

Presented at Carnegie Hall by
MidAmerica Productions, Inc.

1,503rd Concert Worldwide, 1,163rd in New York, 708th in Carnegie Hall

Peter Tiboris: Founder and General Director Emeritus

Sir John Rutter, CBE: Conductor Laureate

Sunday, May 11, 2025 at 8:30 PM
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

New England Symphonic Ensemble

Preston Hawes, Artistic Director and Concertmaster

ERICA GLENN

Worldwide Requiem (World Premiere)

I. Requiem and Kyrie

II. Dies Irae

III. Pie Jesu

IV. Sanctus

V. Agnus Dei

VI. Libera Me

VII. In Paradisum

Rachel Blaustein, Soprano

Sarah Nordin, Mezzo-Soprano

Ziwen Xiang, Tenor

Sejin Park, Baritone

Stacy McCarrey, Piano

Erica Kyree Glenn, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Brigham Young University–Hawaii Ho‘olōkahi Chamber Choir, Laie, HI

(Erica Kyree Glenn, Director)

Timpanogos Singers, American Fork, UT (Miriam Burton, Director)

Voices of ‘Ohana (Keri Hains Kammerman, Director)

INTERMISSION

STEVE DOBROGOSZ

Mass

- I. Introitus
- II. Kyrie
- III. Gloria
- IV. Credo
- V. Sanctus
- VI. Agnus Dei

Mirim Kim, Piano

John M. Petzet, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Bridgeport High School Choir, Bridgeport, NE (Michaela Babic, Director)

Deja Blue Choir, Arapahoe, NE (Valerie Leising, Director)

Maywood High School Choir, Maywood, NE (Whitney van Zyl, Director)

University of Central Arkansas Concert Choir, Conway, AR (Frank Eychaner, Director)

University of Nebraska-Kearney Concert Choir, Kearney, NE (John M. Petzet, Director)

INTERMISSION

JULIO MORALES

Xantoló (World Premiere)

- I. Introito
- II. Kyrie Eleison
- III. Dies Irae
- IV. Lacrimosa
- V. Sanctus
- VI. Agnus Dei
- VII. Lux Aeterna

Elaine Alvarez, Soprano

Laurel Semerdjian, Mezzo-Soprano

Taylor P. Comstock, Tenor

Andrew Manca, Baritone

Karen Eychaner, Piano

Frank Eychaner, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Singers from Mexico (Wilmia Verrier Quinones, Director)

Coro Estomino, Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico (Daria "Darita" Abreu Feraud, Director;

Sponsor: Mr. Colebrooke Jordan and Mrs. Karla V. Jordan)

Schola Cantorum, Pueblo, CO (Leigh Kite, Director)

University of Central Arkansas Concert Choir, Conway, AR (Frank Eychaner, Director)

University of Nebraska-Kearney Concert Choir, Kearney, NE (John M. Petzet, Director)

Viterbo Choral Arts, La Crosse, WI (James Wilson, Director)

Yelm High School Chamber Choir, Yelm, WA (Tim Henderson, 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/programnotes511 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



Erica Kyree Glenn, Conductor

Erica Kyree Glenn is the director of choral activities at Brigham Young University–Hawai‘i and a recent national finalist for the American Prize in Conducting. She holds a doctorate in conducting from Arizona State University, an EdM in Arts in Education from Harvard University, and two degrees in music composition from Longy Conservatory and ASU. Her choral compositions have been commissioned by choirs across the US and have won numerous awards. Her first opera won the international VocalWorks Opera-in-a-Month competition, and her original musical was workshopped at the New York Musical Festival before being produced on the American Repertory Theater’s Oberon stage in Boston. Glenn has taught at Dean College, the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, the Soul Arts Academy in Manhattan, and Arizona State University (Women’s Chorus, New American Choir). She also served in senior management at the American International School of Utah, where she conducted six award-winning choirs. Glenn co-founded the Arizona Women’s Collaborative and Phoenix Singing, and is an active guest conductor and clinician. Recent festivals include the Pacific Heritage Festival (2025), the Nā Leo Hou All-State High School Festival (2025), the WorldStrides Heritage Festival (2022–2025), and Music Celebrations (2023). As a musicologist, she uncovered and conducted the US premiere of a Ukrainian opera by Stefania Turkevych and received an American Councils Grant to Estonia (2023) and a Fulbright Grant to Poland (2022), where she researched the Estonian Singing Revolution and the impact of song among Ukrainian refugees. Her work has been published by Santa Barbara Music Publishing, Pelican Music, LazyBee Scripts, Tactus Magazine, and USA Today.



Rachel Blaustein, Soprano

Praised for her “brilliant lyric soprano,” Rachel Blaustein is quickly gaining recognition for her riveting stage presence and innate musicality across a wide range of repertoire, from baroque to contemporary works. Blaustein’s 2024–2025 season includes her debut with Austin Opera as Jocelyn Jordan in *The Manchurian Candidate*, her debut with South Florida Symphony in Handel’s *Messiah*, the title role in *Rusalka* at Pacific Opera Project, and her exciting role and company debut

as Hodel in Cincinnati Opera's production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Last season, Blaustein made her role debut as Gilda in *Rigoletto* with Opera Delaware and Opera Baltimore. She also joined Opera Omaha for their Opera Outdoors concert, performed as Sarah Kavalier in a workshop of *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* with the Metropolitan Opera, presented a recital at the Academy Art Museum, and made her debut with the Indianapolis Symphony in Handel's *Messiah*.

Sarah Nordin, Mezzo-Soprano

Praised by *Opera News* for the "clear beauty" of her voice and her "spot-on comic timing," mezzo-soprano Sarah Nordin brings an exquisite blend of vocal artistry and strong dramatic instincts to a broad range of repertoire. Nordin reprised her celebrated role as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with First Coast Opera, made her debut with the South Dakota Symphony as Sorrine Olsa in the rarely performed opera *Giants in the Earth* by Douglas Moore, returned to St. Petersburg Opera as Countess Charlotte in *A Little Night Music*, and debuted with Utah Festival Opera as General Cartwright in *Guys and Dolls* and as Mrs. Harcourt in *Anything Goes*. Highlights include performing Bach's B Minor Mass with Orlando Sings, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Great Falls Symphony, and Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance* with First Coast Opera.



Ziwen Xiang, Tenor

Tenor Ziwen Xiang has performed with the Metropolitan Opera Guild, New York City Opera, China National Opera, Turkish State Opera, and Teatro Regio di Parma. He spent five years developing his talents at China National Opera, where he quickly rose through the ranks to become a Principal Soloist. Under the auspices of this company, he performed in operas and concerts across Asia and Europe. In the US, Xiang has sung with Verismo Opera of New Jersey at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall and on the Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage with MidAmerica Productions. In 2018, he portrayed Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* as part of the Metropolitan Opera Guild's *Lecture Performances*. He made his New York City Opera debut in the world premiere of *Stonewall* by Ian Bell and Mark Campbell. In 2021, he played Rodolfo in Puccini's *La bohème* in a film co-produced by More Than Music LTD Hong Kong, Tri-Cities Opera, and Opera Omaha, which was broadcast by Boston Lyric Opera. Later that year, Xiang performed the role of Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with Light Opera of New Jersey.





Sejin Park, Baritone

Hailed as possessing a “powerful baritone voice” by the *Palm Beach Daily News*, Sejin Park is a renowned opera singer and recitalist active in both South Korea and the US. In the 2024–2025 season, Park makes his debut with Anchorage Opera as Taddeo in *L’italiana in Algeri*, brings his celebrated Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* to Salt Marsh Opera, and debuts the role of Escamillo with New York’s New Camerata Opera. In the 2023–2024 season, Park returned to

Santa Fe Opera, performing as Baron Douphol and covering Germont in *La Traviata*. He made his debut as Schaunard in *La bohème* with South Korea’s Gwangju Opera Company, portrayed Ping in *Turandot* with the St. Petersburg Opera Company, and reprised Schaunard in *La bohème* in his debut with Hawaii Opera Theater.



John M. Petzet, Conductor

John Martin Petzet is associate professor of music and director of choral activities at the University of Nebraska-Kearney (UNK). He has developed a national and international reputation as a conductor, teacher, and artist-scholar, having been recognized as a national finalist for the American Prize in Choral Performance with two different choirs. He has five publications in print and has presented 11 different interest sessions in almost 20 states.

Since 2018, he has been invited to Mexico three times to present sessions, conduct choirs, and serve as a clinician. He also sang on *Passion Week*, a professional recording by the Kansas City Chorale and Phoenix Chorale that won a Grammy Award for Best Engineered Classical Album. In the last four years, he has presented at one national and three regional ACDA/NAfME conferences. His choirs were invited two years in a row to perform at the Music by Women Festival in Columbus, Mississippi, and he will conduct the 2027 Oklahoma Choral Directors All-State Junior High Mixed Honor Choir. Since arriving at UNK in fall 2019, the UNK Choraleers have been invited to sing at the South Dakota Music Educators Association Conference, the Festival Internacional De Coros-Tlaxcala Canta, and the Nebraska Music Educators Association Conference.

Mirim Kim, Piano

Mirim Kim, DMA, is a collaborative pianist dedicated to making music with others and inspiring audiences. As an active performer, she organizes themed concerts each semester to share the beauty of music with the public. She recently recorded *Miniatures*, an album with euphoniumist Robert Benton. In 2024, Kim served as a resident pianist for the Great Plains Regional Tuba and Euphonium Conference. She also collaborated with the Tallgrass Chamber Choir for their 2021 and 2022 Christmas Concerts, recording newly composed choral music. Additionally, she has presented at multiple conferences, including the National Opera Association (2025), North American Saxophone Alliance (2024), Great Plains Regional Tuba and Euphonium Conference (2022), and Nebraska Music Education Association (2021). Kim earned her Master of Music in Piano from Indiana University and both her Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano from The University of Texas at Austin, where she held a five-year teaching assistantship.



Frank Eychaner, Conductor

Dr. Frank Eychaner is an internationally celebrated conductor, teacher, and communicator. Eychaner is an assistant professor of music and the director of choral activities at the University of Central Arkansas, where he conducts the Concert Choir and the award-winning Chamber Singers. The UCA choirs frequently perform, collaborate, and tour. Eychaner directs the Master of Arts in Choral Conducting degree at UCA and is actively seeking highly qualified candidates to join the program. He is frequently engaged as a guest conductor, leading professional, educational, and honor ensembles. He will spend 10 days as a guest artist and conductor with Promotora de las Bellas Artes, an organization that supports young women at risk of falling prey to sex trafficking by providing safety, training in musicianship, and choral performance in Tijuana, Mexico in October. Eychaner is also a sought-after clinician and presenter. He has led more than 150 interest sessions on a wide range of topics across the US, as well as in Mexico, Cuba, and Korea. He is the author of *Foundations of Conducting Technique* with GIA Publications.





Elaine Alvarez, Soprano

Cuban-American soprano Elaine Alvarez burst onto the international opera scene in 2007, making a breakout company debut with her soulful portrayal of Mimì in Puccini's *La bohème* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Under the baton of Sir Andrew Davis and the direction of Renata Scott, the *Chicago Tribune* lauded Alvarez's performance, noting, "Conveying lyric pathos seems to come as naturally to Alvarez as breathing." Characterized by a distinct "buffed

bronze soprano" (*Opera News*), Alvarez has blossomed into a true spinto d'agilità, delivering performances rich with "melting, voluminous sound" (*Frankfurter Allgemeine*), "spectacular agility" (*Opera World Magazine*), and "a profoundly genuine sentimentality" (*Miami Herald*). For the 2023–2024 season, Alvarez returned to the Metropolitan Opera, covering the title roles in *Florencia en el Amazonas* and *Madama Butterfly*, and joined the Charleston Symphony for Verdi's Requiem.



Laurel Semerdjian, Mezzo-Soprano

Laurel Semerdjian, an American mezzo-soprano of Armenian descent, has been praised for her "deep, velvety voice" and "enchanting" acting (*Pittsburgh in the Round*). This season, she made her Seattle Opera debut as the Third Lady in *The Magic Flute* and will join Opera Southwest to sing Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, a role she has previously performed with Pittsburgh Opera, Sarasota Opera, and Syracuse Opera. She will also return to the Syracuse Symphony as the

alto soloist in Mozart's Requiem and make her West Edge Opera debut as the Witch of Endor in *David and Jonathan*. Recent performances include the title role in *Carmen* with Tacoma Opera, the alto soloist in Verdi's Requiem with Symphony Tacoma, a performance with Symphoria for their Masterworks Concert Series, and the alto soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Winston-Salem Symphony.

Taylor P. Comstock, Tenor

Taylor Comstock has been hailed as "stirring" (*Portland Press Herald*), with "smooth power" and "sheer, glorious size" (*BroadwayWorld*). In his emerging career, Comstock has already performed many standards of the tenor repertoire, notably Radamés (*Aida*), Des Grieux (*Manon Lescaut*), Manrico (*Il trovatore*), Rodolfo (*La bohème*), Rinuccio (*Gianni Schicchi*),

Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), and Alfredo (*La traviata*). In concert performance, Comstock most recently made his Carnegie Hall debut as tenor soloist in Mozart's "Coronation" Mass, K. 317. He also performed in *Three Tenors! The Next Generation* with the Vallejo Festival Orchestra. Comstock was most recently named third runner up and received the Audience Prize in the 2024 Mary Jacobs Smith Singer of the Year at Shreveport Opera, and first place in the 2023 John Alexander National Vocal Competition at Opera Mississippi. He was also a 2018 Grand Finalist at the Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition, and a four-time Regional Finalist at the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition.



Andrew Manea, Baritone

Lauded for his "charming ... robust baritone," rising Romanian-American baritone Andrew Manea recently made his role debut as the Duke of Nottingham in *Roberto Devereux* with the San Francisco Opera. These performances "thrust him into the spotlight, solidifying his status as the next leading baritone of his generation" (*OperaWire*). Manea recently embarked on a foray into larger repertoire, with four house debuts this season: Nashville Opera, singing Tonio in *I Pagliacci*; North Carolina Opera, singing Germont in *La Traviata*; Sarasota Opera, singing Escamillo in *Carmen*; and The Grange Festival in Hampshire, UK, singing Scarpia in *Tosca*. He also returns to Maryland Opera for Scarpia in *Tosca* and joins the Indianapolis Symphony for Handel's *Messiah*. This past season's operatic highlights include Don Carlo (cover) in *Ernani* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Ford in *Falstaff* with Palm Beach Opera, while in concert he appeared as the baritone soloist for *Carmina Burana* at Carnegie Hall and in the Bravissimo Bel Canto concert with Maryland Opera.



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
Agata Manka
Robert Radliff
Katie Thomas
Gabiella Apola
Heather Frank Olsen
Alejandra Anzola

Second Violins

Eun Jung Lee
Ana Milosavljevic
Marc Szammer
Hannah Moon
Moises Rodriguez
Marina Fragoulis
Rafailia Kapsokavadi
Dylan Ebrahimian

Violas

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

Cellos

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

Basses

Kyle Colina
Laurence Goldman
Lorenzo Sandi

Flutes

Jessica Taskov
Cindy Kimmel

Piccolo

Cindy Kimmel

Oboes

Viatcheslav Znatchenii
Phil Rashkin

Clarinets

Boris Shpitalnik
Nadeen Fankhouser

Bassoons

Gili Sharrett
Dirk Wels

Horns

Tim McCarthy
Taylor Peterson
Blair Hamrick

Trumpets

Atse Theodros
Justin Nurin
Angela Goss

Trombones

Eric Coughlin
Ehren Valmé

Bass Trombone

Ehren Valmé

Timpani

Zoey Cobb

Percussion

Katherine Fortunato
John Tadock

Harp

Jacqueline Kerrod

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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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