

Presented at Carnegie Hall by
MidAmerica Productions, Inc.

1,488th Concert Worldwide, 1,152nd in New York, 697th in Carnegie Hall

Peter Tiboris: Founder, General Director, and Music Director
John Rutter, CBE: Conductor Laureate

“Do not only practice your art, but force your way into its secrets, for it and knowledge can raise men to the divine.” —From the letters of Beethoven, 1826

Monday, May 27, 2024 at 7 PM
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

New England Symphonic Ensemble
Preston Hawes, Artistic Director and Concertmaster

JOHN RUTTER Celebration (World Premiere)
(b. 1945)

JOHN RUTTER Magnificat
I. Magnificat anima mea (Chorus)
II. Of a Rose, a lovely Rose (Chorus)
III. Quia fecit mihi magna (Chorus)
IV. Et misericordia (Soprano)
V. Fecit potentiam (Chorus)
VI. Esurientes (Soprano and chorus)
VII. Gloria Patri (Soprano and chorus)

Juliet Ariadne Papadopoulos, Soprano
John Rutter CBE, Conductor

Participating Choruses
Central Regional High School Choir, Bayville, NJ (Elizabeth Moore, Director)
Chœur classique de l' Outaouais, Gatineau, QC, Canada (Tiphaine Legrand, Director)
Columbia Chorale of Oregon, St. Helens, OR (Alice Boyer, Director)
Continuo Arts Symphonic Chorus, Summit, NJ (Candace Wicke, Director)
Fremont Presbyterian Choir, Sacramento, CA (Rachel Jackson, Director)
Palisade High School Choirs, Palisade, CO (Matt J. Doty, Director)
Roane Choral Society, Harriman, TN (Brenda Luggie, Director)
Syracuse Pops Chorus, Syracuse, NY (Lou Lemos, Director)
The Estes Park Chorale, Estes Park, CO (Denise Stookesberry, Director)
Utah Choral Collective, Bountiful, UT (Brett Levitre, Director)

INTERMISSION

**WOLFGANG
AMADEUS MOZART**
(1756–1791)

Mass in C Major, K. 317 “Coronation Mass”

I. Kyrie (Soprano, Tenor, and Chorus)
II. Gloria (Chorus and Solo Quartet)
III. Credo (Chorus and Solo Quartet)
IV. Sanctus (Chorus)
V. Benedictus (Chorus and Solo Quartet)
VI. Agnus Dei (Chorus, Soprano, and Solo Quartet)

Mary Evelyn Hangley, Soprano
Linda Baird, Mezzo-Soprano
John Kun Park, Tenor
John Allen Nelson, Baritone
David B. Weaver, Conductor

**WOLFGANG
AMADEUS MOZART**
(1756–1791)

***Vesperae solennes de confessore*, K. 339**

I. Dixit (Chorus and Solo Quartet)
II. Confitebor (Chorus and Solo Quartet)
III. Beatus vir (Chorus and Solo Quartet)
IV. Laudate pueri (Chorus)
V. Laudate Dominum (Soprano and Chorus)
VI. Magnificat (Chorus and Solo Quartet)

Lara McGill, Soprano
Roselin Osser, Mezzo-Soprano
Chad Kranak, Tenor
Nicholas Kilkenny, Bass-Baritone
Melvin Unger, Conductor

Participating Choruses

Candesca, Kelowna, BC, Canada (Alexandra Babbel, Director)
H. B. Beal Secondary School Singers, London, ON, Canada (David B. Weaver, Director)
Parkland Chorale, Allentown, PA (Alison Lagan, Director)
The London Singers, London, ON, Canada (David B. Weaver, Director)
The Unger Alumni Choir, Berea, OH (Melvin Unger, Director)
The Unger Chorale, Berea, OH (Melvin Unger, Director)

INTERMISSION

American Folk Hymns

arr. GWYNETH WALKER “How Can I Keep from Singing”

arr. RYAN MURPHY “Simple Gifts”

arr. DAN FORREST “There Is a Fountain”

arr. ALICE PARKER “Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal”

arr. BRYANT MOXLEY “When I Can Read My Title Clear”

arr. MACK WILBERG “Bound for the Promised Land”

arr. MACK WILBERG “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Bryant Moxley, Conductor
Jeanine Skinner, Piano

Participating Choruses

Cave Spring High School Chorus, Roanoke, VA (Bradley Stump, Director)

Magna Vista High School Choir, Ridgeway, VA (Tehillah Munye, Director)

Mercer Christian Academy High School Choir, Princeton, WV (Alandra L. Brannon Blume, Director)

Northeast Piedmont Chorale, Wake Forest, NC (Cynthia Edwards, Director)

The Bluefield University Masterworks Chorale, Bluefield, VA (Mark Milberger, Director)

The Bluefield University Variations Chorale, Bluefield, VA (Mark Milberger, Director)

Wake Forest Baptist Church, Wake Forest, NC (Bryant Moxley, Director)

The solo voice casting for this concert is managed by MidAmerica Productions’
Associate General Director Eilana Lappalainen.

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

The Program

JOHN RUTTER, CBE

Magnificat

The Magnificat, the canticle of the Virgin Mary, is found in the opening chapter of Saint Luke's Gospel, at the point where Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, having just learned she is to be the mother of Christ. Traditionally, the words have been ascribed to Mary, though their strong resemblance to the Old Testament Song of Hannah and to various psalms makes it more likely that Luke himself interpolated them to express an appropriate sense of rejoicing and trust in God. Liturgically, the Magnificat belongs to the Office of Vespers (and its Anglican counterpart, Evensong), as well as to feasts of the Virgin Mary, and there are innumerable concise musical settings intended for use in church. Extended concert settings, however, are quite rare, J. S. Bach's being the most notable (and even this was designed for use in the Lutheran liturgy); in the general layout of its movements and in its scale and dimensions, Bach's Magnificat provided the obvious precedent for John Rutter's setting. There is even a parallel to Bach's Christmas interpolations in the use of a vernacular text on the Virgin Mary, *Of a Rose*, a lovely Rose, which (like so much medieval religious art) likens Mary and her child to a flower springing from the stem of Jesse. Like Bach, Rutter uses Gregorian themes associated with the text at various points in the work. But there all comparisons end, since the style and content of Rutter's Magnificat are not even remotely neo-Bachian, resting rather within an eclectic amalgam of more recent traditions that characterize much of the English composer's choral writing. This work was given its world premiere in May 1990 by the composer in a concert presented by MidAmerica Productions in Carnegie Hall.

—Program notes © Louise Luegner

I. Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord:
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God
my Savior.
For he hath regarded the lowliness
of his hand-maiden:
for behold, from henceforth all
generations
shall call me blessed.

III. Quia fecit mihi magna

For he that is mighty hath magnified
me:
and holy is his name.
Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are filled with thy
glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

IV. Et misericordia

And his mercy is on them
that fear him throughout all
generations.

V. Fecit potentiam

He hath showed strength with his
arm:
he hath scattered the proud in the
imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from
their seat,
and hath exalted the humble and
meek.

VI. Esurientes

He hath filled the hungry with good
things:
and the rich he
hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath
holpen his servant Israel.
As he promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed for ever.

VII. Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the
Son,
and to the Holy Ghost.

Holy Mary, succour those in need,
help the faint-hearted, console the
tearful:
pray for the laity, assist the clergy,
intercede for all devout women:
may all feel the power of your help,
whoever prays for your holy aid.
Alleluia.

As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be, world
without end.
Amen.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)

Mass in C Major, K. 317, “Coronation Mass”

Mozart was proud of this mass, and when he was in Munich in 1780 for the first performance of *Idomeneo*, he sent home for the music so that he could have the mass performed there. From his letters, we learn of performances in and around Vienna in 1781 and 1791, and there were probably others in between. Many bits of melody and turns of phrase in the Mass seem to foretell famous compositions that were still to be in his future, the most obvious being the Agnus Dei theme that is almost a pre-quotation (as it were) of the beautiful aria, “Dove sono” in *The Marriage of Figaro*.

—Program notes © Susan Halpern

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)

***Vesperae solennes de confessore*, K. 339**

The *Vesperae solennes de confessore* (*Solemn Confessional Vespers*) of 1780 was the last sacred work that Mozart wrote for Salzburg and his much disliked employer there, the tyrannical Archbishop Hieronymus von Colloredo. In accordance with the Archbishop's requirement that the music for liturgical services in Salzburg be relatively simple and brief, Mozart wrote a compact work, full of color and variety. Vespers is an evening service, belonging to a liturgical cycle keyed to the hours of the day and prescribing specific psalm texts that vary according to the church calendar. Here, as the title indicates, Mozart set the psalms for use on the feast day of a confessor, a saint who suffered persecution for the Faith. Thus, this music was composed for use on a particular saint's day, and undoubtedly Mozart indicated which one, but no specific information still exists about the circumstances surrounding the work's composition or first performance. Because Archbishop Colloredo required Mozart to write concisely, the psalms and the *Magnificat* are not set verse by verse with separate arias, ensembles, and choruses, but rather composed in continuous movements. The high points of the work are the fugal *Laudate pueri* and the beautiful soprano solo in the *Laudate Dominum*.

—Program notes © Susan Halpern

AMERICAN FOLK HYMNS

Bryant Moxley, Conductor

“How Can I Keep from Singing?” (arr. Walker)

This powerful call to praise is often associated with the Quaker faith, and while it is relevant to the persecution of the Friends, its history extends even beyond. The words are attributed to a woman named Pauline T., and were first published in *The New York Observer* in 1868. In the 1950s, author Doris Plenn (1909–1991) was inspired to add the third stanza after some friends were imprisoned in the US due to political hysteria.

“Simple Gifts” (arr. Murphy)

One morning in 1848, in a rustic, sunlit church in Lake Sabbathday, Maine, Elder Joseph Brackett (1797–1882) stood before his congregation and sang his song, “Simple Gifts,” which he crafted as a musical testimony. It later inspired choreographer/dancer Martha Graham and composer Aaron Copland in their majestic work *Appalachian Spring* in 1944, and Sydney Carter's text “Lord of the Dance” in 1963.

“There Is a Fountain” (arr. Forrest)

William Cowper (1731–1800) (pronounced “Cooper”) lived in England and his wit became known widely throughout the Kingdom, as he wrote of everything from cats to comedy, and from romance to anti-slavery treatises. Cowper befriended slave-ship captain John Newton (author of “Amazing Grace”), and there is evidence to suggest Cowper’s anti-slavery stances influenced Newton greatly. Newton asked Cowper to contribute to his “Olney Hymnal,” and its 1779 publication included the first appearance of “Praise for the Fountain Opened”, which Cowper based on Zechariah 13:1. The text merged in 1865 with an American folk tune, Cleansing Fountain, which was possibly adapted from Lowell Mason.

“Hark! I Hear the Harps Eternal” (arr. Parker)

Like all Americans of the era, Frederic Rowland Marvin (1847–1918), was deeply affected by the American Civil War (1861–1865). He lived through it as a teenager, was inspired by what he experienced to become a physician, and developed a fascination with mortality. His wonderment was reflected in his writings, including his most famous book, “The Last Words (Real and Traditional) of Distinguished Men and Women.” Alice Parker’s soaring 1967 arrangement solidified the song’s place as a standard in choral literature. Known as a pioneer in the choral field, Parker remained active in choral education until her death on Christmas Eve, 2023. This evening’s performance of the song is dedicated to her memory.

“When I Can Read My Title Clear” (arr. Moxley)

Englishman Isaac Watts (1674–1748) wrote over 700 hymn texts, including the oldest of the texts presented tonight. In a world filled with slavery and indentured servitude, Watts captures the desire of society for ownership, pointing singers beyond owning an earthly home, and reminding them of the promise of Jesus to prepare “mansions in the skies.” Woven throughout this version are other American folk hymns that gesture towards heaven. Bryant Moxley’s stirring arrangement was crafted in 2006, in collaboration with then-members of his collegiate chorus, “Variations” of Bluefield College. It was the favorite hymn of beloved dean and professor, Cuban-born Dr. Primitivo Delgado, and the arrangement was created for his memorial service.

“Bound for the Promised Land” (arr. Wilberg)

Samuel Stennett (1727–1795) was a Baptist minister from England who wrote several hymn texts. Historian Edwin Hatfield wrote in 1884, “[In] March, 1795, he was deprived of the wife of his youth. The blow proved too much for his infirm constitution, and he sank under it, surviving her loss only a few months. He died—in joyful anticipation of the blissful world of which he had so sweetly sung, in his own well-known hymn, “On Jordan’s stormy banks I stand ...” The destined tune for the text was birthed on a different continent in a different century; Matilda Durham (1815–1901) was a music teacher from South Carolina, and was twenty years-old when her tune was first published with Stennett’s text. It has endured the decades in both major and minor modes and stands as a tribute to American music education and females in that role.

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” (arr. Wilberg)

Robert Robinson (1735–1790) studied voraciously and preached widely after a dramatic conversion as a teenager, quickly becoming an established Baptist minister. His words of “Come Thou Fount” were written to describe his newfound joy and purpose. Originally set to a different tune, once the hymn text crossed the Atlantic, it was paired with a uniquely American melody (Nettleton) perhaps written by the Connecticut evangelist, Ahasel Nettleton (1783–1844). Text and tune were first published together in 1813.

—Program notes © Bryant Moxley and Alandra B. Brannon

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The Artists



John Rutter, CBE, Conductor

John Rutter was born in London in 1945 and received his first musical education as a chorister at Highgate School. He went on to study music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he wrote his first published compositions and conducted his first recording while still a student. His compositional career has embraced both large and small-scale choral works, orchestral and instrumental pieces, a piano concerto, two children's operas, music for television, and specialist writing for such groups

as the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble and The King's Singers. His larger choral works—Gloria (1974), Requiem (1985), Magnificat (1990), Psalmfest (1993), and Mass of the Children (2003)—have been performed many times around the world. Rutter co-edited four volumes in the Carols for Choirs series with Sir David Willcocks, and, more recently, has edited the first two volumes in the new Oxford Choral Classics series: Opera Choruses (1995) and European Sacred Music (1996). A new volume in the series, Sacred Choruses, was published in 2018. From 1975 to 1979, Rutter was director of music at Clare College, whose choir he directed in a number of broadcasts and recordings. After giving up the Clare post to allow more time for composition, he formed the Cambridge Singers as a professional chamber choir primarily dedicated to recording, and he now divides his time between composition and conducting. Rutter has guest-conducted or lectured at many concert halls, universities, churches, music festivals, and conferences in Europe, Africa, North and Central America, and Australasia. In 1980, he was made an honorary fellow of Westminster Choir College, Princeton, and in 1988 a fellow of the Guild of Church Musicians. In 1996, the Archbishop of Canterbury conferred a Lambeth Doctorate of Music upon him in recognition of his contribution to church music. He was honored in the 2007 Queen's New Year Honours List, being awarded a CBE for services to music. Most of his music is published by Oxford University Press. In November 2023, Rutter became a fellow of The Ivors Academy, recognizing his impact on contemporary choral repertoire. Rutter has conducted more than 140 concerts as MidAmerica Productions' Conductor Laureate.

Juliet Ariadne Papadopoulos, Soprano

Praised by the *Greek National Herald* as having a “powerful and clear voice that dazzles audiences,” young Greek-American soprano Juliet Ariadne Papadopoulos has performed in venues all over the metropolitan area. Juliet discovered a love for music while singing with NYC's Voyces as a child and continued her classical training at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High



School of Music and Art. Juliet graduated summa cum laude from SUNY Purchase's Opera program in May of 2022. Juliet is currently in the second and final year of her Master of Music degree at the Yale School of Music and the Institute of Sacred Music. With the Yale School of Music, she has performed as a soprano soloist for J.S. Bach's *Magnificat* and *Christmas Oratorio*, and Amy Beach's *Canticle of the Sun*. Other favorite concert credits include Vaughan Williams's *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Schubert's *Magnificat*, Brahms's *Liebeslieder Waltzes*, and C.P.E. Bach's *Magnificat*. Recent solo performances include performing Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* at the Norfolk Chamber Festival, the world premiere of *Edensongs* by Aaron Jay Kernis at Yale's Woolsey Hall, and the US premiere of *Theophanes the Greek* by Savvas Karantzias at Symphony Space.



David B. Weaver, Conductor

David B. Weaver has taught music in London, Ontario since 1989 and is currently the head of the Music Department at H.B. Beal Secondary School, Director of the Beal Singers, Beal Madrigal Choir & The London Singers, and Musical Director of Beal Musical Theatre. His choirs have received numerous honors and awards including golds at music festivals in Washington, New York, Boston, Chicago, Toronto, and Montreal. BMT productions have won numerous Brickenden Awards for Best Youth Musical. Mr. Weaver has conducted choirs at national and provincial conventions of the OMEA, CMEA, and ACCC, and performed on Maclean-Hunter TV, Rogers TV, CTV, and CBC Television and Radio. and on numerous choir tours across Canada, the USA, and Europe (England, Wales, Ireland, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Montenegro, and Venice, Italy). Conducting credits include Mozart's Requiem and Coronation Mass, Beethoven's Mass in C, Bach's *Magnificat*, Rutter's *Gloria*, *Mass of the Children*, *Requiem*, and *Magnificat*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Haydn's *Creation* and *Missa Sancti Joannis de Deo*, Faure's *Requiem*, Ray's *Gospel Mass*, Schubert's Mass in G, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Handel's *Messiah*, Tin's *Calling All Dawns*, Quartel's *Snow Angel* (world premiere of orchestrated version), Shaw's *Many Moods of Christmas*, plus collaborations with the London Fanshawe Symphonic Chorus including Bach's *St. John Passion*, McCartney's *Liverpool Oratorio* (Gerald Fagan, conductor), and Britten's *War Requiem* (Sir David Willcocks, conductor).



Mary Evelyn Hangley, Soprano

Soprano Mary Evelyn Hangley is a graduate of San Francisco Opera's prestigious Adler Fellowship and made her San Francisco Opera debut as the Mother *Hansel und Gretel*. Recent performances include *Erwartung* with West Edge Opera, Pamina (*The Magic Flute*) with the Buffalo Philharmonic, and Leonora (*Il Trovatore*) with Opera San Jose. Ms. Hangley performed with the San Francisco Symphony in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and sang Anna Sørensen in

Kevin Puts' *Silent Night* at the Glimmerglass Festival. In concert, she has sung with Oakland Symphony, Sacramento Philharmonic and the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra. As a participant of the Merola Opera Program, she took over for an ill colleague mid-performance in Conrad Susa's *Transformations*. Upcoming engagements include a return to West Edge Opera for multiple roles in *Legend of the Ring*, the Countess *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Opera Modesto, and her debut with Opera Omaha as Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*).



Linda Baird, Mezzo-Soprano

Praised for resonant, flexible singing, Canadian mezzo-soprano Linda Baird has performed with opera companies and orchestras, both locally and around the world, including Seattle Opera, Vancouver Opera, Opera Română Craiova, North Czech Philharmonic Teplice, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, West Edge Opera, ViVace - Opera Philadelphia, Opera Modesto, Sacramento Choral Society and Orchestra, among others. Recently featured in Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*,

Linda has also performed in a variety of other roles, including Carmen in Bizet's *Carmen*, Zita in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, Dorabella in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Rosina in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Judith in Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*, Charlotte in Massenet's *Werther*, Romeo in Bellini's *I Capuleti ei Montecchi*, Foreign Princess in Dvořák's *Rusalka*, Flora and Annina in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Mercedes in Bizet's *Carmen*, and Suzuki in Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*.

John Kun Park, Tenor

John Kun Park, a Korean-American Tenor from Los Angeles, California, has been described as "a clarion tenor voice ... that floats its high notes with ease and emotional fervor." John began 2024 reviving Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* with Opera Grand Rapids, then



shortly after joining Penn Square Festival for their “Opera Couples Therapy,” concert, singing highlights from *Carmen*, *Tosca*, and *Cavalleria Rusticana*. He will make his role and company debut singing Cavaradossi in Opera Modesto’s *Tosca*, then join Opera on the James in the fall to debut as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*. Mr. Park is making his strides towards the dramatic and Wagnerian repertoire. He has appeared nationally premiering and covering title roles in operas such as *Tosca*, *Faust*, *Carmen*, and *Die Walküre* with companies such as Chautauqua

Opera, Sarasota Opera, Central City Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, West Bay Opera, and Long Beach Opera.



John Allen Nelson, Baritone

John Allen Nelson recently debuted with Washington National Opera as Fighter Jet Pilot in the world premiere of *Grounded*. This season he returns to Pacific Symphony as Schaunard in *La Bohème*. Last season he debuted with several companies, including Marcello in *La Bohème* with Northern Lights Music Festival, Marullo in *Rigoletto* with Pacific Symphony, Escamillo in *La Tragédie de Carmen* with Seaglass Theater Company, Imperial Commissioner and Sharpless

cover in *Madama Butterfly* with Lubbock Symphony, and the title role of *Don Giovanni* with West Bay Opera as a last-minute jump-in. Recent highlights include Schaunard in Bar Harbor Music Festival’s *La Bohème*, Count Almaviva in Opera Ithaca’s *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Giordano in the world premiere of *Stonewall* with New York City Opera, Di Cosimo in *Il Postino* with Opera Santa Barbara, King Edward III in *L’assedio di Calais* with Odyssey Opera, and Marcello in *La Bohème* with Utah Opera as a last-minute fill-in on opening night.



Melvin Unger, Conductor

Melvin Unger began his career teaching junior high school in Toronto and has since conducted choirs of all types and ages, appearing at conventions and festivals in Canada, the United States, and Europe. He holds a D.M.A. degree in choral music from the University of Illinois (where he was a University fellow), the M. Mus. degree in choral conducting from the University of Oregon (home of the Oregon Bach Festival),

and the B. Mus. degree in choral music education from the University of Saskatchewan (Canada). From 1980 to 1998, he taught at the North American Baptist College in Edmonton (Canada) and, for most of those years, conducted the Da Camera Singers in Edmonton. In 1998, he became director of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute at Baldwin Wallace University (Berea, Ohio), where he founded the BW Singers. From 2001 to 2015, he conducted the Singers' Club of Cleveland, a male chorus serving the greater metropolitan area.



Lara McGill, Soprano

Hailed as “a voice of size, clarity, and wide coloristic range ... a three-dimensional figure who combined vulnerability with strength and tugged at the heartstrings in her every breath and movement” (*Pittsburgh Post Gazette*), Laura McGill made her 9th Avenue Opera debut as Zerlina in New York City and covered the same role with Opera Tampa last summer. She looks forward to portraying the role of “Water” this fall with Resonance Work’s *The Little Prince*. She has

appeared with St. Petersburg Opera in FL as Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, and also sang Pamina and Antonia in their past seasons. Other favorite roles include: Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* and Romilda in *Xerxes* with Pittsburgh Festival Opera, Donna Anna, Mamah Cheney in *Shining Brow*, The Foreign Women in Menotti’s *The Consul* with Opera New Jersey, Susannah in Carlisle Floyd’s *Susannah*, Sandrina, Lauretta, Adina, and her Pittsburgh Opera debut as Barbarina. Ms. McGill’s concert soloist performances range from Baroque to Vaughan Williams. Highlights include: Bach’s *Mass in B minor*, Vivaldi’s and Handel’s *Gloria*, *Messiah* excerpts, Brahms’, Mozart’s, and Rutter’s *Requiem*, and *In Terra Pax* by Finzi.



Roselin Osser, Mezzo-Soprano

Praised as a “gorgeous, mellifluous mezzo ... with vivid expression and engaging intensity” by the *Boston Musical Intelligencer*, Roselin Osser’s concert highlights include alto soloist in the Mozart *Requiem*, Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio*, and Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater*. Acclaimed for comic and whimsical opera roles, she recently made her Boston Lyric Opera debut as Hansel in their Artist Classroom Visits production of *Hansel and Gretel*. Other opera appearances include Sesto in

La Clemenza di Tito, Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*. Osser has combined her lifelong passion for performing arts with strong motivation to reduce human impact on the environment.

She earned engineering and technology degrees at Tufts and MIT in parallel to her vocal studies, now achieving a distinctive dual career as both a classical singer and sustainability consultant for prominent green building projects.



Chad Kranak, Tenor

Chad Kranak has an active operatic career in the US and abroad and has been praised for his “lyrical eloquence” and “attractive lyric sound” by *Opera News*. His recent engagements include Bacchus (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Cavaradossi (*Tosca*), Rinuccio (*Gianni Schicchi*), Sciala (*Scalia/Ginsberg*), Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*). Recent concert and oratorio credits include the Rachmaninoff *Vespers*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Mozart *Requiem*, Saint-Saëns *Requiem*, and a recital with

St Thomas Church in New York. He has performed with St. Petersburg Opera, Barn Opera, New Rochelle Opera, St Thomas Church, Voices of Ascension, Bard Music Festival, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and the Sequoia Symphony. His most recent credits include performing the role of Cavaradossi in Heartbeat Opera’s *Tosca*, highlights from *Carmen* with On Site Opera, and Sciala in *Scalia/Ginsberg* with Opera Ithaca, and a concert of Broadway and Opera hits in North Carolina. Upcoming engagements include performing the role of Don Jose in a workshop of a new concept for Bizet’s *Carmen* and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 in D minor with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra this fall.



Nicholas Kilkenny, Bass-Baritone

Hailed for his “fine bass-baritone voice ... as well as some equally fine acting chops” (*Buffalo Rising*), Nicholas Kilkenny has developed a career as a versatile performer of operatic, concert, and recital repertoire. Recent opera performances include Colline in *La bohème* and Renato in *Un ballo in maschera* with Buffalo Opera Unlimited, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Hudson Opera Theater, and Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Geneva Light Opera. Recent concert

performances include Handel’s *Messiah* with the Buffalo Philharmonic, Faure’s *Requiem* with the Genesee Valley Orchestra, and Dvořák’s *Te Deum* with Houghton University. To close his 2023–2024 season, Nicholas will make his role debut as Baron Zeta in Geneva Light Opera’s production of Lehár’s *The Merry Widow*. In addition to his performance career, Nicholas Kilkenny is a passionate educator currently teaching applied voice and vocal literature at Nazareth University’s School of Music.



Bryant Moxley, Conductor

Bryant Moxley has served as Minister of Music and Worship at Wake Forest Baptist Church, Wake Forest, NC since 2014. Previously he served as Assistant Professor of Music and Music Department Chair at Bluefield University, Bluefield, VA for 12 years and as Minister of Music at churches in Virginia, West Virginia, Kansas, Kentucky, and Arkansas. Under his direction, choirs from Bluefield University regularly toured throughout Virginia, the surrounding region, and internationally in Austria, Italy, and the Czech Republic. Additionally, his choirs have joined other choral singers for performances in Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center. Tonight's performance is Moxley's Carnegie Hall debut. He is a summa cum laude graduate of Ouachita Baptist University (Arkadelphia, AR) and received his master's degree from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (Louisville, KY). Mr. Moxley is Coordinator of the Segue Youth Choir Festival (Raleigh, NC) and Camp Director for the Music and Worship Arts Camp of Eagle Eyrie Baptist Conference Center (Lynchburg, VA). He is an active member of ACDA, a member of the Virginia Baptist Male Chorale, and the Northeast Piedmont Chorale. He is a licensed Musikgarten instructor and can be found most Thursday mornings on a classroom floor exploring music with a room full of toddlers and babies. An avid runner, Moxley has survived several half marathons. He enjoys tennis, cooking, travel, and spending time with his daughters, their husbands, and their dogs as much as possible.



Preston Hawes, New England Symphonic Ensemble Artistic Director and Concertmaster

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: 265 Sunrise Highway, Suite 1-183; Rockville Centre, NY 11570
212-239-0205 | midamerica-music.com

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