

Presented at Carnegie Hall by
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Peter Tiboris: Founder and General Music Director

John Rutter, CBE: Conductor Laureate

Sunday, March 17, 2024 at 1 PM
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

New England Symphonic Ensemble

Preston Hawes, Artistic Director and Concertmaster

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK
(1841–1904)

Te Deum, Op. 103

Te Deum (Chorus)

Sanctus (Soprano)

Tu Rex gloriae, Christe! (Bass and chorus)

Aeterna fac cum Sanctis (Chorus)

Dignare Domine (Soprano and chorus)

ĒRIKS EŠENVALDS
(b. 1977)

Trinity Te Deum

Lisa Houben, Soprano
Gabriel Manro, Bass
Yuanhung Lin, Organ
Jeffery Goolsby, Conductor

Participating Choruses

Abilene Christian University A Cappella Chorus, Abilene, TX (Jeffery Goolsby, Director)

Brick Memorial Honors and Alumni Chorus, Brick, NJ (Kevin Bettys, Director)

Brookdale Concordia Chorale, Middletown, NJ (Cynthia and John Balme, Co-Directors)

Permian High School Varsity Choirs, Odessa, TX (Laurie Wash, Director)

Whippany Park Madrigal Singers, Whippany, NJ (Craig Limey, Director)

This afternoon's program is continued on the following pages.

FELIX
MENDELSSOHN
(1809–1847)

Psalm 42, Op. 42

Leslie Ann Bradley, Soprano
Emilio Pons, Tenor I
Ethan Ellis, Tenor II
Eliam Ramos, Bass I
Gabriel Manro, Bass II
Yuanhung Lin, Organ
Charlene Pauls, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Appleby Choir, Oakville, ON (Sara Joy, Director)
Bishop's University Singers, Sherbrooke, QC (Melinda Enns, Director)
Church of the Incarnation Choir, Oakville, ON (Charlene Pauls, Director)
Guelph Chamber Choir, Guelph, ON (Charlene Pauls, Director)
Masterworks of Oakville, Oakville, ON (Charles Demuyne, Director)
Pauls Carnegie Choir, Oakville, ON (Charlene Pauls, Director)
Oakville Choir for Children and Youth, Oakville, ON (Maria Conkey and Charlene Pauls, Directors)
Victoria Philharmonic Choir, Victoria, BC (Peter Butterfield, Director)

INTERMISSION

FRANCIS POULENC
(1899–1963)

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo (Chorus)
Laudamus te (Chorus)
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis (Soprano and chorus)
Domine Fili unigenite (Chorus)
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei (Soprano and chorus)
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris (Soprano and chorus)

Sara LeMesh, Soprano
Nancy Klein, Conductor

MORTEN LAURIDSEN *Lux Aeterna*
(b. 1943)

Introitus
In Te, Domine, Speravi
O Nata Lux
Veni, Sancte Spiritus
Agnus Dei—Lux Aeterna

Elisa Fraser Wilson, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Old Dominion University Concert Choir, Norfolk, VA (Nancy Klein, Director)
Regent University Concert Choir, Virginia Beach, VA (Joan Pi, Director)
University of Texas at El Paso Choirs, El Paso, TX (Elisa Fraser Wilson, Director)
University of Texas at El Paso Choral Union, El Paso, TX (Elisa Fraser Wilson, Director)

INTERMISSION

Ensemble Spotlight Series:

STEPHANIE
ANN BOYD

Four Future Memories

PERCY GRAINGER

Lisbon from *Lincolnshire Posy*
(arr. Robert Longfield)

MAURICE DURUFLÉ

Ubi Caritas

GIOVANNI
BATTISTA MARTINI

Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina

Vianca Alejandra, Soprano
Alyce Daubenspeck, Mezzo-Soprano
Ethan Ellis, Tenor
Eliam Ramos, Bass

REGINAL WRIGHT

Opportunity (World Premiere)

Peter C. Jagdeo and **Jed H. Ragsdale**, Co-Conductors
Tomball Memorial High School Choir and Orchestra, Tomball, Texas

Please hold your applause until the end of multi-movement works.

The Program

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

***Te Deum*, Op. 103**

When the American, music-loving philanthropist Mrs. Jeannette Thurber convinced the world-renowned Czech composer Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904) to be the new director of her National Conservatory of Music in New York City, she commissioned from him a piece celebrating the 400th anniversary of Columbus Day, planned as a grand cantata for chorus, orchestra, and soloists. Telling Dvořák that she would supply the text (later selecting a poem called “The American Flag”), she suggested that, should she be unable to supply it to him before he left Europe, he should select a Latin Hymn such as “Te Deum laudamus” or “Jubilate Deo.” He did precisely this, giving us *Te Deum* in 1892. With a chorus and operatic solos for soprano and bass, the work adopted the theatricality and drama of Verdi’s Requiem and the same solo pairing as Brahms’s German Requiem.

ĒRIKS EŠENVALDS (b. 1977)

Trinity Te Deum

The *Trinity Te Deum* is a re-imagining in Ešenvalds’s terms of the Anglican tradition of ceremonial music for a grand occasion. It was commissioned for the Installation of Sir Gregory Winter as Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, on October 10, 2012. This brief and brilliant hymn of praise opens with flashing fanfares from brass and organ, the choir’s declamation by turns jubilant and hushed before a “magical” organ modulation leads to a contrasting center. Anchored by an eternal drone, and flecked with harp decoration, this has the air of both a gentle, stately dance and a naive folk song. The tripartite structure of the hymn is respected with a return of the opening material but this is the briefest of reprises (the text is truncated too): three ecstatic shouts of “Holy” and the rejoicing is done.

—Gabriel Jackson

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847)

***Psalm 42*, Op. 42**

The Psalm’s opening movement is a tapestry of rich invention. Though the character of the alto melody might lead one to expect fugal treatment, the motive begins a different melodic line in each voice. The resulting texture of overlapping vocal lines coalesces again and again in a chordal statement of the text. The next two movements are both arias for soprano—the first, slow and lyrical with a plangent oboe melody in counterpoint, and the second lively, declamatory, and supported by a three-part women’s choir. The fanfare-like fourth movement for full choir (“Why so sorrowful,

my soul?”), with its repeated cry “Harre auf Gott!” (“Wait for the Lord!”), anticipates the music of Mendelssohn’s *Lobgesang* Symphony. The central movement, both musically and textually, is the quintet, presenting the psychological distress in the solo soprano simultaneously with the reassuring triumphalism of the male solo quartet. Characterized by wide leaps and angular melodic lines, the soprano repeatedly exclaims, “My God, within me is my soul cast down,” while the quartet steadfastly sings in mostly conjunct, diatonic, closely voiced harmonies. The centrality of this movement led to Mendelssohn’s assertion “if the quintet doesn’t succeed, then the whole will not succeed.” The final movement draws upon virtuosic Handelian counterpoint that had recently found tremendous success in St. Paul.

—Ryan Turner

FRANCIS POULENC (1899–1963)

Gloria

Always an idiosyncratic composer, Poulenc was often derided for remaining aloof to the atonal drive of his modernist colleagues. “You’ll have to forgive my Carmelites [nuns]; they can only sing tonal music,” he once retorted. In the *Gloria* of 1959, commissioned by the Boston Symphony, one hears equally his Parisian sophistication and the sincerity of his religious beliefs. The ceremonial grandeur of the first movement gives way to jocular thumping and solemn phrases of chant in the “Laudamus te,” inspired, Poulenc said, by the sight of monks playing soccer. The soloist’s arching melodic lines in the “Domine Deus” are undercut with dissonance and insistent rhythms that underscore the music’s pathos. All these elements are masterfully combined in the dramatic final movement. After a strident unison statement of the theme, the easy gait of the music that follows is broken by brilliant trumpet fanfares that drive the music to a climactic crash, then silence. What follows then is music of truly ineffable calm: Poulenc literally turns his theme upside down and expands it into one of his most beautiful melodies. Those fanfares return, not as interrupting blasts, but as joyous outbursts that subside into the work’s quiet close, the final chord colored not with doubt, but mystery.

—Andrew Adams

MORTEN LAURIDSEN (b. 1943)

Lux Aeterna

Written in 1997, Morten Lauridsen’s *Lux Aeterna* has become a staple of the choral repertoire. This five-movement non-liturgical work is actually a Requiem. It was completed just after Lauridsen’s mother had died, and is peaceful and uplifting in character. All of the words, which contain references to light, are drawn from sacred Latin texts. According to Lauridsen in his note for the score of *Lux Aeterna* (Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.), the two outer movements—“Introitus” and “Agnus

Dei—Lux Aeterna”—refer to the Requiem Mass, and the central movements come from the “Te Deum,” “O Nata Lux,” and “Veni, Sancte Spiritus.”

—Dale Zeidman

STEPHANIE ANN BOYD**Four Future Memories**

Four Future Memories, by Stephanie Ann Boyd, creates a set of short stories for string orchestra about the memories we may have someday in the distant future. Through a combination of literature, music, and time, Memories whisks us through several musical tableaux of the future’s past.

PERCY GRAINGER**Lisbon from *Lincolnshire Posy*** (arr. Robert Longfield)

“Lisbon” is the first movement of *Lincolnshire Posy*, written by Percy Grainger in 1937 as a commission for the American Bandmasters Association. This arrangement was created by Robert Longfield as the first appearance of this much beloved “collection of musical wildflowers” outside of the concert band setting.

MAURICE DURUFLÉ**Ubi Caritas**

Ubi Caritas, composed in 1960 by Maurice Duruflé, is a meditative text set so that the freely flowing motion of the chant, first heard in the altos, is always at the forefront. It is primarily homophonic, with each voice moving together in hymn-like fashion.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA MARTINI**Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina**

Domine ad adjuvandum me festina, by G.B. Martini, is divided into three distinct sections, beginning with a slow opening polyphonic section, then launches into a festive concerto style with sections for chorus, soloists, as well as orchestra alone. The work ends with a double fugue set.

REGINAL WRIGHT**Opportunity** (World Premiere)

Opportunity, composed by Reginal Wright, was commissioned for the ensemble’s performance in Carnegie Hall in 2024, with inspiring melodic lines throughout. The text is based on Berton Braley’s poem about opportunities waiting to be discovered.

Texts and Translations

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

Te Deum, Op. 103

Te Deum laudamus:
te Dominum confitemur.
Te aeternum Patrem
omnis terra veneratur.
Tibi omnes Angeli;
tibi caeli et universae Potestates;

Tibi Cherubim et Seraphim
incessabili voce proclamant:
Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra

maiestatis gloriae tuae.
Te gloriosus Apostolorum chorus,

Te Prophetarum laudabilis numerus,

Te Martyrum candidatus laudat
exercitus.
Te per orbem terrarum

sancta confitetur Ecclesia,
Patrem immensae maiestatis:
Venerandum tuum verum et unicum
Filiū;
Sanctum quoque Paraclitum
Spiritum.

Tu Rex gloriae, Christe.
Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius.

Tu ad liberandum suscepturus
hominem,
non horruisti Virginis uterum.

Tu, devicto mortis aculeo,

aperuisti credentibus regna
caelorum.

Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes, in gloria
Patris.
Iudex crederis esse venturus.

*We praise thee, O God:
we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worship thee:
the Father everlasting.*

*To thee all Angels cry aloud:
the Heavens, and all the Powers
therein.*

*To thee Cherubim and Seraphim:
continually do cry,*

Holy, Holy, Holy:

Lord God of the Sabbath

*Heaven and earth are full of the
Majesty*

of thy glory.

*The glorious company of the Apostles:
praise thee.*

*The goodly fellowship of the Prophets:
praise thee.*

*The noble army of Martyrs: praise
thee.*

*The holy Church throughout all the
world :*

doth acknowledge thee;

The Father: of an infinite Majesty;

Thine honourable, true: and only Son;

Also the Holy Ghost: the Comforter.

Thou art the King of Glory: O Christ.

*Thou art the everlasting Son: of the
Father.*

*When thou tookest upon thee to
deliver man:*

*thou didst not abhor the Virgin's
womb.*

*When thou hadst overcome the
sharpness of death:*

*thou didst open the Kingdom of
Heaven to all believers.*

*Thou sittest at the right hand of God:
in the glory of the Father.*

*We believe that thou shalt come: to be
our Judge.*

Te ergo quaesumus, tuis famulis
subveni:
quos pretioso sanguine redemisti.

Aeterna fac cum sanctis tuis in
gloria numerari.

*We therefore pray thee, help thy
servants:
whom thou hast redeemed with thy
precious blood.
Make them to be numbered with thy
Saints: in glory everlasting.*

FELIX MENDELSSOHN
Psalm 42, Op. 42

As the heart cries out for fresh
water,
so my soul cries, o God, to you.
My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.
When will I reach the place
where I will behold God's
countenance?
My tears are my meal, day and night,
since daily they say to me:
"Where, now, is your God?"
When I look inward
I pour out my heart in solitude;
For I would gladly go
with the crowd and make pilgrimage
to the House of God,
with rejoicing and thanksgiving
among
the crowd who celebrate there.
Why do you trouble yourself, my
soul,
and are so restless in me?
Wait for God!
for I will yet thank him,
since he brings me aid with his
countenance.
My God, my soul is troubled within
me.

Therefore I remember you!
Your streams rush forth,
so here a deep,
and there a deep roar;
all the surges and waves
of your waters flood over me.
My God, my soul is troubled within
me.
By day the Lord has
promised his mercy,
and by night I sing to him,
and I pray to the God of my life.
My God, my soul is troubled within
me.
Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go about so sorrowfully,
when my enemy oppress me?
Why do you trouble yourself, my
soul,
and are so restless in me?
Wait for God!
for I will yet thank him,
since he is the help of my
countenance
and my God.
Praise be to the Lord, the God of
Israel,
from now on until eternity.

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FRANCIS POULENC

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo

Gloria in excelsis Deo
Et in terra pax hominibus bonæ
voluntatis.

*Glory to God in the highest
And on earth peace, goodwill to all
people.*

Laudamus te

Laudamus te, Benedicimus te,
Adoramus te, Glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi Propter magnam
gloriam tuam.

*We praise you, We bless you, We
worship you, We glorify you.
We give thanks to you for your great
glory*

Domine Deus, Rex caelestis

Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus
Pater omnipotens.

*Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty
Father.*

Domine Fili unigenite

Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.

*Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus
Christ.*

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius
Patris, Rex Celestis
Deus Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis; suscipe
deprecationem nostram.

*Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the
Father, King in Heaven
Who takes away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us. Receive our
prayers.*

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, Tu solus
Dominus, Tu solus Altissimus.
Jesu Christe, Cum Sancto Spiritu in
gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

*You who sit at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy on us.
Only you are holy, only you are Lord.
Only you are most high.
Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit in the
glory of God the Father. Amen.*

MORTEN LAURIDSEN

Lux Aeterna

Introitus

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on
them.

You are praised, God, in Zion,
And homage will be paid to you
in Jerusalem:

Hear my prayer,
To you all flesh will come.
Rest eternal grant them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on
them.

In Te, Domine, Speravi

Thou, having delivered mankind,
did not disdain the Virgin's womb.
Thou overcame the sting of death
and opened to believers the
kingdom of heaven.

A light has risen in the darkness for
the upright.

Have mercy on us, O Lord,
have mercy on us.
Let thy mercy be upon us, O Lord,
for we have hoped in thee.
In thee, O Lord, I have trusted:
let me never be confounded.

O Nata Lux

O born light of light,
Jesus redeemer of the world,
mercifully deem worthy and accept
praises and prayers from your
suplicants.
Who once was clothed in the flesh
for those who are lost.
Allow us to become members of
your holy body.

Veni, Sancte Spiritus

Come, Holy Spirit,
And send from heaven
Your ray of light.
Come, Father of the poor,
Come, giver of gifts,
Come, light of hearts.

The best of Consolers,
Sweet guest of the soul,
Sweet refreshment.
In labor, thou art rest,
In heat, thou art the tempering,
In grief, thou art the consolation.

O light most blessed,
Fill the inmost heart
Of all thy faithful.
Without your grace,
There is nothing in us,
Nothing that is not harmful.
Cleanse what is dirty,
Moisten what is dry,
Heal what is hurt.
Flex what is rigid,
Heat what is frigid,
Correct what goes astray.

Grant to thy faithful,
Those that trust in thee,
Thy sacred seven-fold gifts.
Grant the reward of virtue,
Grant the deliverance of salvation,
Grant joy everlasting.

Agnus Dei—Lux Aeterna

Lamb of God, who takes away the
sins of the world, grant them rest.
Lamb of God, who takes away the
sins of the world, grant them rest.
Lamb of God, who takes away the
sins of the world, grant them rest
forever.

May eternal light shine on them,
Lord,
as with your saints in eternity,
because you are merciful.
Grant them eternal rest, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on
them,
Alleluia. Amen.

The Artists



Jeffery Goolsby, Conductor

Jeffery Goolsby is director of choral studies at Abilene Christian University, where he leads a diverse program of choral ensembles dedicated to artistic excellence, transformational musical experiences, and high-impact community engagement. He conducts the university's flagship choral ensemble, the A Cappella Chorus, conducts the University Chorale, and Chamber Singers, and leads three student-led contemporary a cappella groups. He was influential in establishing the ACU Gospel Choir, the university's newest ensemble. The ACU choral music program engages students from various academic, social, racial, and economic backgrounds. More than half of the program is comprised of non-music majors.

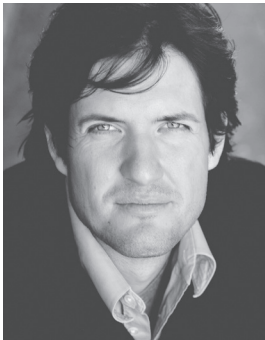
Goolsby teaches courses in choral conducting and choral methods and supervises the choral music education program. Prior to joining the ACU faculty, he taught for 10 years in successful high school choral music programs in the Dallas and Houston areas. He has served in churches as

music director and consultant. Choirs under his direction have performed at notable venues in the US and abroad. The ACU A Cappella Chorus tours regionally every academic year. Recent national tours include performances at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center (2017) and Carnegie Hall (2024). He and his wife of 20 years, Lisa, have two wonderful children, an ill-behaved dog, an ornery cat, and are proud to call Abilene “home.”



Lisa Houben, Soprano

Born in Washington, DC to Dutch parents, the soprano Lisa Houben began her international career with *Tosca*. Since then, her performances of *Fidelio*, *Tosca*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Lady Macbeth*, *Aida*, *Madama Butterfly* brought her to the Opera of Rome, Palermo’s Teatro Massimo, La Fenice in Venice, Opera of Bordeaux, Opera of Lyon, Brussels’s La Monnaie, Nuremberg’s Staatstheater, Vienna’s Volksoper, and Strasbourg’s Opéra du Rhin. Her wide range of repertoire also includes Verdi’s *Giovanna d’Arco*, Abigaille (*Nabucco*), Feldmarshallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Elisabetta (*Don Carlos*), Leonora (*La forza del destino*), *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Suor Angelica*, Giorgietta (*Il trittico*), Marguerite (Gounod’s *Faust*), Maddalena (*Andrea Chénier*), Santuzza (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), Tatyana (*Eugene Onegin*), Contessa (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), and Cherubini’s *Médée*.



Gabriel Manro, Baritone

Multiple Grammy Award-winning baritone Gabriel Manro has been called “a new kind of baritone...a knock-down baritone” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*). Manro made his operatic debut as Third Inmate in Heggie’s *Dead Man Walking* (Opera Pacific) with Frederica von Stade. Manro has created roles in numerous contemporary and world-premiere operas and musicals: Muscovite Trader in LA Opera’s *The Ghosts of Versailles* (Grammy Award, Best Opera Recording); the Mousing in the LA Philharmonic’s *Alice in Wonderland*; the Computer in LA Opera’s *The Fly* by film composer Howard Shore (*Lord of the Rings*) directed by David Cronenberg; original cast of *Séance on a Wet Afternoon* by Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked*, *Godspell*); original cast of LA Opera’s *Il Postino* (Sony Classical DVD); the Commentator in the west coast premiere of Derrick Wang’s *Scalia/Ginsburg*; and President Lincoln in Golden Gate Opera’s world-premiere of *Lincoln and Booth*.



Charlene Pauls, Conductor

Charlene Pauls has enjoyed a varied musical career as a choral conductor, soprano soloist, clinician, adjudicator, academic, and pedagogue. Drawing on this extensive background, Pauls has developed a holistic approach in guiding singers to create a more beautiful, healthy, and well-crafted choral sound, regardless of age.

Over the course of her career, she has directed a wide range of adult, university, and youth choirs. Under her direction, choirs have won nationally at the CBC Amateur Canadian Choral Competition, World Choir Games gold medal standing (Riga, Latvia), and have appeared at the Canadian national choral conference, Podium. In 2018, she was thrilled to be awarded the Ontario Arts Council's Leslie Bell Prize, which "recognizes excellence in emerging conductors".

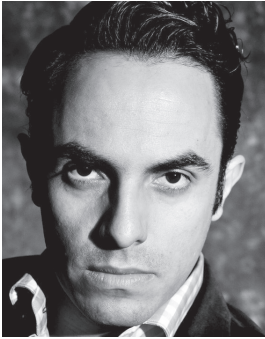
Since 2019, Pauls has been the artistic director of the Guelph Chamber Choir, an organization that has been a stalwart on the Canadian choral scene for over 40 years. The GCC presents a four-concert main season spanning works from larger orchestral/choral pieces to contemporary works and commissions. She is passionate about community engagement and has developed the Sing Out program that runs concurrently with the concert season creating programming aimed at developing youth musicians, connecting with seniors, and engaging with community partners. Pauls holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Toronto where she specialized in vocal pedagogy and a doctoral research dissertation on Bach's Cantata BWV 210. She received a Master of Arts from McGill University (Early Music), and completed undergraduate degrees from the Universities of Winnipeg and Manitoba in theology, piano, and voice.



Leslie Ann Bradley, Soprano

Soprano Leslie Ann Bradley "brings the stage to life whenever she sets foot into the spotlight" (*Toronto Star*). Recent engagements for Bradley include Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with Symphony Nova Scotia, Brahms's *Deutsches Requiem* with Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Handel's *Messiah* with The Florida Orchestra, and, with White Snake Projects, premiering various art songs through *Sing Out Strong: Remembered Voices*. Past seasons included a recital at the

Gustin House in Saskatoon where she sang a diverse program ranging from Brahms to Sondheim, and both Berg's *Seven Early Songs*, and Mahler's *Symphony No. 4* with the Victoria Symphony.



Emilio Pons, Tenor

The career of tenor Emilio Pons has taken him across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. Since his debut at the Mariinsky Theater in Saint Petersburg, he has performed at the Grand Théâtre de Genève, Theater St. Gallen, Royal Opera House in Copenhagen, Vlaamse Opera in Belgium, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Theater Freiburg, Theater Heidelberg, Vilnius City Opera, Opéra de Metz, as well as Compañía Nacional de Ópera de Bellas Artes, the Teatro

Municipal de Santiago, and Theatro Municipal of Rio de Janeiro. Pons holds a graduate degree in piano from the National Conservatory of Music in Mexico and a Juris Doctor Degree from the Universidad Iberoamericana, in addition to Master and Doctor of Music degrees from the Indiana University. He is a prize-winner of the Irma Cooper, Palm Beach Opera, and Pavel Lisitsian competitions, and the RBT-Preis München award at the Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition (2007) in Vienna.



Ethan Ellis, Tenor

Ethan Ellis is a 2023 Manhattan School of Music graduate. Recent roles include Peter Quint in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* at Chicago Summer Opera, Jupiter in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* at Berlin Opera Academy, Schoolmaster in Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and Valetto in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* at Trentino Music Festival.



Eliam Ramos, Baritone

Eliam Ramos has a rich full lyric bass-baritone voice. He began his training and graduated from the Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico. He made his professional debut in 2011 as Il Commendatore in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with Teatro de la Ópera de Puerto Rico, directed by Antonio Barasorda. Since then, his artistic engagements have included the role of Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Fauré's Requiem, and a Gala of Zarzuela for the Puerto Rico

Symphonic Orchestra. Other notable performances include Mozart's Requiem with the Puerto Rico Philharmonic Orchestra, Luis Nogales in *Luisa Fernanda*, Don Pedro in *El barberillo de Lavapiés*, a pirate in *Cofresí* by Rafael Hernández, and various concerts, recitals, master classes, and opera summer programs.



Nancy Kirkland Klein, Conductor

Nancy Kirkland Klein has directed the choral program at Old Dominion University since 1986. In her 38 years with the Diehn School of Music, she has created a large and much sought after University Choir, has established the F. Ludwig Diehn Chorale, began and developed the NASM accredited M.M.E. and the Graduate Performers Certificate, and moved the department into School of Music status. She has traveled worldwide as a conductor and choral clinician, conducting numerous concerts in the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris; St. Mark's Basilica in Venice; St. Giles's Cathedral in Scotland; Conservatoire de Musique in Luxembourg; and Avery Fisher Hall and Alice Tully Hall in New York. She has been a three-time keynote speaker for the European Music Educators Association and is a regular presenter and guest conductor for the Virginia Music Educators Association. Klein has conducted master classes in choral conducting from Rochester, New York to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Serving our nation's military, she has trained conductors for the US Army, preparing them to work with instrumental and choral groups, and has trained many of the choral music educators in eastern Virginia. As a conductor, she has premiered the works of living composers Adolphus Hailstork, Richard Moriarty, Steven Melillo, and Steven Coxe. She has received numerous awards including the Joel S. Lewis Award for Mentoring, University Professor Designation for Excellence in Teaching, Robert Stern Award for Excellence in Teaching, 2014 ALLI Award for Lifetime Contributions to the Arts, and the Alfred Nelson Marquis Award for Lifetime Achievement. Klein is the first woman to achieve the rank of full professor of music at Old Dominion University and is the first woman to serve as director/chair of the F. Ludwig Diehn School of Music. Married to Robert Klein, she is the proud grandmother of three little girls.



Sara LeMesh, Soprano

Soprano Sara LeMesh, hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* for her “powerhouse performance of vocal majesty and expressive translucency,” is a dramatic presence on the opera and concert stages. During the 2023–2024 season, LeMesh debuted with West Bay Opera in Carlos Franzetti’s *Corpus Evita* as Isabel Perón and covered Nellie/Madwoman in Rene Orth’s *10 Days in a Madhouse* with Opera Philadelphia. She also debuted with Opera Naples as Frasquita in Bizet’s *Carmen* and appeared in concert with the Brooklyn Art Song Society. Additional opera credits include Norina in Donizetti’s *Don*

Pasquale (Mendocino Music Festival) and Bess in Missy Mazzoli's *Breaking The Waves* (West Edge Opera).



Elisa Fraser Wilson, Conductor

Elisa Fraser Wilson is director of choral activities at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), where she coordinates the choral/voice area, conducts the Concert Chorale and Chamber Singers, and teaches undergraduate and graduate choral conducting, pedagogy, and literature. Currently, she is also the director of the UTEP Children's Choir, and chorusmaster for the El Paso Symphony Orchestra and El Paso Opera. During her tenure at UTEP, she has additionally served as director of the UTEP Opera Workshop and chorusmaster and director of the Young Artist Program for El Paso Opera. Wilson's creative activities and pedagogy center on community engagement, culture of care, commissioning works for choir, trombones, and works by student and regional composers, and applying concepts of Viewpoints acting training to choral rehearsal and performance. She has coordinated and directed choruses for UTEP performance residencies in the kingdom of Bhutan (Opera Bhutan) and Leeds, England, and her choirs have been invited to perform at the Big 12 Trombone Conference and the TMEA Annual Clinic/Convention. Wilson completed degrees in choral music education, voice performance, and choral conducting and literature from the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign (BS and DMA), and Wichita State University (MM). She has conducted numerous collegiate, secondary, and community choirs, including children's, jazz and show choirs, and is a regular clinician/adjudicator for local and regional festivals. Wilson and her husband, Steve, are frequent musical collaborators, outdoor adventure enthusiasts, and proud parents of Conor, Ethan, and Katrina.



Jed Hyun Ragsdale, Conductor

Jed Hyun Ragsdale is the current director of choirs at Tomball Memorial High School (TMHS) and will complete year 26 in public education this May. Prior to TMHS, Ragsdale directed choirs at Cy-Fair HS, Jersey Village HS, and at Langham Creek HS. In 2004, his Varsity Men's Choir performed at the Texas Music Educators' Association Convention. Ragsdale is a proud servant leader who has served choral music in many areas such as the Texas Music Educators Association Clinic Coordinator, Convention Facilities Chair, All-State Choir Organizer, All-State Choir Section Leader, Area E Auditions

Chair, Area F Auditions Chair, Region 27 Vocal Division Chair, and the Texas Choral Directors Association Convention Hospitality Chair. In 2019, Ragsdale was elected vice-president of TMEA. Ragsdale received a Bachelor of Music from Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas, studying with Kenny Sheppard, and a Master of Educational Leadership from Lamar University. He has two incredible children, Avery and Aidan, both involved in the performing arts.



Peter C. Jagedo, Conductor

Peter C. Jagedo is an educator based in the Houston area and has been the head orchestra director at Tomball Memorial High School since 2017. During that time, the orchestra program has been recognized for musical excellence on every level. Besides winning Superior ratings in all regional University Interscholastic League competitions, in 2018 the orchestra was recognized by the Houston Symphony, which awarded the program a High School Residency.

During the 2019–2020 term, the National Orchestra Honors Project awarded a Recognized commendation to the Tomball Memorial Symphony Orchestra, placing it in the top five full orchestra programs in the nation. During the 2020–2021 term, the Honors Project awarded a National Winner commendation to both the Symphony and String Orchestras, placing them both in the top three programs in the nation. The String Orchestra was again awarded with a Recognized commendation in 2023. The Symphony Orchestra was also a 2023 Finalist in the Texas Music Educators Association Honor Orchestra competition. Jagedo resides in Houston with his wife, Shannon, who is also a violinist and orchestra director, and their two children. Besides teaching and composing, he enjoys reading science fiction novels, traveling, and, of course, PC gaming with his friends and family.



Vianca Alejandra, Soprano

Vianca Alejandra is a New York-based Puerto Rican soprano. Currently, she is a first prize winner in the Adult Voice Classical category at the Music International Grand Prix competition and a District Winner from The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. In January, she represents the Puerto Rico District in the Gulf Coast Regional Round. As a member of the New York Philharmonic Chorus, she participated in the world premiere of *Émigré* in Shanghai, China.

During her 2022–2023 season, she made her role debut as Kathie in *The*

Student Prince with Regina Opera in Brooklyn, New York, and as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* at the International Summer Opera Festival of Morelia in Mexico.



Alyce Daubenspeck, Mezzo-Soprano

Alyce Daubenspeck is a young, dramatic force to be reckoned with. Her voluptuous mezzo-soprano sound has been described as “emotionally shattering,” with its “pristine tone” that embodies high notes that are both “extraordinarily controlled and on the edge of wildness.” Her vulnerability as a dramatic actress has been moving audiences for the last five years, with roles such as Augusta Tabor in Douglas

Moore’s *The Ballad Of Baby Doe*, the Old Prioress in Poulenc’s *Dialogues des Carmelites*, Lyubov from Tchaikovsky’s *Mazeppa*, and Anita in *La Navarraise* by Massenet.



Preston Hawes, New England Symphonic Ensemble Artistic Director

Hailed by the European Academy of Arts and Sciences as an “electrifying and virtuosic” performer with “exquisite taste and rare talent,” Canadian violinist Preston Hawes is a laureate of the Concours de musique du Canada, the Andrews International Music Competitions, and the Prix de Musique de Chambre à Fontainebleau, and is a recipient of the J. C. Van Hulsteyn Award, and Peabody Career

Grant. He has been heard as a soloist in more than 35 countries and in venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, and Plovdiv Symphony Hall. Having earned a Master of Music degree and the coveted Artist Diploma at Yale University, Hawes completed his studies by earning a Doctorate of Musical Arts from The Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University. Hawes is a professor of music and director of strings at Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Maryland, and is the artistic director of the New England Symphonic Ensemble.

New England Symphonic Ensemble

With performances described as “flawless” (*Rhodes Magazine*), the New England Symphonic Ensemble (NESE), under the artistic direction of Dr. Preston Hawes, is among the most frequently featured organizations in Carnegie Hall. Since its inception in 1989, the NESE has drawn global

critical acclaim in hundreds of concerts on the world's most prestigious stages. In collaboration with MidAmerica Productions, the NESE has been led by a roster of guest conductors including John Rutter, Peter Tiboris, Sherrill Milnes, Helmuth Rilling, Simon Carrington, and Jonathan Willcocks, and regularly hosts international guest soloists. NESE world premieres include Dinos Constantinides's *Byron's Greece*, *Hymn to the Human Spirit*, and *Midnight Fantasy II* for wind ensemble; John Rutter's *Cantate Domino*, *Distant Land*, *Magnificat*, and *Mass of the Children*; and John Leavitt's *A Christmas Garland*. The NESE boasts multiple US premieres, including Mozart's *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots*, Reimann's Concerto for Violin and Cello, Tchaikovsky's *Ode to Joy*, and René Clausen's *Hellas: In the Name of Freedom*. The NESE can be heard on the Naxos label in an award-winning recording of spirituals with internationally renowned mezzo-soprano, the late Barbara Smith Conrad.

MidAmerica Productions, Inc.

During its 40 years, MidAmerica Productions has brought together conductors, soloists, and choral and instrumental ensembles from the US and abroad to appear at New York's top venues, including Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage, Weill Recital Hall, and Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall; and Alice Tully Hall and Avery Fisher Hall (now David Geffen Hall) at Lincoln Center. Additionally, MidAmerica Productions has presented concerts in numerous US cities and in countries throughout the world, including Greece, England, Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Italy, France, Portugal, and Russia. MidAmerica Productions's concerts have showcased choral groups singing oratorios with talented conductors, full orchestra, and professional soloists; individual instrumental and choral groups performing as part of the Ensemble Spotlight Series; and solo recitals. Diverse programs have included Madrigal Festivals, Vocal Jazz Festivals, National Wind Ensemble, National Festival Youth Orchestra, and Sweet Adelines. Among the renowned guest conductors who have led MidAmerica's concerts are John Rutter (who has conducted more than 130 concerts in Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall), Sherrill Milnes, Lukas Foss, Helmuth Rilling, H. Robert Reynolds, JoAnne Falletta, Michael Morgan, and Jonathan Willcocks. More than 800 conductors have conducted on MidAmerica's series in New York and abroad, sharing the stage with 1,300 solo artists from the world's greatest opera companies and concert stages, and 3,700 choral ensembles from the US and abroad. There have been 174 youth and collegiate orchestras, as well as 146 youth and collegiate bands, jazz bands, and wind ensembles.

MidAmerica Productions

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