

Presented at Carnegie Hall by
MidAmerica Productions, Inc.

1,502nd Concert Worldwide, 1,162nd in New York, 707th in Carnegie Hall

Peter Tiboris: Founder and General Director Emeritus

Sir John Rutter, CBE: Conductor Laureate

Sunday, May 11, 2025 at 1 PM
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

New England Symphonic Ensemble

Preston Hawes, Artistic Director and Concertmaster

JOSEPH HAYDN

Tē Deum in C Major, Hob. XXIIIc:2

Darrin Hassevoort, Conductor

ANTONIO VIVALDI

Magnificat, RV 610

- I. Magnificat
- II. Et exultavit
- III. Et misericordia eius
- IV. Fecit potentiam
- V. Deposuit
- VI. Esurientes
- VII. Suscepit Israel
- VIII. Sicut locutus est
- IX. Gloria patri

Virginia Mims, Soprano | **Abigail Levis**, Mezzo-Soprano

Christopher Bozeka, Tenor | **Andrew Gilstrap**, Bass-Baritone

Ye In Kwak, Organ

Francis Cathlina, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Brighton High School Choir, Brighton, TN (Matthew Bowsher, Director)

Chattanooga Symphony and Opera Chorus, Chattanooga, TN (Darrin Hassevoort, Director)

Choral Arts of Chattanooga, Chattanooga, TN (Darrin Hassevoort, Director)

Cantare of LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts, New York, NY (Jana Ballard, Director)

Memphis Central High School Concert Singers, Memphis, TN (Roland Wilson, Director)

Milan Special School District, Milan, TN (Paige Wilson, Director)

INTERMISSION

MORTEN LAURIDSEN *Lux Aeterna*

- I. Introitus
- II. In te, domine speravi
- III. O nata lux
- IV. Veni, sancte spiritus
- V. Agnus Dei

Donald Milton III, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus, Atlanta, GA (Donald Milton III, Director)

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta Choir, Atlanta, GA (Donald Milton III, Director)

Lehigh Valley Chorale, Easton, PA (Nicholas Sienkiewicz, Director)

INTERMISSION

KIM ANDRÉ ARNESEN Selections from *Magnificat*

- I. Magnificat anima mea
- II. Ecco denim
- V. Fecit Potentiam
- VI. Suscepit Israel
- VII. Gloria Patri

Ye In Kwak, Organ

Jordan Saul, Conductor

The Ohio State University Women's Glee Club, Columbus, OH (Jordan Saul, Director)

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

The Program

Program notes for this performance are available in the digital playbill at midamerica-music.com/programnotes0511 or by scanning the QR code below:



Please note that the use of any type of mobile device during the performance is strictly prohibited.

The Artists



Darrin Hassevoort, Conductor

Darrin James Hassevoort has been hailed by the *Shakespeare Bulletin* as “a singer with a superb tenor voice.” The *Chattanooga Times Free Press* recently claimed, “Hassevoort boasts a bright, clear tenor voice.” He made his operatic debut in the role of Borsa in Verdi’s *Rigoletto* and has performed operatic roles in *Madama Butterfly*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Faust*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, and *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Hassevoort has conducted opera performances of Offenbach’s *L’île de Tulipatan*; Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and *Patience*; Schuman’s *The Mighty Casey*; Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*; and Puccini’s *Suor Angelica*. He served as assistant conductor for the staging rehearsals of the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera and has guest-conducted productions of Handel’s *Messiah*, Gilbert and Sullivan’s *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and a Harvest Hymn Festival for the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera. In addition, Hassevoort conducted regional productions of musicals such as *The Boy Friend*, *Working*, *Cinderella*, *Musical of Musicals: The Musical*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *The Secret Garden*, *Into the Woods*, *Big Fish*, and two musical revue shows. On the concert stage, Hassevoort has worked professionally with musicians such as Kenneth Kiesler, Joseph Flummerfelt, Donald Pippin, Ola Gjeilo, Harry Connick Jr., and Dave Brubeck. He currently serves as the chorus director for the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, artistic director for Choral Arts of Chattanooga, director of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga’s Men’s Chorus, and director of music and worship at First Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga.



Francis Cathlina, Conductor

Francis Cathlina, DMA is a distinguished Vietnamese-American conductor and educator. He is currently the director of choral activities at the University of Memphis, where he oversees the choral area, leads the Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting program, and conducts the University Singers. A two-time Grammy Award-nominated educator, Cathlina’s work with choirs has garnered international recognition. In 2025, he will work with choral directors in Brazil and the Philippines and is set to headline the 2025 Alabama Music Educators Association conference. The University

of Memphis Singers, under his direction, have been invited to perform for national and state conferences. With more than 62 presentations across the globe, international publications, and a robust guest conducting schedule, Cathlina holds degrees from UNT, Michigan State, and Baylor. Outside of conducting, he is an avid pickleball player. He, his husband Kyle, and their dog Coco proudly call Memphis, Tennessee their home. In this program, Cathlina wears an áo dài, traditional Vietnamese formalwear. This áo dài was sewn and hand-painted in Vietnam. As one of the few Vietnamese conductors in the field, Cathlina proudly dons it as a tribute to his heritage.

Virginia Mims, Soprano

During the 2024–2025 season, Virginia Mims returned to the role of Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Sarasota Opera, after debuting the role at Brevard Music Center in 2017. Additionally, she will be singing excerpts from *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto* on their *Music of Giuseppe Verdi* concert. Roles credits include Mimì (*La bohème*) at Sachsenwald Forum (Reinbek, Germany); Musetta (*La bohème*), Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*), Mary Bailey (*It's A Wonderful Life* by Heggie), Blumenmädchen (*Parsifal*), and Zemfira (*Aleko*) at Indiana University. Mims was recently named a winner of the Carolyn Bailey Vocal Competition held by the National Opera Association.



Abigail Levis, Mezzo-Soprano

Named “Debut Artist of the Year” by the Joy in Singing Foundation, mezzo-soprano Abigail Levis has been described by critics as “fearless,” “dazzling,” “impressive,” and “breathtaking.” This season, Levis will sing the Mezzo Voice of the Fountain in *Ainadamar* with LA Opera. In 2023–2024, she had engagements with LA Opera, the Brooklyn Art Song Society, Opera in the Pines, and MUSE/IQUE. She has performed roles including Cherubino, Romeo, Komponist, Prince Charmant, Stéphan, Siébel, Mercédès, Zweite Dame, Dido, Zerlina, Orfeo, and Prince Orlofsky with companies including Promfest Estonia, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Luzerner Theater, the Lakes Area Music Festival, Opera Parallèle, Opera Philadelphia, and Charlottesville Opera.





Christopher Bozeka, Tenor

Tenor Christopher Bozeka is recognized for his “expressively captivating” performances as well as his “beautiful, piercing tone.” In the 2024–2025 season, he made his role debut with the Metropolitan Opera as the Kill Chain Mission Coordinator in *Grounded* and covered the Hunchback in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and Don Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro*. He also returned to Opera Las Vegas and Sarasota Opera, singing his fifth and sixth performances as Count Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, appeared as a soloist with the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, Musiqa, and Yosa Philharmonic, reprises the role of the Duke in *Rigoletto* with Finger Lakes Opera, and will take his Rossini abilities to new heights as Elvino in *La sonnambula* with Teatro Nuovo after recently singing Rodrigo in *Otello* (Central City Opera), the title role in *Le Comte Ory* (Opera Southwest, Lyric Opera of Chicago cover), and *Nemorino* in Livermore Valley Opera and Houston Grand Opera.



Andrew Gilstrap, Bass-Baritone

With his “dark, powerful bass-baritone” and “perfect [comedic] timing,” Andrew Gilstrap has established himself as a versatile artist known for his musical sophistication and acting ability. In the 2024–2025 season, Gilstrap returned to Wolf Trap Opera to sing Horstmayer in *Silent Night*, made his debuts with Arizona Opera and Sarasota Opera as Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and returned to cover Colline and Benoit/Alcindoro in *La bohème* at Arizona Opera. He will also perform Hans Olsa in *Giants in the Earth* with the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra, sing as the bass soloist in *Messiah* (Chattanooga Symphony) and Mozart’s Requiem (Carolina Philharmonic), and will perform in recital with Steve Blier. Last season, Gilstrap returned to several companies: as Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (Wolf Trap Opera), covers in *Edward Tulane* (Minnesota Opera), and as a soloist in *Frankenstein* and Horace Derwent in *The Shining* (Atlanta Opera).

Donald Milton III, Conductor

Donald Milton III is an Atlanta-based conductor known for his dynamic programming, energetic rehearsals, and focus on vocal technique. Milton is the longtime director of music at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta (UUCA), the largest UU congregation in the Southeast. At UUCA, Milton runs one of the most eclectic and exceptional music

programs in the city. He has served as the artistic director of the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus since January 2018 and has overseen a period of incredible growth both artistically and in the community. Milton is an active guest conductor, clinician, and lecturer. He has presented his lecture "The Second Voice Change: The Aging Voice" in over a dozen states, as well as in Israel and Canada, and is currently writing a book on the subject. Active in the Atlanta music scene, Milton has served as the executive director of the Atlanta Master Chorale, as the artistic director of the Dekalb Choral Guild, and is the founder of Sky Punch ATL, a community arts production company.



Jordan Saul, Conductor

Conductor, educator, and mezzo-soprano

Jordan Saul demonstrates compassionate rigor and social relevance in teaching and engaged programming in performance. As a conductor, Saul emphasizes musical and personal skill building through programming by prioritizing voices of the global majority. An advocate of new music, Saul develops performance opportunities for student composers, and magnifies works by womxn and womxn of color specifically.



Collaborating with artists of diverse media and experience provides a rich opportunity for meaningful, lasting impact. Saul has produced programs with the Spelman Glee club, composer B. E. Boykin, former papal organist Sandor Kadar, the band Delta Rae, *Project Runway All-Stars* alumna Valerie Mayen, and many community and business partners. She teaches clinics, masterclasses, and honor choirs throughout the US. As a mezzo-soprano, Saul has been privileged to sing under the batons of Alan Gilbert, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Daniel Barenboim, Gustavo Dudamel, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Simon Rattle. Such musical perspectives honed in Saul the unwavering belief that pathways to mountaintop musical experiences ought not be reserved for a few, but made accessible to larger communities of people. At The Ohio State University, she serves as professor of teaching for choral music education, conducts both the Women's Glee Club and Lab Choir, and advises student organizations and student teachers. Prior to joining The Ohio State University School of Music faculty, she was associate director of choral activities and professor of music education at the Conservatory of Music at Baldwin Wallace University. Saul holds degrees from the University of Arizona and Westminster Choir College.



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 Dr. 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 such as 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.

New England Symphonic Ensemble

First Violins

Preston Hawes
Funda Cizmecioglu
Robert Radliff
Agata Manka
Rafailia Kapsokavadi
Alejandra Anzola
Gabriella Apola
Heather Frank Olsen

Second Violins

Eun Jung Lee
Ana Milosavljevic
Marc Szammer
Hannah Moon
Moises Rodriguez
Katie Thomas
Jason Garcia

Violas

Dudley Raine IV
Angel Contreras
Laurie Cadwallader
Surai Balbeisi
Thomas Purcell
Kerrick Sasaki

Cellos

Christopher Cortez
Kevin Charlestream
Karlos Rodriguez
Sofia Yatsyshyna
Katie Chambers
Sasha Ono

Basses

Kyle Colina
Laurence Goldman
Lorenzo Sandi

Flute

Jessica Taskov

Oboes

Rita Mitsel
Phil Raskin

Clarinet

Boris Shpitalnik

Bassoons

Dirk Wels
Gili Sharrett

Horns

Tim McCarthy
Taylor Peterson
Ser Konvalin

Trumpets

Justin Nurin
Atse Theodros
Angela Goss

Trombones

Eric Coughlin
Djorkaeff Zentla
Ehren Valmé

Timpani

Katherine Fortunato

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MidAmerica Productions, Inc.

For over 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, Sweden, and Russia. MidAmerica Productions' 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 Sir John Rutter (who has conducted more than 140 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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