

Presented at Carnegie Hall by
MidAmerica Productions, Inc.

1,483rd Concert Worldwide, 1,147th in New York, 692nd in Carnegie Hall

Peter Tiboris: Founder and General Director

John Rutter, CBE: Conductor Laureate

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 2 PM
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

New England Symphonic Ensemble

Preston Hawes, Artistic Director

JOHN RUTTER *All Things Bright and Beautiful*

ELAINE HAGENBERG *O Love*

FAYE WONG “Gratitude” (arr. Man Tou)

HAROLD ARLEN / “Over the Rainbow” from *The Wizard of Oz*
E. Y. HARBURG (arr. Andy Beck)

Chiafen Lin, Conductor

TIM RICE / “Circle of Life” (arr. Audrey Snyder)
HANS ZIMMER /
ELTON JOHN /
LEBO M.

Claire Chiu, Piano

Sofia Yatsyshyna, Cello, Carnegie Scholars Program Musician

Abner Marquez, Trumpet, Carnegie Scholars Program Musician

Zoey Cobb, Percussion

Karl Chang, Conductor

Participating Choruses

Crystal Children’s Choir, Cupertino, CA (Chiafen Lin, Director)

Crystal Children’s Choir, Taiwan, (Hua-Lin Chung, Director)

National University of Tainan Affiliated Primary School (NUTNPS) Children’s Choir,

Tainan City, Taiwan (Shu-Nu Sun, Director)

INTERMISSION

GIUSEPPE VERDI

Overture to *La forza del destino*

PYOTR ILYICH
TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36
I. Andante sostenuto—Moderato con anima—
Moderato assai, quasi Andante—Allegro vivo
II. Andantino in modo di canzone
III. Scherzo: Pizzicato ostinato—Allegro
IV. Finale: Allegro con fuoco

Peter Tiboris, Conductor

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

This afternoon, Mr. Tiboris conducts with an ivory baton from his private collection, previously owned and used by conductor Leonard Bernstein from 1958 to 1969.

The Program

JOHN RUTTER

All Things Bright and Beautiful

All Things Bright and Beautiful, perhaps one of the most well-loved hymn texts of all time, is a children's hymn written by Cecil Francis Alexander in 1848. In Rutter's popular setting, a gentle orchestral accompaniment, featuring woodwinds, strings, and harp, creating a backdrop for the vivid imagery in the poetry. Celebrating the wonder of God's creation, the choral melody sparkles with whimsical lightness, giving momentum and joy to each verse. From purple-headed mountains, to rivers, cold winds, and summer sun, every stanza celebrates the world around us with gratitude.

ELAINE HAGENBERG

O Love

This work was inspired by the words of Scottish minister, George Matheson in 1882. Blinded at the age of 19, his fiancée called off their engagement and his sister cared for him as he endured new challenges. Years later, on the eve of his sister's wedding, he faced the painful reminder of his own heartache and loss as he penned the words to this hymn. Given a fresh melody that soars with eloquence, composer Elaine Hagenberg uses hopeful ascending lines representing renewed faith. Though lingering dissonances remind us of past heartache, the beautiful promise remains: "morn shall tearless be."

HAROLD ARLEN / E. Y. HARBURG

"Over the Rainbow" from *The Wizard of Oz* (arr. Andy Beck)

"Over the Rainbow" is a ballad by Harold Arlen with lyrics by Yip Harburg. It was written for the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*, in which it was sung by actress Judy Garland in her starring role as Dorothy Gale. It won the Academy Award for Best Original Song and became Garland's signature song.

TIM RICE / HANS ZIMMER / ELTON JOHN / LEBO M.

"Circle of Life" (arr. Audrey Snyder)

Composed by Elton John, with lyrics by Sir Tim Rice and Hans Zimmer, this captivating piece from the Academy Award-winning movie *The Lion King*, delves into the heart of Africa. With the symbolic opening chant of "Nants ingonyama bagithi Baba," the work weaves an African cultural

tapestry. The song's melodies mirror the animation's imagery, enriched by traditional drums and animal sounds. Diverse choir contributions, hand-played percussion, a pan flute key change, and subtle synth elements create a tribal ambiance.

GIUSEPPE VERDI

Overture to *La forza del destino*

After February 1859, when *Un ballo in maschera* was first performed, Verdi did not compose a new opera for more than two years. On June 3, 1861, he signed a contract to write a new opera for the Imperial Theater in St. Petersburg. He chose as his subject *La forza del destino* (*The Power of Destiny*), based on a famous Spanish play, *Don Alvaro, O La Fuerza Del Sino*, by Don Angel de Saavedra, Duke of Rivas. The story tells of the power of fate to destroy, sometimes through improbable means, Don Alvaro, the woman he loves, her father, and her brother. The opera is one of the grimmest of its day, but perhaps Verdi felt that the work would appeal to the Russian taste for gloomy tales.

La forza del destino had its premiere on November 10, 1862, in St. Petersburg. In appreciation, Czar Alexander II conferred the Order of St. Stanislaus, an honor not customarily accorded to artists, upon Verdi. The czar may have been well satisfied with the opera, but the composer was not. Six years later, Verdi made extensive revisions in the work for presentation in a new form at La Scala in Milan on February 20, 1869. Among the changes was the expansion of the opera's original brief orchestral introduction into the full-scale dramatic overture we know today.

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36

When a former student from the Moscow Conservatory challenged Pyotr Tchaikovsky about the program for his fourth symphony, the composer responded, "Of course my symphony is programmatic, but this program is such that it cannot be formulated in words. That would excite ridicule and appear comic ... In essence, my symphony is an imitation of Beethoven's Fifth; i.e., I imitated not the musical ideas, but the fundamental concept."

Beginning with the Fourth Symphony, Tchaikovsky launched a musical exploration of the concept of fate as an inescapable force. In a letter to Meck, Tchaikovsky explained, "The introduction is the seed of the whole symphony, undoubtedly the central theme. This is fate, i.e., that fateful force which prevents the impulse to happiness from entirely achieving its goal, forever on jealous guard lest peace and well-being should ever be attained in complete and unclouded form, hanging above us like the Sword of Damocles, constantly and unremittingly poisoning the soul. Its force is

invisible and can never be overcome. Our only choice is to surrender to it, and to languish fruitlessly.”

The fate motive blasts open the symphony with a mighty proclamation from the brasses and bassoons. “One’s whole life is just a perpetual traffic between the grimness of reality and one’s fleeting dreams of happiness,” Tchaikovsky wrote of this movement. This theme returns later in the movement and at the end of the fourth, a reminder of destiny’s inescapability.

The beauty of the solo oboe that begins the *Andantino* beckons, and the yearning countermelody of the strings surges with surprising energy before it subsides. In the *Scherzo*, Tchaikovsky departs from the heaviness of the previous movements with *pizzicato* strings. Tchaikovsky described this playful movement as a series of “capricious arabesques.”

Like the first movement, the *Finale* bursts forth with a blaze of sound. Marked *Allegro con fuoco* (with fire), the music races by in a raging inferno. Abruptly, fate returns and the symphony concludes with barely controlled frenzy, accented by cymbal crashes.

—Elizabeth Schwartz

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The Artists



Karl Chang, Conductor

Karl Chang is the founding director and president of Crystal Children's Choir in Silicon Valley, which he co-founded in 1994 with three friends: Jenny Chiang, Rita Lu, and Diane Kwan, with a goal of blending the best of eastern and western musical traditions.

Crystal welcomes first to 12th graders of all ethnic backgrounds. Under Chang's leadership, the choir has received invitations to perform at many national and international choral conventions, has won many awards, and has been recognized for its outstanding performance of repertoire rich in cultural diversity. A notable honor was the Crystal Choir's performance in 2013 before a packed house in Dallas at the National Convention of the American Choral Directors Association. The Crystal Choir made its first appearance at Carnegie Hall in 2000, under the auspices of MidAmerica.

Since Chang first brought Crystal to ACDA in 1995, the children's choir has built a national reputation in mainstream American society and has taken international performance tours as an American group. Additionally, Crystal Choir has expanded to include branches in Taiwan and China: Crystal Taiwan was established in 2000 and has grown to over 450 choristers; and a Beijing branch of Crystal was created in 2009, inspired by successful performances of the American Crystal at Beijing Concert Hall in the previous years. Crystal Beijing currently has 120 choristers. Another successful undertaking is an annual international choral workshop in conjunction with Stanford University. Crystal started collaborating with Stanford in 2010 to organize a summer camp, providing an option for the choir's fourth to eighth graders to take choral lessons with visiting Asian children in the same age group.

Besides his responsibilities with Crystal Choir, for over 32 years, Chang has been directing Ching Ching Chorus, a 150-voice community ensemble; and he continues to inspire people to develop their love for singing.

Chang holds a Doctor of Education in Leadership and Management from St. Thomas University in Florida, a Master of Business Administration from Santa Clara University in California, and a Master of Science in Engineering from University of Texas. However, his passion for choral music has led him to pursue his lifelong dream in children's music education.

Zoey Cobb, Percussion

Zoey Cobb is a New York-based freelancing percussionist, educator, and videographer who seeks to provide a fresh perspective on the music she is a part of. As a performer, she has played in various venues ranging from parading down the streets of Ireland and small living rooms, to Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. Playing for ensembles and organizations like Yellow Barn, Vic Firth, New England Symphonic Ensemble, and Des Moines opera project.

Sofia Yatsyshyna, Cello, and Abner Marquez, Trumpet

Ukrainian cellist Sofia Yatsyshyna and Venezuelan trumpeter Abner Marquez are members of The Carnegie Scholars Program (CSP) of the New England Symphonic Ensemble. This unique orchestral mentorship program is credited at Washington Adventist University's Department of Music in Takoma Park, MD and brings elite pre-professional musicians to the stage of Carnegie Hall under the guidance of director and CSP alumnus Preston Hawes, in working collaboration with the many of finest musicians in America; the members of the New England Symphonic Ensemble, and in partnership with MidAmerica Productions. Alumni of the Carnegie Scholars Program are heard regularly on Broadway, in movie soundtracks, and accompanying some of the most famous singers on tour and on shows like *Saturday Night Live*, *The Late Show*, and *Good Morning America*, and many have become award-winning instrumental soloists, teachers and professors, principal musicians in orchestras across the globe.



Peter Tiboris, Conductor

Greek-American conductor, music director, and impresario Peter Tiboris has been a vital presence on the international music scene for more than 50 years.

As general and music director of MidAmerica Productions in New York since its founding in 1983, Tiboris has presented more than 1,400 concerts worldwide, including New York City like Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher (now David Geffen) Hall and Alice Tully Hall (the site of his January 7, 1984, New York debut with the American Symphony Orchestra). In 2004, he founded MidAm International, which produces concerts in major European cultural centers including Paris, Vienna, Salzburg, Florence, Lisbon, Prague, Berlin, Warsaw, Athens, Moscow, and St. Petersburg. In 2005, he created the International Festival of the Aegean on the Greek island of Syros in the Cyclades, where he presented international-caliber performances of opera, oratorios, concerti, symphonic works, Greek folk music, jazz, theater, and ballet. In 2011, the festival was celebrated as the "best cultural organization

operating in the wider region of Greece” by the Awards Committee of Music Critics of the Union of Greek Theatre and Music Critics in Athens.

Tiboris has a vast repertoire, ranging from major choral works to countless symphonies, operas, and ballets, including numerous world and American premieres. Among the distinguished orchestras Tiboris has conducted are London’s Royal Philharmonic and Philharmonia Orchestras, Niedersächsische Staatsorchester Hannover, Virtuosi di Praga, Brno Philharmonic, National Opera Orchestra of Cairo, American Symphony Orchestra, Moscow Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra, Société Philharmonique de Montréal, Israel Symphony Orchestra Rishon LeZion, Orchestra del Teatro dell’Opera di Roma, Orchestra di Verona, and Orchestra di Siciliana di Palermo. His ballet engagements have included the Balletto di Verona and the Teatro dell’Opera di Roma, whose production of *Peer Gynt* with director/choreographer Renato Zanella was named “Ballet of the Year” by *Danza e Danza* magazine. In 2016, he made his Asian debut with the Macau Orchestra and Taipei Philharmonic Chorus in Macau, China.



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.

Carnegie Scholars Program

The Carnegie Scholars Program (CSP) of the NESE is a unique mentorship program that brings pre-professional musicians to the stage of Carnegie Hall in collaboration with MidAmerica Productions, and mentor-members of the New England Symphonic Ensemble (NESE). First formed in the 1970s and later formalized as an accredited class for degree-seeking

students at Washington Adventist University (Takoma Park, MD), CSP musicians have performed in well over 250 concerts at Carnegie Hall, have performed at the Jerash Festival in Jordan under the auspices of HM Queen Noor of Jordan, at Wilanow Palace in Warsaw Poland for President Ford, Henry Kissinger, and First Secretary Edward Gierek, for HRH Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana of Thailand, and for numerous other dignitaries, world leaders, and leading musicians. The Carnegie Scholars Program provides an inclusive and affirming artistic space that instills in young musicians the mission of service through music that brings joy, solace, and adventure to all who hear.

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.

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