

Presented at Carnegie Hall by  
**MidAmerica Productions, Inc.**

1,512th Concert Worldwide, 1,172nd in New York, 717th in Carnegie Hall

Peter Tiboris: Founder and General Director Emeritus

Sir John Rutter, CBE: Conductor Laureate

Sunday, June 22, 2025 at 2 PM  
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

# **New England Symphonic Ensemble**

**Preston Hawes**, Artistic Director

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**HEATHER SORENSON** *Lessons Learned from Kids* (Carnegie Hall Premiere)

- I. Perseverance
- II. Honesty
- III. Consequences
- IV. Gratitude
- V. Manners
- VI. Compassion
- VII. Perseverance REPRISE

**Bryan Anderson**, Piano  
**Stephen Roddy**, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

**Children's Chorus of Collin County**, Plano, TX (Janie Oliver, Director)

**Houston Children's Chorus**, Houston, TX (Stephen Roddy, Director)

**St. Paul's UMC Choristers and Trebles**, Houston, TX (Suzanne Vanlandingham, Director)

INTERMISSION

RALPH  
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

*Dona Nobis Pacem*

- I. Agnus Dei
- II. Beat! Beat! Drums!
- III. Reconciliation
- IV. Dirge for two veterans
- V. The angel of death has been abroad throughout the land ...

**Christine Lyons**, Soprano | **Daniel Rich**, Baritone

**Jameson Caps**, Organ

**Eric Choate**, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

**Areté Singers**, Dublin, CA (Timothy Salaver, Director)

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

**Philadelphia Voices of Pride**, Philadelphia, PA (Daniel Schwartz, Director)

**Parish Choir of The Episcopal Church of St. Mary the Virgin**, San Francisco, CA

(Eric Choate, Director)

**Vallejo Choral Society**, Vallejo, CA (Julia Morris, Director)

INTERMISSION

WOLFGANG  
AMADEUS MOZART

Requiem, K. 626

I. Introitus—Requiem

II. Kyrie

III. Sequenz

Dies irae

Tuba mirum

Rex tremendae

Recordare

Confutatis

Lacrimosa

IV. Offertorium

Domine Jesu

Hostias

V. Sanctus

VI. Benedictus

VII. Agnus Dei

VIII. Communio

**Janani Sridhar**, Soprano | **Krista Laskowski**, Mezzo-Soprano

**Angel Gomez**, Tenor | **Daniel Sumegi**, Baritone

**Anna Khaydarova**, Organ

**Shulamit Hoffmann**, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

**Blacksburg Master Chorale**, Blacksburg, VA (Dwight Bigler, Director)

**Decatur Presbyterian Chancel Choir**, Decatur, GA (Matthew McMahan, Director)

**Great Rivers Choral Society**, Godfrey, IL (Raynard Brown, Director)

**Trinity United Methodist Church Chancel Choir**, Denton TX (Tawny Rybowicz, Director)

**Virginia Tech Choirs**, Blacksburg, VA (Dwight Bigler, Director)

**Viva la Musica!**, San Francisco Bay Area, CA (Shulamit Hoffmann, Director)

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

Rodgers is the Official House Organ of Carnegie Hall

# The Program

Program notes for this performance are available in the digital playbill at [midamerica-music.com/programnotes622](http://midamerica-music.com/programnotes622) or by scanning the QR code below:



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

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# The Artists



**Stephen Roddy, Conductor**

Stephen Roddy is the founder and director of the Houston Children's Chorus. This auditioned group of children represents the very finest of Houston's young musicians. They are frequently called upon to represent Houston at local and worldwide civic and cultural events, including 32 performances for the President of the United States. They perform more than 40 concerts each year to an approximate audience of 750,000 people. The Chorus is regularly featured with the Houston Symphony and sang as back-up vocals to Josh Groban during the pre-game ceremonies of the Super Bowl in 2004. In 2008, the Children's Chorus performed concerts in the major concert halls of Beijing and Shanghai as part of the 2008 Olympics cultural arts festival. In 2010, the Chorus performed with full orchestra at Carnegie Hall in the premiere of *Heartsongs*, a major composition on the poetry of Mattie Stepanek and commissioned by Houston Children's Chorus. An accomplished pianist, organist, and conductor, Roddy has conducted state honor choir festivals in Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, Arkansas, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and Texas. A recent concert involved 1,500 singers and a 100-piece orchestra at Our Lady of Angels Cathedral in Los Angeles. He is in demand as a children's music recording specialist and has directed or produced recordings for Silver Burdett & Ginn Music textbooks, Shawnee Press, Lifeway, Fred Bock Music Company, Warner Bros. Music, Blue Bell Ice Cream, Gerber Baby Foods, and United Way. Roddy is a native of Dayton, Ohio, and is a graduate of Auburn University and Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.



**Eric Choate, Conductor**

Eric Choate is in demand internationally as a choral and orchestral conductor. His 2025 engagements include serving as chorus master for Donizetti's *La fille du régiment* at Festival Napa Valley. Recent engagements include the Göteborgs Symfoniska Kör & Vokalensemble, San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Berkeley Symphony Chorus, and San Francisco Boys Chorus. As an award-winning composer, Choate's works have been performed worldwide by artists including VOCES8, musicians of the San Francisco Symphony, American Bach Soloists, Las Cruces Symphony, Frederica von Stade, Johann

Vexo, Vancouver Chamber Choir, Brian Thorsett, Friction Quartet, and university choirs around the globe. His compositions are published by E.C. Schirmer and VOCES8 Publishing, with recordings available on the Arsia Audio and Ulysses Arts labels. Choate serves as professor of choral and organ music at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and performs organ concerts throughout the US and Europe. In the summer of 2023, he studied improvisation with Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin in Paris. Choate holds the Fellowship Certificate (FAGO) from the American Guild of Organists and is director of music at the Episcopal Church of St. Mary the Virgin. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Theory and Composition from St. Olaf College and studied harmony and counterpoint at the European American Musical Alliance in Paris. He holds a Master of Music from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studied with David Conte. Choate lives in San Francisco with his wife, soprano Ellen Leslie.

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### **Christine Lyons, Soprano**

Christine Lyons is a critically acclaimed operatic soprano based in the US and Europe, having distinguished herself in major houses across the globe in roles such as Adina, Musetta, Micaëla, Donna Anna, Fiordiligi, the Countess, Pamina, Juliette, and many others.



This season begins with a gala performance in New York for former President Joe Biden, alongside Billy Porter and Alan Cumming. Following this, Lyons takes the stage with Knoxville Opera as Musetta in *La bohème*, appears as the featured soloist with Lyric Fest in Philadelphia for *Nevertheless, She Sang*, joins Catapult Opera as Herodias in *San Giovanni Battista*, and returns to Carnegie Hall for MidAmerica Productions' concert of Vaughan Williams's *Dona Nobis Pacem*. In addition, Lyons will perform at several galas in Washington, DC, as well as sing the national anthem at the 25,000-seat Red Bull Arena for the Gotham FC soccer league.

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### **Daniel Rich, Baritone**

Baltimore-born baritone Daniel Rich is a recent graduate of the Metropolitan Opera's prestigious Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. During the 2023–2024 Met season, he appeared as Pàris in *Roméo et Juliette* and as Chester in Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*. He made his Met debut during the 2022–2023 season as a Waiter in *Der Rosenkavalier* and covered the Count of Lerma in *Don Carlos*. On the concert stage, he has appeared as a featured



soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, Orff's *Carmina Burana* with both the Richmond Symphony and Berkshire Choral International, and a concert of sacred music by Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington with the Los Angeles Master Chorale at Walt Disney Concert Hall, among others.



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**Shulamit Hoffmann, Conductor**

Today's performance marks Shulamit Hoffmann's fifth engagement and third conducting appearance at Carnegie Hall under the auspices of MidAmerica Productions. Hoffmann leads *Viva la Musica!*, an ensemble based in the San Francisco Bay Area whose performances include major works, multimedia productions, and collaborations with sister ensembles. Tours have included Vermont; Vienna and Salzburg; New York; Prague and Dresden; Vilnius, Riga, Tallinn,

Helsinki, and St. Petersburg; as well as London and Bath. Hoffmann earned her doctorate from Teachers College, Columbia University. She holds master's degrees in piano and choral conducting and is a licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music, London, and the University of South Africa. Her mentors include Dr. Charlene Archibeque (Robert Shaw Awardee) in conducting; Drs. Abeles, Allsup, and Volpe in music education; and Dr. Adolph Hallis, Lamar Crowson, and Nellie Tholen in piano. Hoffmann has twice received US Congressional Recognitions. Her biography has been entered into the US Congressional Record. She was named Outstanding Graduate Student in the School of Music and Dance at San José State University and has received the San Mateo County Mayors' Diversity Award. She has served as local branch program chair and president of the Music Teachers National Association and the National Federation of Music Clubs. Her teaching at several colleges and universities culminated in 24 years at the College of San Mateo. Some of her former students—now music professors—and their students are performing with her today.



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**Janani Sridhar, Soprano**

Raved as having the “loveliest of voices,” Singaporean soprano Janani Sridhar is well known for her interpretation of operatic heroines. Equally at home in concert repertoire, Sridhar's orchestral engagements include collaborations with orchestras across the US and Asia. A passionate proponent of contemporary music, Sridhar has premiered works by American and Singaporean composers, and has had the honor of working with composers Jake Heggie,

Libby Larsen, Evan Mack, and Tom Cipullo. Some of Sridhar's recent season performances include: J.S. Bach's "Coffee Cantata," Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Britten's *Les Illuminations*, as well as a series of recitals in Texas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Carolina, Kentucky, Ohio, Louisiana, and Indiana. Last summer, Sridhar was one of five singers selected to be part of Cincinnati Song Initiative's *The Fellowship of the Song*. She also joined Charlottesville Opera as Eulalie Shinn in *The Music Man*.

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### **Krista Laskowski, Mezzo-Soprano**

Lauded for her "flowering, darkly rich voice" (*Boston Classical Review*) and "natural, easy stage presence, and ample vocal gift", mezzo-soprano Krista Laskowski is "adding an engaging zest" (*The Boston Musical Intelligencer*) to the American opera and concert stage. Laskowski's repertoire spans both standard and contemporary opera, musical theatre, oratorio, and song. Most recently, she was the alto soloist in Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* in Canandaigua, New York, and was featured in a Gilbert and Sullivan Revue with Choral Artists of Sarasota, where she had previously been featured in the Florida premiere of Florence Price's *Abraham Lincoln Walks At Midnight*, Mozart's Requiem, and Bleckner's *The Children's March*. As a recitalist, she has presented programs which include art song, opera arias, and musical theatre selections. Laskowski has been featured on the concert stage in the works of Bach, Vivaldi, Saint-Saëns, Pergolesi, Handel, Mozart, Vaughan Williams, Duruflé, Strozzi, and Argento. Onstage, Laskowski has performed with Opera Tampa, Indianapolis Opera, Gulfshore Opera, Odyssey Opera, Boston Opera Collaborative, MassOpera, and New Voices Opera. Other favorite roles include Meg March (*Little Women*), Amastre (*Serse*), Florence Pike (*Albert Herring*), Siebel (*Faust*), and Franca Nacarelli (*The Light in the Piazza*).



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### **Angel Gomez, Tenor**

Angel Raii Gomez, an emerging voice on the opera stage, is currently a fourth-year resident artist at the Academy of Vocal Arts and a 2025 National Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. Praised by critics for his "stage personality, tremendous wit and flare, and a heart-stopping pretty lyric tone," he won the 2023 first prize in the prestigious Meistersinger Competition at AIMS in Graz, Austria, and the 2023 first prize in the Giargiari Bel Canto Competition. In the 2024–2025 season, he sings the title roles in Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz* and Gounod's *Faust* both at AVA, and debuts at Carnegie Hall



with Mozart's Requiem. This past summer, he debuted the roles of Duca di Mantova in Verdi's *Rigoletto* and Pluton in Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers* with Opera North in New Hampshire, and performed Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Ocean City Pops. Future engagements include the Verdi Requiem with Portland Opera, Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* with San Diego Symphony, and Mozart's Requiem with Columbus Symphony Orchestra. Last season, Gomez debuted the role of Percy in Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* at the Academy of Vocal Arts, followed by his much-anticipated debut there as Conte Almaviva in Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Other roles he has performed at AVA include Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Gastone in *La Traviata*, and Triquet in *Eugene Onegin*. He has also performed Rinuccio in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, Don Jose in *Carmen*, Podesta in Mozart's *La Finta Giardiniera*, and Haydn's "Lord Nelson" Mass with the New Jersey Master Chorale.



**Daniel Sumegi**, Baritone

Daniel Sumegi has sung more than 100 operatic roles on many of the world's major stages, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Washington National Opera, and Seattle Opera, as well as Opera Australia in his home country. He has also appeared in the opera houses of Bonn, Cologne, Frankfurt, and Hamburg, as well as Paris, Barcelona, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, and Houston. Last season, Sumegi made his debut as Wotan/The Wanderer in Opera Australia's new production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* before returning to the Metropolitan Opera to cover Padre Guardiano in their new production of *La forza del destino*. He also joined Pacific Symphony as Judge Turpin in *Sweeney Todd* and Opera Maine to sing Ramfis in *Aida*. This season, he returns to the Met to cover the First Soldier in *Salome* and joins Fort Worth Symphony to cover Daland in *Der fliegende Holländer*.



**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.

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### **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

Funda Cizmecioglu  
Agata Manka  
Dylan Ebrahimiian  
Elissa Cassini  
Heather Frank Olsen  
Emilie Flores  
Jonathan Block  
Rachel Helm

## Second Violins

Ana Milosavljevic  
Eun Jung Lee  
Sofya Puyul  
Marc Szammer  
Marina Fragoulis  
Celine Boulben  
Valentina Anzola  
Amneris Puscasu

## Violas

Mitsuru Kubo  
Kerrick Sasaki  
Angel Contreras  
Surai Balbeisi  
Veronica Anzola  
Thomas Purcell

## Cellos

Kevin Charlestream  
Christopher Cortez  
Sofia Yatsyshyna  
Laura Masferrer  
Sonna Kim  
Marc Trembovelski

## Basses

Kyle Colina  
Laurence Goldman  
Lorenzo Sandi

## Flute

Jessica Taskov

## Oboe

Rita Mitsel

## Clarinets

Boris Shpitalnik  
Nadeen Fankhauser

## Bassoons

Gili Sharrett  
Dirk Wels

## Horns

Tim McCarthy  
Patricia Schmitt

## Trumpets

Justin Nurin  
Atse Theodros

## Trombones

Eric Coughlin  
Burt Mason  
Ehren Valmé

## Percussion

David Stevens  
John Tadlock  
Tarun Bellur  
Oliver Xu  
Kai Chuan Yang

## **MidAmerica Productions, Inc.**

Founded by Conductor, Music Educator, Entrepreneur Peter Tiboris over 40 years ago, 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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