Unit of Virginia Union University. In 1942, the College became the independent Norfolk Polytechnic College, and two years later an Act of the Virginia Legislature mandated that it become a part of Virginia State College. The College was able to pursue an expanded mission with even greater emphasis in 1956 when another Act of the Legislature enabled the institution to offer its first Bachelor's degree. The College was separated from Virginia State College and became fully independent in 1969. Subsequent legislative acts designated the institution as a university and authorized the granting of graduate degrees. In 1979, university status was attained.

On another website page there is a "historical overview," which provides further context and color:

During a time when many thought African Americans believed that their future was limited, there were those who thought and knew that a future offering great possibilities was achievable. These community leaders envisioned that an institution of higher education located in Norfolk would encourage the growth of a homegrown educated elite who were likely to remain in Hampton Roads, where their expertise would ensure the growth and success of the community. ... The University celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1985 From three rooms and 85 students, the school had grown to 255 classrooms, and 7,200 students in 22 buildings.

— The Editors



model for “continuing the Western classical tradition” by including African American and Native American musical material (most famously in Dvořák’s Symphony No 9, *From the New World*, with its purported references to Longfellow’s *The Song of Hiawatha*, and the Largo theme often known as *Goin’ Home*, an original melody often mistaken for a spiritual). In *Done Made My Vow*, however, one arguably could identify a closer affinity with Bloch’s *Sacred Service*, to which Hailstork’s choral piece has been compared. But where Bloch aspired to explore Hebrew liturgy through an elevated musical language, Hailstork works from a much broader array of influences.

Hailstork devotes equal attention to the spoken texts, originally balancing selections adapted from Psalms with excerpts of speeches by Frederick Douglass and King. In his 2009 revision, Hailstork replaced the climactic quotations from King’s “I Have a

Dream” speech with excerpts from Barack Obama’s speeches and his book *The Audacity of Hope*, forging for a later generation an extramusical link between that dream and the election of the country’s first African American president.

Instrumentation: two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drums, marimba, chimes, orchestra bells, xylophone, large cowbell with no clapper, large tam-tams, suspended cymbals, snare drum sticks, tom-toms, crash cymbals, tambourine, slit drum, bass drum, African drum, antique cymbals, cowbells, celesta, and strings.

— Ken Smith, an ASCAP/
Deems Taylor Award-winning
annotator and winner of the 2020
Society of Publishers in Asia Award
for arts and culture reporting

Questions of Genre



Adolphus Hailstork

Although *Done Made My Vow* is labeled a cantata or an oratorio, Hailstork’s own classification of the piece is simply “a ceremony” — a designation underplaying its European musical models and focusing instead on a variety of American religious and social experiences. The form is less of a Mass than a Protestant church service. The narrator is part celebrant, part griot, while the chorus is by turns a church choir and a gathering of civil rights protest singers.

With the speaker, the orchestra becomes a broadly lyrical backdrop underscoring spoken text to sustain a mood; with the soloists and chorus, the relationship is more reciprocal, not merely coloring the text symphonically (with particularly dramatic brass and percussion) but occasionally weaving in layers of intricate counterpoint in its own right. Unlike traditional large-form choral works, in which soloists and chorus are separated by clear boundaries, Hailstork often overlaps his forces. A spiritual in the chorus may frame, punctuate, or be starkly interrupted by spoken text.

The resulting narrative is as epic as it is abstract. Although Hailstork’s stated goal is “to capture or reflect the tribulations and occasional triumphs of African Americans in this country,” he also maintains that this should not limit his listeners. In this way, Hailstork intends audiences to find his recipe instantly familiar, even if a particular ingredient is not usually on their table.

Text

Done Made My Vow, A Ceremony

By Adolphus Hailstork

Speaker

Come, acquire wisdom. Cling to learning and never let it go. Observe it well, for it is your life.

My name is Toil. My mother is Strength. My future: achievement. My goal is pride. I've walked this land; I've tilled this soil; In the name of this nation I have died. So I'll fight for the right to be free, to proclaim to the world: "I'm a man; look at me."

Choir

Done made my vow to the Lord,
And I never will turn back.
I will go, I shall go
to see what the end will be.

Adapted from the spiritual Done Made My Vow

Speaker

Now is a time for thanksgiving! Come, bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord!

Choir and Tenor

O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever. O give thanks unto the God of Gods. O give thanks unto the Lord of Lords, for his mercy endureth forever. He works great marvels; He alone! He made the heavens; He made the great lights: the sun to rule by day, the moon and stars to rule by night. He led his people through the wilderness, remembered us when we were lowly and defends us from our foes. Alleluia!

Adapted from Psalm 136

Speaker

Alleluia!! Alleluia!! Thank the Lord. Alleluia! For He has brought us a long way! Yes, we have journeyed a long way, you and I. My name is Toil. And you know me; you've met me along the way. My name is Toil. My mother is Strength. My father is Courage. And you know them. You have called on them on country roads and city streets ... on nights of horror and days of hope. With them, you and I have tilled the soil and sown the seeds, and wept in seasons of bitter harvests. But today we have gathered here to celebrate our past and to dedicate our future. Come! Let us bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. Lift your hands in the sanctuary and BLESS THE LORD!!

Now is a time for remembrance. Now is a time to honor those men and women who boldly declared themselves "guilty" before the bench of injustice, and, by doing so, changed a nation.

(Please turn the page quietly.)

Voice 1

Douglass! ... Frederick!

Speaker

Guilty! Of saying: “Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing” ... and of saying: “Power concedes nothing without a demand. If we ever get free from the oppressions and wrongs heaped upon us, we must pay for their removal. We must do this by labor, by sacrifices, and if needs be, by our lives.”

*Adapted from Douglass’s “West India Emancipation” speech,
delivered at Canandaigua, New York, August 4, 1857*

Voice 2

Turner! ... Nathaniel!

Speaker

Guilty! Of agitating, of demanding, of daring... of sacrificing.

Voice 3

Truth! ... Sojourner!

Speaker

Guilty! Of telling it like it was ... Is!

Voice 4

Tubman! ... Harriet!

Speaker

Guilty! Of escaping from slavery and then returning, like Moses, to lead her people to freedom!

Voice 5

Dubois!

Voice 6

Marcus!

Voice 7

Malcolm!

Voice 8

RANDOLPH! ... A. PHILIP!

Speaker

Guilty! Double Guilty! Of organizing a union, and of standing up to a President of these United States, forcing him to put Blacks to work on the homefront while he was sending them to kill ... and die on the battlefield!

Voice 9

PARKS! ... Rosa!

Speaker

Guilty! Of not moving to the back of the bus!

Voice 10

MARTIN!

Speaker

Guilty!! ... of believing in a dream...

Final Voice

OBAMA!!

Speaker

Guilty! Of daring, and of having the courage and vision to become President of these United States of America!

“It is the fundamental belief — that I am my brother’s keeper, I am my sister’s keeper — that makes this country work.

“It is what allows us to pursue our individual dreams and yet still come together as one American family.

“I am not talking about blind optimism; I am talking about something more substantial. It is the hope of slaves sitting around a fire singing freedom songs. The hope of immigrants setting out for distant shores.

“It is the audacity of hope — hope in the face of difficulty, hope in the face of uncertainty. The audacity of hope! In the end, that is God’s gift to us, the bedrock of this nation.”

“We affirm the greatness of our nation — not because of the height of our skyscrapers, or the power of our military, or the size of our economy. Our pride is based on a very simple premise, summed up in a declaration made over two hundred years ago:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

“Hope is the bedrock of this nation. The belief that our destiny will not be written *for* us, but *by* us, by all those men and women who are not content to settle for the world as it is, who have the courage to remake the world as it *should* be, brick by brick, block by block.

“Together ordinary people can do extraordinary things, because we are not a collection of red and blue states. We are the *United* States of America. And in this moment, we are ready to believe again!”

Adapted from speeches and writings by US President Barack Obama

(Please turn the page quietly.)

Choir

We shall overcome,
we shall overcome.
I do believe,
we shall overcome someday!

*Adapted from the song “We Shall Overcome,”
originally a spiritual before becoming a civil rights anthem*

Soprano and Choir

I will praise thee, O Lord, with all of my heart. Boldly, O God, will I sing unto thee. I will bow down in thy holy temple. I will bow down for thy loving kindness, and for thy truth I will praise thy name. Praise Alleluia. Let all the Kings of the earth praise thee, O Lord. Great is the glory of the Lord. All the Kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear thy holy word. Yea, they shall sing in thy holy temple. They shall sing psalms to thy loving kindness and for thy truth I will praise thy name.

Adapted from Psalm 138

Tenor and Choir

For thou hast made thy promise wide as the heavens, and when I called to thee thou didst answer me and make me bold. And thou didst strengthen my soul!

Adapted from Psalm 138

Done made my vow to the Lord. I will go, I shall go.

Adapted from Psalm 138

Soprano and Tenor

Though I walk among foes Thou dost preserve me; And with thy right hand Thou shalt save me; Thy true love endureth forever. Leave not thy work unfinished.

Adapted from Psalm 138

Speaker

The Lord *will* accomplish His purpose. Thy true love, O Lord, endureth forever. Leave not thy work unfinished.

Adapted from Psalm 138

Treble

This little light of mine. I'm goin' to let it shine. Everywhere I go, I'm goin' to let it shine.

Adapted from the gospel song of the same name by Harry Loes, ca. 1920

Speaker

Now is a time for dedication. I did not struggle so you could tremble in the darkness. I did not suffer so you could be less than what you are. You were not born to cower. You were not born to cringe. Your mother is strength. Your father is courage. Your name is toil. We have gathered here today to celebrate our past and to dedicate our future. We have paid homage to our heroes and we have heard the voices of our hopes. The future is before you; the present is with you. It is your turn to believe in dreams.

Choir

My name is Toil; My mother is strength, My future: achievement. My goal is pride. I've walked this land, I've tilled this soil; In the name of this nation I have died. So I'll fight for the right to be free, to proclaim to this world: "I'm a man, look at me."

Speaker

Go. Acquire wisdom. Cling to learning and never let it go. Observe it well, for it is your life. Walk with the wise, and be wise.

Choir and Soloists

My name is Toil; My mother is strength, My future: achievement, my goal is pride. I've walked this land, I've tilled this soil. In the name of this nation I have died. So I'll fight for the right to be free, to proclaim to this world: "I'm a man, look at me." Alleluia!

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method for section string
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The Artists



Praised for electrifying performances, Interlochen Arts Academy Orchestra conductor **Leslie B. Dunner** maintains an active performance life in addition to bringing a

wealth of experience to Interlochen. In addition to 11 years of collaboration with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, his concert engagements have included the Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Seattle symphony orchestras; as well as The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, and New York Philharmonic, among others. He has conducted in Canada, Estonia, Italy, Mexico, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, and Ukraine. His 2022–23 highlights include conducting The Kennedy Center’s Dance Festival, *Reframing the Narrative*, Wagner’s *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* in Newark, Rossini’s *L’italiana in Algeri* in Tulsa, Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker* in Oakland, the Calgary Philharmonic’s opening concert, and two concert programs with the New York Philharmonic as part of the inaugural season in the new David Geffen Hall.

Dunner was principal conductor at Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Louisville Ballet, interim music director of Orquesta Filarmónica in Guadalajara, and music director of the Joffrey Ballet and Annapolis, Dearborn, and Nova Scotia symphony orchestras. He’s conducted the New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Michigan Opera Theatre, London’s Royal Ballet, Birmingham’s Royal Ballet, and South African Ballet Theatre, among others nationally and abroad. On tour he

has appeared at festivals across the United States, Europe, Scandinavia, South America, the former Soviet Union, and South Africa, and in special performances for Princess Diana, Nelson Mandela, and the G7 Summit with President Clinton. He has had audiences with South Africa’s presidents F. W. De Klerk, Nelson Mandela, and Jacob Zuma, and has met Desmond Tutu.

The first American prize winner of the Toscanini International Conducting Competition, Dunner is a recipient of Leonard Bernstein’s American Conductors Award and the NAACP’s James Weldon Johnson and Distinguished Achievement Awards. He is interim director of Chicago’s South Shore Opera and resident conductor of New Jersey’s Trilogy Opera Company. At Long Beach Opera Dunner led Anthony Davis’s *The Central Park Five*, which received the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for Music.

Leslie Dunner composes and performs as a clarinetist. He has played clarinet for Traverse City, Michigan, productions of the musicals *Elf*, *Cinderella*, and *Chicago*.



Tazewell Thompson is an internationally acclaimed opera and theater director and award-winning playwright, teacher, lecturer, and actor. He received the 2020

MCANA Award as librettist, with composer Jeanine Tesori, for Best New Opera in North America for *Blue*, named Best in Classical Music in 2019 by both *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. After its premiere at Glimmerglass and performances at the Detroit, Seattle,

Pittsburgh, Toledo, and Dutch National operas, *Blue* is scheduled to be presented at Washington National Opera, English National Opera, and New Orleans Opera. Thompson's more than 150 directing credits include world and / or American premieres throughout the United States, France, Spain, Italy, Africa, Japan, Canada, and The Netherlands. He received an Emmy nomination for the *Live From Lincoln Center* production of *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, and directed three operas in the same season in three different theaters at the Kennedy Center: Philip Glass's *Appomattox*, Weill's *Lost in the Stars*, and the American premiere staging of Vivaldi's *Cato in Utica*. Aaron Copland chose Thompson to rewrite the libretto and stage the world premiere of his opera *The Second Hurricane* for Copland's 85th birthday celebration. *Jubilee*, Thompson's 2019 a cappella work about The Fisk Jubilee Singers, played to five weeks of standing-room-only audiences at Arena Stage in Washington, DC, and was recently produced at Alabama Shakespeare Festival. His award-winning play *Constant Star*, about Ida B. Wells, has had nationwide productions and received nine Barrymore, five NAACP, and three Carbonell awards. His play *Mary T. & Lizzy K.* received the Edgerton Foundation New Play Award. His poem *Ghostlight*, about the closing of Broadway theaters during the pandemic, covered the entirety of *The New York Times* Opinion page.



Rasean Davonté Johnson is a video artist and designer of projections for theater, film, and installations. He is owner of the Chicago-based practice eight-infinitystudio, which

specializes in design, video engineering consultation, and content creation for the performing arts. His 2021 commission *We Are All in This Together: Shut-down, Crisis, Restart* — an immersive, 360-degree video installation exploring the collective experience of the pandemic — was part of *Wonder / Wall* at Bay Street Theater in Sag Harbor. Other works include two presentations at Yale University: *Living Sculpture* as part of LUX: Ideas through Light, at the Beinecke Rare Books Library, and *A Night of Wonder*. Collaborative works include *The Ballad of Lula Del Ray 2.0* with Manual Cinema at the Logan Arts Center, *Convergence: A mad tea pARTy* at the Yale Art Gallery, and *Passenger: the American landscape redefined* at the University of Chicago and the Bridgeport Film Festival.

His work as a theatrical designer has received honors including the Michael Maggio Emerging Designer Award in 2018 and the Joseph Jefferson Award for Best Projection Design in 2022 and 2019. He was part of the 2017 Opera America Robert L.B. Tobin Director-Designer Showcase in Houston. Design work includes collaborations with Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Manual Cinema, Chicago Opera Theater, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Portland Opera, Yale Repertory Theatre, McCarter Theatre Center, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and, abroad, the Ningbo Song and Dance Company (China), B-Floor Theatre (Thailand), and Edinburgh Festival Fringe (Scotland).

Rasean Davonté Johnson received his MFA from Yale University, and has lectured there and at Columbia College Chicago, Syracuse University, Carnegie Mellon, DePaul University, and Ohio State University.



Lighting designer **Robert Wierzel** has worked with artists and directors from diverse disciplines and backgrounds in opera, theater, dance, museums, and contemporary

music, and on stages throughout the country and abroad. His Broadway productions include *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*, the musical *Fela!* (Tony Award nomination), and David Copperfield's *Dreams and Nightmares*. His work has appeared in other New York City venues including Park Avenue Armory (*Deep Blue Sea*), Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York Shakespeare Festival, Lincoln Center (*American Songbook Series*), Roundabout Theatre Company, and Signature Theatre Company.

Wierzel has designed productions with opera companies in New York (New York City Opera, Glimmerglass Festival), Paris, Versailles, Tokyo, Norway, Amsterdam, Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, Wexford, Atlanta, Boston, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Dallas, Portland, Denver (Opera Colorado), Washington, DC, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Florida Grand, Kansas City (Lyric Opera of Kansas City) and Chicago (Lyric Opera and Opera Theatre), among others.

Robert Wierzel's dance work includes more than 37 years with the Bill T. Jones / Arnie Zane Company. Among the other dance companies with which he has collaborated are the Lyon Opera Ballet and the Berlin Opera Ballet. He has designed at most regional theaters across the country, including The Alliance Theatre (Atlanta), A.C.T. (San Francisco), Shakespeare Theatre Company and Arena Stage (Washington, DC), Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Oregon Shakespeare

Festival, Guthrie Theater, Hartford Stage, The Huntington (Boston), The Old Globe (San Diego), and Goodman Theatre and the Center Theatre Group (Los Angeles). He is a creative partner at Spark Design Collaborative and serves on the faculty of NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Design for Stage and Film.



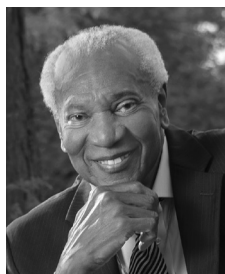
Grammy Award-winning bass-baritone **Ryan Speedo Green** has quickly established himself as an artist in international demand at the world's leading opera houses. The

2022–23 season sees his first leading role at The Metropolitan Opera, starring as Emile Griffith in Terence Blanchard's *Champion*, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin and directed by James Robinson. Green also makes his Opéra national de Paris debut, singing Kurwenal in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel, and his Bavarian Staatsooper debut, as Varlaam in Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov*. He also returns to Washington National Opera to sing Ferrando in a new production of Verdi's *Il Trovatore* and Orest in a new production of Richard Strauss's *Elektra*.

In addition to his New York Philharmonic debut in the World Premiere of *Gathering Song*, composed by Courtney Bryan, with a libretto by Tazewell Thompson, written for him, his orchestral engagements include Kurwenal with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Musorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death* at Carnegie Hall with Daniele Rustioni conducting the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and selections from Blanchard's *Champion* with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra

Chamber Ensemble at Carnegie Hall, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Green also appears as a featured artist on the Richard Tucker Music Foundation Gala. This academic season he serves as artist-in-residence at Florida State University, a role that includes master classes with vocal students and a solo recital.

In the fall of 2016 Little, Brown, and Co. published *Sing for Your Life: A Story of Race, Music, and Family*, by New York Times journalist Daniel Bergner. The book tells the story of Green's personal and artistic journey from a trailer park in southeastern Virginia to Virginia's juvenile facility of last resort to The Met stage.



Simon Estes

(Speaker) is an internationally renowned opera star. He has sung in 84 opera houses and with 115 orchestras, collaborating with 90 of the

world's most eminent conductors. Of the 104 roles he has performed, 17 were title roles. He has sung for six United States Presidents, from President Lyndon B. Johnson through President Obama, as well as many notable dignitaries, royalty, religious figures, and the Nobel Peace Prize Committee. He is the only person to have performed for the 25th, 50th, and 75th anniversaries of the United Nations. He has received 13 honorary doctorates.

Estes's humanitarian efforts have helped save the lives of more than 100,000 children in Africa and elsewhere from malaria. His foundations in Switzerland, Oklahoma, and Iowa have awarded more than 600 scholarships. He supported the Simon Estes Music High School in Cape Town, South Africa, for many years.

Simon Estes has taught at The Juilliard School, Boston University, Iowa State University, Wartburg College, and Des Moines Area Community College. He has given lectures and master classes at Harvard University, Duke University, University of Iowa, and many other universities throughout Europe, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan.

In 2022 Estes was inducted into the Opera Hall of Fame. That year he also performed with the Des Moines Metro Opera in *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* under the direction of Tazewell Thompson.



Soprano **Janinah Burnett**

is one of the foremost performing artists of her generation. A versatile singing actor, musician, writer, arranger, and educator, she is

in demand and has thrilled audiences domestically and internationally in opera, recital, musical theater, jazz, television, and film. Her many signature operatic roles include Mimì in Puccini's *La bohème*, Leila in Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*, Donna Anna and Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen*, Marguerite in Gounod's *Faust*, and Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata*. As Mimì in the original cast of Baz Luhrmann's *La Bohème on Broadway*, Burnett won an LA Stage Alliance Ovation Award and performed on the Tony Awards broadcast. Shortly thereafter she joined the roster of principal artists at The Metropolitan Opera, remaining for eight consecutive seasons. She has been in the cast of Andrew Lloyd Weber's *Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway since 2016, appearing as Carlotta Giudicelli, and will remain until its final performance in April.

In February 2021 Burnett released her debut album, *Love the Color of Your Butterfly*, which features her own musical arrangements and collaborations with some of the world's finest jazz musicians, including Christian Sands, Sullivan Fortner, Jr., Casey Benjamin, and Terreon Gully, who produced the project. Released on her own label, Clazz Records, it is an amalgamation of jazz, opera, art song, oratorio, rhythm and blues, and spirituals. It introduces her concept of "Clazz," which encourages collaboration and redefines the parameters of genre while embracing parts of history that are erased, widely unknown, or forgotten. *Love the Color of Your Butterfly* has been featured in numerous publications, including the *Financial Times*, *Playbill*, *Broadway World*, *DownBeat*, and *Opera News*.



Rodrick Dixon possesses a versatile tenor voice of extraordinary range that has earned him the respect of conductors, orchestras, and opera companies throughout

North America, including Los Angeles Opera, Michigan Opera Theater, Todi Music Festival, Portland Opera, Opera Columbus, Virginia Opera, Cincinnati Opera, and Opera Southwest.

On the concert stage he has appeared with The Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras; Cincinnati, American, and Atlanta symphony orchestras; Ravinia and Bravo! Vail Music Festivals; the Los Angeles Philharmonic; and at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia. He has also performed at Sydney Arts Festival in Australia.

Dixon's engagements last season included the George Enescu Festival, in the title role of Zemlinsky's *Der Zwerg*; The Philadelphia Orchestra, for Beethoven's *Missa solemnis*; Florida Orchestra, for the Mozart Requiem; Calvin University, for Handel's *Messiah*; Richmond, Greensboro, and Alexandria symphony orchestras for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9; and appearances in Detroit and Chicago for *Too Hot to Handel*. The current season includes debuts with the New York Philharmonic, Netherlands Philharmonic, and the Baltimore, Nashville, Peoria, and South Dakota symphony orchestras; and returns to the Colorado Symphony and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Next season includes his debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Froh in Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, and his return to Los Angeles Opera in *Der Zwerg*.

Rodrick Dixon has appeared on television in a number of PBS specials. He was part of the original cast of *Ragtime* on Broadway, and in *Show Boat* at the Auditorium Theatre. He has also appeared on recordings (Sony / BMG); *Cook, Dixon & Young—Volume One* on PBS's *Great Performances*; *Follow That Star* Christmas CD; Liam Lawton's *Sacred Land*; *Rodrick Dixon Live in Concert*; and a Christmas album with the Cincinnati Pops.



Ebony Spicer (Treble) is a sophomore at Repertory Company High School for Theatre Arts in New York City. She is a singer (with a range from tenor to soprano), actor,

and musician who plays acoustic guitar, piano, and bass guitar. Proficient in sight-singing and songwriting, she is a

versatile artist who has performed an array of genres including jazz, classical, gospel, and pop. She has been trained and mentored at the Noel Pointer Foundation (classical guitar, 2013–15), Open Hydrant Theater Company (musical theater, 2017–19), Piper Theatre (Shakespeare summer workshop, London, 2019), Motown Museum’s Spark Music Camp (summer 2019 and, virtually, 2020), Trinity Youth Choir and Mama Foundation for the Arts (2018–present), and CAT Youth Theatre (2021–22). Her most recent performances include Sondheim’s *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (monologue, 2020), Stravinsky’s *Oedipus Rex* (chorus and messenger, 2021), *Spring Carol* (quartet, Trinity Youth Choir, 2021), *Oedipus at Colonus* (Antigone and swing, 2022), *Come Sunday* (solo, Trinity Youth Choir, 2022), the film *Pins and Needles* (CAT Youth Theatre, 2022), *Grateful* (solo, Mama Foundation for the Arts, 2022), and a script excerpt from *Medea* (2022).

The New York Philharmonic has established the **New York Philharmonic Chorus** to mark the opening of the new David Geffen Hall in the 2022–23 season. The ensemble of New York–based, professional vocalists appears in four of the Orchestra’s programs over the season under the direction of Malcolm J. Merriweather. The NY Phil Chorus made its debut in the two Opening Galas. The New York Philharmonic Chorus also appears

in Adolphus Hailstork’s *Done Made My Vow, A Ceremony*, in March and in the New York Premiere of John Luther Adams’s *Become Desert*, a work co-commissioned by the Orchestra, in June. For these performances of Adolphus Hailstork’s *Done Made My Vow*, the chorus was prepared by director Malcolm J. Merriweather, choral associate Michele Kennedy, and collaborative pianist Jason Wirth.

Malcolm J. Merriweather, a Grammy-nominated conductor and baritone, is preparing the New York Philharmonic Chorus for all of its appearances in the Orchestra’s 2022–23 season. He is music director of New York City’s The Desoff Choirs, an associate professor at Brooklyn College, and on the faculty at the Manhattan School of Music. He has conducted ensembles in venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Madison Square Garden in New York, as well as at Westminster Abbey in London and the Vatican, before Pope Francis. Merriweather’s repertoire ranges from J.S. Bach to the world premiere recording of Margaret Bonds’s *The Ballad of the Brown King* (AVIE Records). As a baritone, Merriweather, who studied with Rita Shane, has appeared as soloist throughout the United States and premiered dozens of contemporary solo works. He was a fellowship recipient at Tanglewood and earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Manhattan School of Music, and Syracuse University.

New York Philharmonic Chorus

SOPRANO

Vianca Alejandra
Gloria Bangiola
Samara Bowden
Alicia Brozovich
Meg Dudley
Halley Gilbert
Jennifer Gliere
Laura Jobin-Acosta
Pamela Jones
Sylvia Maisonet
Barbee Monk
Mara O'Malley
Katie O'Neal
Elizabeth van Os
Alexis Rodda
Rachel Rosales
Mithuna Sivaraman
Elisa Singer Strom
Michelle Trovato
Linda Tsatsanis
Cherisse Williams
Cherissia Williams
Angela Yam

ALTO

Jennifer Borghi
Linda Childs
Brooke Collins
Marissa Coté
Caitlin Caruso Dobbs
Caitlyn Douglas
Allison Gish
Lena Haleem
Erin Kemp
Janette M. Lallier
Michaela Larsen
Francesca Lunghi
Jonathan May
Sarah Moga
Katherine Doe Morse
Guadalupe Peraza
Michelle Repella
Mary Rice
Charlotte Small-
Chestnut
Sara Trenner
Carla Wesby

TENOR

Justin E. Bell
Daveed Buzaglo
Michael Celentano
Ryan Chavis
Charles Curtis
Joseph Demarest
Vrushabh Doshi
Elliot JG Encarnación
Kaleb Hopkins
Brandon Hornsby-Selvin
Christopher Isaiah
Brian Jeffers
John Kawa
Nathan Siler
Fernando Silva-Gorbea
Rodari Simpson
Chase Taylor
Edward Washington
Tommy Wazelle

BASS

Brian J. Alvarado
Wayne Arthur
Blake Austin Brooks
Courtney Carey
Charles D. Carter
Daniel Chiu
Jeffrey Gavett
Roderick Gomez
Dominic Inferrera
Angelo Johnson
Andrew Jurden
Brian Linares
Conrad Miller
Steven Moore
Brian Mummert
Gregory Purnhagen
Mark E. Rehnstrom

(Current as of February 20, 2023)

Jaap van Zweden and the New York Philharmonic



Jaap van Zweden became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in 2018; in the 2022–23 season he presides over the Orchestra’s return to the new David Geffen Hall. He is also Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, since 2012, and becomes Music Director of the Seoul Philharmonic in 2024. He has appeared as guest with the Orchestre de Paris; Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw and Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestras; Vienna, Berlin, and Los Angeles philharmonic orchestras; and London Symphony, Chicago Symphony, and Cleveland orchestras.

Jaap van Zweden’s NY Phil recordings include David Lang’s *prisoner of the state* and Julia Wolfe’s Grammy-nominated *Fire in my mouth* (Decca Gold). He conducted the first performances in Hong Kong of Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*, the Naxos recording of which led the Hong Kong Philharmonic to be named the 2019 *Gramophone* Orchestra of the year. His performance of Wagner’s *Parsifal* received the Edison Award for Best Opera Recording in 2012.

Born in Amsterdam, Jaap van Zweden became the youngest-ever concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at age 19. He began his conducting career almost 20 years later, was named *Musical America*’s 2012 Conductor of the Year, and was awarded the prestigious Concertgebouw Prize in 2020. In 1997 he and his wife, Aaltje, established the Papageno Foundation to support families of children with autism.

The **New York Philharmonic** connects with millions of music lovers each season through live concerts in New York and around the world, as well as broadcasts, recordings, and education programs. The 2022–23 season marks a new chapter in the life of America’s longest living orchestra with the opening of the new David Geffen Hall and programming that engages with today’s cultural conversations through explorations of *HOME*, *LIBERATION*, *SPIRIT*, and *EARTH*, in addition to the premieres of 16 works. This marks the return from the pandemic, when the NY Phil launched NY Phil Bandwagon, presenting free performances across the city, and 2021–22 concerts at other New York City venues.

The Philharmonic has commissioned and / or premiered important works, from Dvořák’s *New World* Symphony to Tania León’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *Stride*. The Orchestra has released more than 2,000 recordings since 1917, streams performances on NYPhil+, and shares its extensive history free online through the New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives.

Founded in 1842, the New York Philharmonic is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. Jaap van Zweden became Music Director in 2018–19, succeeding titans including Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler.

NEED TO KNOW

New York Philharmonic Guide

Order Tickets and Subscribe

Order tickets online at nyphil.org or call (212) 875-5656.

The New York Philharmonic Box Office is at the **Welcome Center at David Geffen Hall**, open from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday; noon to 6:00 p.m., Sunday; and remains open one-half hour past concert time on performance evenings.

Donate Your Concert Tickets

Can't attend a concert as planned? Call Customer Relations at (212) 875-5656 to donate your tickets for re-sale, and receive a receipt for tax purposes in return.

For the Enjoyment of All

Latecomers and patrons who leave the hall will be seated only after the completion of a work.

Silence all cell phones and other electronic devices throughout the performance.

Photography, sound recording, or videotaping of performances is prohibited.

Accessibility

David Geffen Hall



All gender **restrooms** with accessible stalls are in the Karen and Richard LeFrak Lobby. Accessible men's, women's, and companion restrooms are available on all levels. Infant changing tables are in all restrooms.

Braille & Large-Print versions of print programs are available at the Head Usher's Desk, located on the Leon and Norma Hess Grand Promenade. **Tactile maps** of the Karen and Richard LeFrak Lobby, with seating chart of the Wu Tsai Theater, are available in the Welcome Center.

Induction loops are available in all performance spaces and at commerce points including the Welcome Center, Coat Check, and select bars. Receivers with headsets and neck loops are available for guests who do not have t-coil accessible hearing devices.

Noise-reducing headphones, fidgets, and earplugs are available to borrow.

Accessible seating is available in all performance areas and can be arranged at point of sale. For guests transferring to seats, mobility devices will be checked by staff, labeled, and returned at intermission and after the performance. Seating for persons of size is available in the Orchestra and Tiers 1 and 2. Accessible entrances are on the Josie Robertson Plaza. Accessible routes from the Karen and Richard LeFrak Lobby to all tiers and performance spaces are accessible by **elevator**.

For more information or to request additional accommodations, please contact Customer Relations at (212) 875-5656 and visit lincolncenter.org/visit/accessibility.

For Your Safety

For the latest on the **New York Philharmonic's health and safety guidelines** visit nyphil.org/safety.

Fire exits indicated by a red light and the sign nearest to the seat you occupy are the shortest routes to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, do not run — walk to that exit.

If an evacuation is needed, follow the instructions given by the House Manager and Usher staff.

Automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and **First Aid kits** are available if needed during an emergency.