



23|24 SEASON

 UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

presents

**HANDEL'S *Messiah***  
**ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**  
**ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**  
**CHAMBER CHORUS**

**Norman Mackenzie**, director of choruses

**Maria Valdes**, soprano

**Kelley O'Connor**, mezzo-soprano

**Miles Mykkanen**, tenor

**Lawson Anderson**, bass-baritone

SAT, DEC 16, 7:30 pm

Hodgson Concert Hall

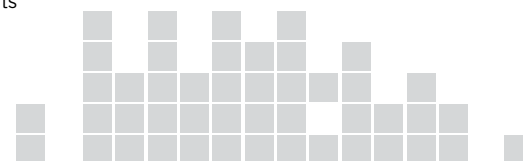
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#ugapresents



## PROGRAM

### **Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685-1750)

Cantata No. 1, "Jauchzet, frohlocket," from *Weihnachtsoratorium*, BWV 248 (1734) [30:00]

1. Jauchzet, frohlocket! (Chorus)
2. Es begab sich aber zu der Zeit (Recitative: Evangelist)
3. Nun wird mein liebster Bräutigam (Recitative: Contralto)
4. Bereite dich Zion (Aria: Contralto)
5. Wie soll ich dich empfangen (Chorale)
6. Und sie gebar ihren ersten Sohn (Recitative: Evangelist)
7. Er ist auf Erden kommen arm (Chorale, Recitative: Chorus, Soprano, Bass)
8. Grosser Herr und starker König (Aria: Bass)
9. Ach, mein herzliebes Jesulein! (Chorale)

## INTERMISSION

### **George Friderick Handel** (1685-1759)

Part the First (Christmas Portion) and Hallelujah from *Messiah*, HWV 56 (1741) [58:00]

1. Overture
2. Recit: Comfort ye, my people (Tenor)
3. Air: Ev'ry valley shall be exalted (Tenor)
4. Chorus: And the glory of the Lord
5. Recit: Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts (Bass)
6. Air: But who may abide the day of His coming? (Alto)
7. Chorus: And He shall purify
8. Recit: Behold! A virgin shall conceive (Alto)
9. Air and Chorus: O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion (Alto)
10. Recit: For behold, darkness shall cover the earth (Bass)
11. Air: The people that walked in darkness (Bass)
12. Chorus: For unto us a Child is born
13. Pastoral Symphony
- 14a. Recit: There were shepherds abiding in the field (Soprano)
- 14b. Recit: And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them (Soprano)
15. Recit: And the angel said unto them (Soprano)
16. Recit: And suddenly there was with the angel (Soprano)
17. Chorus: Glory to God in the highest
18. Air: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion (Soprano)
19. Recit: Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd (Alto)
20. Air: He shall feed his flock like a shepherd (Alto, Soprano)
21. Chorus: His yoke is easy and His burthen is light
44. Chorus: Hallelujah

Program is subject to change.

## PROGRAM NOTES, TEXTS, AND TRANSLATIONS

### **Cantata No. 1, "Jauchzet, frohlocket," from *Weihnachtsoratorium*, BWV 248** **Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685-1750)

We hear tonight the first of the six cantatas known as the Christmas Oratorio. All six include much music that Bach had originally written for secular cantatas. The opening chorus of this work, for instance, began with the words "Tune the drums." Bach's transformation of this material to wonderful and idiomatic Christmas music is a marvel.

The opening chorus begins with the drums and is followed up by a mighty rush with the strings and winds to the dazzling entrance of the trumpets. While in cantata format, the Oratorio includes a tenor Evangelist who narrates the story. This narration is in the form of recitative rather like those in the Matthew and John Passions. In order to keep clear what is narrative and what is commentary, all the recitatives have obbligato instruments. An alto recitative with oboes d'amore leads us into the familiar aria "*Bereite dich, Zion*." After the Passion chorale, which, curiously enough, begins and ends the Oratorio, the Evangelist continues. An interesting movement with the *soprani* singing the chorale "*Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ*" and a bass soloist singing a recitative underneath, leads us into the great bass aria "*Großer Herr, o starker König*." This work was originally in praise of the king, but its kingly trumpet part is totally suited to the new text. A wonderful and grand setting of "*Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her*" with the trumpets ends the cantata. — ©Craig Smith

### **Cantata for the First Day of Christmas** **(Weihnachts-Oratorium I)**

#### **1. Chor**

Jauchzet, frohlocket, auf, preiset die Tage,  
Rühmet, was heute der Höchste getan!  
Lasset das Zagen, verbannet die Klage,  
Stimmt voll Jauchzen und Fröhlichkeit an!  
Dienet dem Höchsten mit herrlichen  
Chören,  
Laßt uns den Namen des Herrschers  
verehren!

#### **2. Rezitativ T (Evangelist)**

*Es begab sich aber zu der Zeit, daß ein Gebot von dem Kaiser Augusto ausging, daß alle Welt geschätzt würde. Und jedermann ging, daß er sich schätzen ließe, ein jeglicher in seine Stadt. Da machte sich auch auf Joseph aus Galiläa, aus der Stadt Nazareth, in das jüdische Land zur Stadt David, die da*

#### **1. Chorus**

Celebrate, rejoice, rise up and praise these days,  
glorify what the Highest has done today!  
Abandon despair, banish laments,  
sound forth full of delight and happiness!  
Serve the Highest with glorious choruses,  
let us honor the name of the Supreme Ruler!

#### **2. Recitative T (Evangelist)**

*It came to pass at that time, however, that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be appraised. And everyone went to be appraised, each to his own city. So Joseph also went out of Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into the Jewish territory to the city of David, which*

*heißet Bethlehem; darum, daß er von dem Hause und Geschlechte David war: auf daß er sich schätzen ließe mit Maria, seinem vertrauten Weibe, die war schwanger. Und als sie daselbst waren, kam die Zeit, daß sie gebären sollte. (Luke 2:1, 3-6)*

### 3. Rezitativ A

Nun wird mein liebster Bräutigam,  
Nun wird der Held aus Davids Stamm  
Zum Trost, zum Heil der Erden  
Einmal geboren werden.  
Nun wird der Stern aus Jakob scheinen,  
Sein Strahl bricht schon hervor.  
Auf, Zion, und verlasse nun das Weinen,  
Dein Wohl steigt hoch empor!

### 4. Arie A

Bereite dich, Zion, mit zärtlichen  
Trieben,  
Den Schönsten, den Liebsten bald bei  
dir zu sehn!  
Deine Wangen  
Müssen heut viel schöner prangen,  
Eile, den Bräutigam sehnlichst zu lieben!

### 5. Choral

**Wie soll ich dich empfangen  
Und wie begegn' ich dir?  
O aller Welt Verlangen,  
O meiner Seelen Zier!  
O Jesu, Jesu, setze  
Mir selbst die Fackel bei,  
Damit, was dich ergötze,  
Mir kund und wissend sei!**  
("Wie soll ich dich empfangen," verse 1)

### 6. Rezitativ T (Evangelist)

*Und sie gebar ihren ersten Sohn und wickelte ihn in Windeln und legte ihn in eine Krippe, denn sie hatten sonst keinen Raum in der Herberge. (Luke 2:7)*

### 7. Choral S und Rezitativ B

**Er ist auf Erden kommen arm,  
Wer will die Liebe recht erhöh'n,  
Die unser Heiland vor uns hegt?  
Daß er unser sich erbarm,  
Ja, wer vermag es einzusehen,  
Wie ihn der Menschen Leid bewegt?**

*was called Bethlehem; since he was of the house and race of David; so that he might be appraised with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was pregnant. And while they were there, the time came for her to deliver.*

### 3. Recitative A

Now my dearest Bridegroom,  
now the hero from David's branch,  
for the comfort, for the salvation of the earth, will be born at last.  
Now the Star out of Jacob will shine,  
its light already breaks forth.  
Arise, Zion, and give up your weeping now,  
your happiness rises high above you!

### 4. Aria A

Prepare yourself, Zion, with tender efforts,  
to behold your lovely one, your beloved,  
near you soon!  
Your cheeks  
must now glow much more radiantly,  
hurry to love the Bridegroom with passion!

### 5. Chorale

**How shall I embrace You,  
and how encounter You?  
O desire of the whole world,  
O adornment of my soul!  
O Jesus, Jesus, place  
the torch near me Yourself,  
so that what gives You pleasure  
be known and familiar to me!**

### 6. Recitative T (Evangelist)

*And she bore her first son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, since there was no other room in the inn.*

### 7. Chorale S and Recitative B

**He came to earth poor,  
Who can rightly exalt this love,  
that our Savior harbors for us?  
So that He might have sympathy for us,  
Indeed, who could possibly have predicted  
how the sorrow of humanity moved Him?**

**Und in dem Himmel mache reich,  
Des Höchsten Sohn kömmt in die Welt,  
Weil ihm ihr Heil so wohl gefällt,  
Und seinen lieben Engeln gleich.**  
So will er selbst als Mensch geboren werden.  
**Kyrieleis!**  
("Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ," verse 6)

### 8. Arie B

Großer Herr, o starker König,  
Liebster Heiland, o wie wenig  
Achtest du der Erden Pracht!  
Der die ganze Welt erhält,  
Ihre Pracht und Zier erschaffen,  
Muß in harten Krippen schlafen.

### 9. Choral

**Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein,  
Mach dir ein rein sanft Bettelein,  
Zu ruhn in meines Herzens Schrein,  
Daß ich nimmer vergesse dein!**  
("Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her," verse 13)

Luke 2:1,3-6 (mov't. 2); "Wie soll ich dich empfangen," verse 1: Paul Gerhardt 1653 (mov't. 5); Luke 2:7 (mov't. 6); "Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ," verse 6: Martin Luther 1524 (mov't. 7); "Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her," verse 13: Martin Luther 1535 (mov't. 9)

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**Part the First (Christmas Portion) and Hallelujah from *Messiah*, HWV 56  
George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)**

**Ten Things You Might Not Know about Handel's *Messiah***  
by Noel Morris

### 1. The "Hallelujah" chorus isn't Christmas music—or *wasn't*.

It's one of the top downloads during the Christmas season, yet it was actually written for Easter. The "Hallelujah" chorus proclaims Christ's Resurrection and makes a splendid finale to Part Two of *Messiah*. It was early in the 19th century that more and more choirs began to co-opt the famous chorus for Christmastime. The text of the "Hallelujah" chorus comes from the Book of Revelation, "For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

## 2. Much of the text from *Messiah* comes from the Old Testament.

*Messiah* is a compilation of Bible verses. Librettist Charles Jennens took the broad view of his subject, drawing extensively from the Hebrew prophets. Part One anticipates the birth of the *Messiah* using texts from the Books of Isaiah and Malachi, and only moves into the Nativity at the famous chorus “For unto us a child is born” (around thirty minutes into the piece). Part Two explores the relationship between the world’s iniquity and Christ the Redeemer. Much of its text comes from Isaiah and the Book of Psalms. Part Three, by far the shortest section, opens with verses from the Book of Job, and then shifts into the New Testament to celebrate the risen Christ: “O death, where is thy sting?”

Sources of *Messiah* include the Books of Isaiah, Haggai, Malachi, Luke, Zechariah, Matthew, John, Psalms, Lamentations, Romans, Revelation, Job, and 1 Corinthians.

## 3. Handel spoke in a jumble of languages.

Born in Halle (in modern-day Germany) to a prominent surgeon, Handel, né Georg Friedrich Händel, was schooled in both French and German. He spent his early twenties in Italy learning to compose in the style of Italian opera before landing in London in 1710. Traditionally, musicians were servants to members of the ruling class, but Handel sensed opportunity amid the new class of wealthy merchants and professionals—they were hungry for status and access to life’s finer things. The German composer’s “Italian operas” became all the rage. In 1727, Handel became a naturalized Englishman by Act of Parliament and changed his name to George Frideric Handel. Although he lived in London for the last forty-nine years of his life, he famously spoke English sprinkled with bits of German, French and Italian.

## 4. *Messiah* was premiered in Ireland.

By 1741, Londoners had lost interest in Handel’s Italian operas. Needing to recover from disastrous ticket sales, he accepted an invitation to a season-long residency in Dublin. From the moment he arrived, he was a celebrity again. Handel sold subscriptions from his house and presented two series of sold-out concerts that winter, setting aside his new oratorio, *Messiah*, until the Easter season. By the spring, there was such a buzz around the piece that Handel sold tickets to the dress rehearsal. As a precaution, the *Dublin Journal* ran advertisements suggesting that concertgoers refrain from wearing swords or hoop skirts in order to make “room for more company.” *Messiah* premiered in the Great Music Hall on April 13, 1742. The concert benefitted a debtor’s prison and hospital. According to the composer, some seven hundred people squeezed into the six hundred-seat theater.

## 5. Some people found *Messiah* indecent.

In certain circles, theaters were considered places of ill repute. Jonathon Swift, author of *Gulliver’s Travels* and Dean of Saint Patrick’s Cathedral, initially tried to prevent his choir from participating in the world premiere of *Messiah* for fear that it would sully its reputation. Swift also objected to the participation of contralto Susannah Cibber who was scandalized by divorce. (Swift eventually backed down.)

At *Messiah*’s London debut the following year, there were murmurs of indecency surrounding the singing of Biblical texts from the stage of a theater.

Ironically, it was due to cries of indecency that Handel began writing oratorios in the first place. Opera had been banned in Rome by papal decree, so Handel skirted the issue by writing oratorios (dramatic works in an operatic style on biblical subjects—minus the sets and costumes).

In the 1750s, *Messiah* caught on when performances moved to a chapel at the Foundling Hospital; the work became part of Handel’s annual benefit for orphans. Soon, Covent Garden took up the tradition of performing *Messiah* during Lent, when opera was forbidden.

## 6. There is no definitive version of *Messiah*.

Handel was as much impresario as composer. He continually rewrote his works to suit a particular performance. He would transpose or rewrite music for particular singers, delete or add movements and often inserted entire organ concertos between acts. As was common during the Baroque, Handel used varied combinations of keyboard and bass instruments to cover the part of basso continuo, including organ, harpsichord, bassoon, cello, harp and theorbo (a large lute).

As *Messiah* grew in popularity, so grew the size of the orchestra. The 1742 Dublin premiere employed a few soloists, a chorus of eight boys and sixteen men, plus a modest orchestra. By 1787, Westminster Abbey advertised an ensemble of eight hundred.

## 7. He wrote it in 24 days.

*Messiah* runs about two hours and twenty minutes; that means Handel wrote around 45 minutes of music per week. He finalized the piece on September 14, 1741, with the dedication “SDG,” or Soli Deo Gloria (Glory to God alone).

Incredibly, keeping a breakneck pace was more the rule than the exception with Handel. He routinely composed an oratorio in a month’s time, although his fluency was helped by his use of recycled material. In *Messiah*, for example, he lifted “For unto us a child is born” and “All we like sheep have gone astray” from his duet “Nò, di voi non vo’ fidarmi” (“No, I will never trust you”).

## 8. *Messiah* is packed with word painting.

To represent the flogging of Jesus, for example, Handel creates a cascading effect by laying one statement of “And with His Stripes” upon another. That’s followed by the chorus “All we like sheep have gone astray.” Here, Handel begins with a strong, unified proclamation: “All we like sheep!” But on the word “astray,” the four sections of the chorus peel away from one another, meandering across the musical landscape. It might also be argued that having the tenors sing a series of couplings on an “A” vowel mimics the sheep’s bleating.

## 9. A page of *Messiah* is engraved on a tomb in Westminster Abbey.

On April 6, 1759, Handel attended a performance of *Messiah* at Covent Garden. He died eight days later on Holy Saturday and was laid to rest in the south transept of Westminster Abbey. A life-size monument sculpted by Louis-François

Roubiliac portrays the composer clasping a page from the soprano aria “I know that my redeemer liveth” from *Messiah*. The composer’s face is a replica of his death mask. The cost of the monument was covered by Handel’s estate. Much of his remaining fortune was divided between his favorite charities.

#### 10. Why do people stand during the “Hallelujah” chorus?

That’s a very good question. Possibly some trivia lover told you that it is because King George II was so moved by the music that he stood up when he heard it in 1743. As a rule, when the king stands, everybody stands. But scholars have been unable to confirm the presence of his royal personage at that concert. There are numerous newspaper and eyewitness accounts, but none mentions the King (it seems unlikely that the King’s presence would go unnoticed). The earliest known source of George II’s famous gesture is secondhand, an account given in the 1770s by a man named James Beattie: “They were so transported,” Beattie wrote, “that they all, together with the king (who happened to be present) started up and remained standing.” According to sources, standing during different choruses of *Messiah* happened as early as the 1750s. Whatever the reason for it, the tradition endures today.

#### *Messiah*

Music by George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Texts selected from the Bible by Charles Jennens (1700-1773)

#### Part I

##### *Sinfonia*

Tenor

Comfort ye my people, saith your God;  
speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem,  
and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished,  
that her iniquity is pardoned.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness:  
Prepare ye the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
Every valley shall be exalted,  
and every mountain and hill made low:  
the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

[*Isaiah* 40:1-4]

Chorus

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together:  
for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

[*Isaiah* 40:5]

Bass

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts:  
Yet once a little while, and I will shake the

heavens, and the earth, and the sea and the dry land,  
and I will shake all nations,  
and the desire of nations shall come.

The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come  
to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant,  
whom ye delight in, behold,  
He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

[*Haggai* 2:6-7; *Malachi* 3:1]

Bass

But who may abide the day of His coming?  
And who shall stand when He appeareth?  
For He is like a refiner’s fire.

[*Malachi* 3:2]

Chorus

And He shall purify the sons of Levi,  
that they may offer unto the Lord  
an offering in righteousness.

[*Malachi* 3:3]

Alto

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,  
and shall call his name Emmanuel,  
God with us.

[*Isaiah* 7:14; *Matthew* 1:23]

Alto and Chorus

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion,  
get thee up into the high mountain;  
O thou that tellest good tidings to  
Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength;  
lift it up, be not afraid;  
say unto the cities of Judah:  
Behold your God! Arise, shine,  
for thy light is come,  
and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

[*Isaiah* 40:9; 60:1]

Bass

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,  
and gross darkness the people:  
but the Lord shall arise upon thee,  
and His glory shall be seen upon thee.  
And the Gentiles shall come to thy light,  
and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

[*Isaiah* 60:2-3]



Bass

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:  
and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death,  
upon them hath the light shined.

[*Isaiah 9:2 (Matthew 3:16)*]

Chorus

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given,  
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,  
and His name shall be called Wonderful,  
Counselor, the mighty God,  
the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

[*Isaiah 9:6*]

### **Pastoral Symphony**

Soprano

There were shepherds abiding in the field,  
keeping watch over their flocks by night.  
And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,  
and the glory of the Lord shone round about  
them, and they were sore afraid.  
And the angel said unto them:  
Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings  
of great joy, which shall be to all people:  
for unto you is born this day in the city of David a  
Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.  
And suddenly there was with the angel  
a multitude of the heavenly host,  
praising God, and saying:  
[*Luke 2:8-11,13*]

Chorus

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace on earth, good will towards men.  
[*Luke 2:14*]

Soprano

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout,  
O daughter of Jerusalem, behold, thy King  
cometh unto thee. He is the righteous Saviour,  
and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.  
[*Zechariah 9:9-10*]

Alto

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then shall the lame man leap as an hart,

and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

[*Isaiah 35:5-6*]

Alto and Soprano

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,  
and He shall gather the lambs with His arm,  
and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead  
those that are with young.

Come unto Him, all ye that labour,  
and are heavy laden, and He will give you rest.  
Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him,  
for he is meek and lowly of heart,  
and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

[*Isaiah 40:11; Matthew 11:28-29*]

Chorus

His yoke is easy, and His burthen is light.  
[*Matthew 11:30*]

Chorus

Hallelujah!  
for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.  
The kingdom of this world is become the  
kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ;  
and He shall reign for ever and ever.  
King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.  
[*Revelation 19:6; 11:15; 19:16*]

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

### **NORMAN MACKENZIE**



Norman Mackenzie's abilities as musical collaborator, conductor and concert organist have brought him international recognition. As Director of Chorus for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) since 2000, he was chosen to help carry forward the creative vision of legendary founding conductor Robert Shaw.

During his tenure, the chorus has made numerous tours and garnered several Grammy Awards, including best classical album and best choral performance.

At the ASO, he prepares the choruses for all concerts and recordings, works closely with Nathalie Stutzmann on the commissioning and realization of new choral-orchestral works and conducts holiday concerts. In his 14-year association

with Mr. Shaw, he was keyboardist for the ASO, principal accompanist for the ASO Choruses and ultimately assistant choral conductor. In addition, he was musical assistant and accompanist for the Robert Shaw Chamber Singers, the Robert Shaw Institute Summer Choral Festivals in France and the United States and the famed Shaw/Carnegie Hall Choral Workshops.

He prepared the ASO Chorus for its acclaimed 2003 debut and successive 2008 and 2009 performances in Berlin with the Berlin Philharmonic, in Britten's *War Requiem*, Berlioz's *Grande Messe des Morts* and Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, respectively, conducted by ASO Principal Guest Conductor Donald Runnicles.

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## MARIA VALDES



American soprano Maria Valdes was recently described as a “first-rate singing actress and a perfectly charming Gilda” (*New York Times*). The 2023-2024 is filled with multitudes of thrilling symphonic and recital debuts. On the symphonic stage, Ms. Valdes joins the Greensboro Symphony to sing Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* and Mahler's Symphony No. 4, is featured as the soprano soloist in *Messiah* with both the Atlanta Symphony and St. Luke's Episcopal Church, and she returns to the Phoenix Symphony for Strauss's *Four Last Songs*. In recital, she is

featured with Il Cenacolo Italian Club, the Cathedral of St. Paul, the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, and with Spanish River Concerts. Additionally, Ms. Valdes makes her return to Houston Grand Opera in a role TBA.

In the 2022-2023 season, Ms. Valdes made her Metropolitan Opera debut covering Papagena in *The Magic Flute*, returned to Atlanta Opera as Léontine in *L'Amant anonyme* and Hawaii Opera Theater to portray Lauretta in Gianni Schicchi. Additionally, Ms. Valdes portrayed Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* with Newport Classical, made her San Jose Symphony debut singing *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* and *Carmina Burana*, and joined the Madison Chamber Music Festival for a recital.

Also an accomplished recitalist, Ms. Valdes has appeared in concert with Martin Katz, and made her New York recital debut with the New York Festival of Song performing with Steven Blier and Michael Barrett in *Compositora*, a recital of female Latin American composers. Ms. Valdes can be heard singing Mendelssohn's *Hear my prayer* on the album *Evening Hymn* released by Gothic Records and acclaimed in the American Record Guide. An award winner in the regional Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions, Ms. Valdes is also the winner of the top prize at the Corbett Opera Scholarship Competition at Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and is the recipient of a Shoshana Foundation Grant.

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## KELLEY O'CONNOR



Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor is one of the most compelling vocal artists of her generation. She is known for a commanding intensity on stage, a velvet vocal tone, and the ability to create sheer magic in her interpretations. O'Connor performs and inhabits a broad selection of repertoire, from Beethoven, Mahler, and Brahms to Dessner, Corigliano, and Adams (who wrote the title role of *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* for her); she is sought after by many of today's most accomplished composers. She performs

with leading orchestras and conductors around the world, with preeminent artists in recitals and chamber music, and with highly acclaimed opera companies in the U.S. and abroad.

In the 2023-24 season, O'Connor performs with the Houston Symphony in John Adams' *El Niño* led by David Robertson, and brings Peter Lieberman's *Neruda Songs* to concerts with the New World Symphony under the baton of Stéphane Denève, with the Omaha Symphony and Music Director Ankush Bahl, and the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra led by Johannes Fritzsich. O'Connor performs as a soloist in Mahler's Second Symphony with the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra with Music Director Michael Stern, and in the composer's Third Symphony with the San Francisco Symphony conducted by Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen, and she joins the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Fabio Luisi for Schmidt's seldom-performed *Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln*.

For her debut with the Atlanta Symphony in Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar*, Kelley O'Connor joined Robert Spano for performances and a Grammy award-winning Deutsche Grammophon recording. Her recording catalogue also includes Mahler's Third Symphony with Jaap van Zweden and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Lieberman's *Neruda Songs* and Michael Kurth's *Everything Lasts Forever* with Robert Spano and the Atlanta Symphony, Adams' *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* with Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Franz Welser-Möst and the Cleveland Orchestra.

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## MILES MYKKANEN



A winner of the 2019 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Miles Mykkanen garners recognition and praise on the world's concert and operatic stages for his “focused, full-voiced tenor” (*New York Times*). Of his performance in the title role of *Albert Herring*, *Opera News* reported, “Miles Mykkanen displayed a lovely lyric voice with an appealing honeyed sweetness in the timbre, which he employed with intelligence and humor.”

Miles Mykkanen's 2023-24 season includes a debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Steuermann in *Der Fliegende Holländer* in a production by Tim Albery led by Henrik Nánási, as well as a San Francisco Opera debut in the North American premiere of the gripping one-act drama of Kaija Saariaho and Sofi Oksanen, *Innocence*, directed by Simon Stone and conducted by Saariaho specialist Clément Mao-Takacs. Other performances of the season include *Carmina Burana* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Krzysztof Urbanski, Mozart's Requiem with the Oregon Symphony and Music Director David Danzmayr, and Handel's *Messiah* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra led by Norman Mackenzie and with the Kansas City Symphony under the baton of Roberto Kalb.

Last season, Miles Mykkanen gave three prominent role debuts: Steuermann in *Der fliegende Holländer* in a return engagement with the Canadian Opera Company, the title role of *Albert Herring* in his debut at Chicago Opera Theater, and his first Fenton in *Falstaff* for a company debut at the Staatsoper Hamburg. Other operatic engagements included the tenor's return to the Metropolitan Opera to cover Tamino in the company's new production by Simon McBurney of *Die Zauberflöte* and the title role of *Candide* in performances with the Opéra de Lausanne. Concert engagements were anchored by multiple performances of Handel's *Messiah* at University Musical Society, Ann Arbor and with the Atlanta and New Jersey Symphonies.

## LAWSON ANDERSON



Hailed for his “powerful, darkly-hued voice and nobility of phrasing and carriage” (Cleveland Classical), Lawson Anderson is quickly establishing himself as one of the leading bass-baritones of his generation. A former management consultant with an MBA from Columbia Business School, Anderson made waves in the opera world after receiving First Prize at the Gerda Lissner Foundation's International Vocal Competition. He debuted at Carnegie Hall as Wotan in *Das Rheingold*, followed by triumphant runs in the title roles of *Don Giovanni* with the

Cleveland Opera and *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Berlin Opera Festival.

Anderson is acclaimed as a gifted interpreter of Mozart, particularly in the title role of *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Nevill Holt Opera, the Music Academy of the West under the baton of James Conlon, and at the Berlin Opera Festival. Other appearances include Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, Colline in *La bohème* with Opera Tampa, Verdi's Requiem, Schubert's *Die Winterreise*, and Rocco in *Fidelio* at the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City.

Celebrated for his talent and artistry, Anderson has received recognition from numerous international competitions. These include the 2017 Opera Index top prize Arthur E. Walters Memorial Award, grand prize from the Olga Forrai Foundation for Dramatic Voices, and the grand prize from the Giulio Gari Foundation.

Anderson was nominated as the 2017 eastern region finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council, grand finalist and winner of the 2017 Anita Cerquetti Voice Competition, and a finalist at the 2017 Hans Gabor Belvedere Competition in Moscow and the 2018 Viñas Contest in Barcelona.

## ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Under the leadership of Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) offers live performances, media initiatives and learning programs that unite, educate and enrich our community through the engaging and transformative power of orchestral music experiences.

Now in its 79th season, the ASO engages the diverse international community of our city, bringing people together in harmony—including our youngest citizens, with extensive opportunities for youth and families to fall in love with music. Two hallmark education programs celebrate anniversaries this season: the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra celebrates 50 years, and the Talent Development Program—one of the longest-running musical education diversity programs in the country—turns 30.

The orchestra's range and depth are featured in more than 150 concerts each year, including the flagship Delta Classical Series, Movies in Concert, Family Concerts, Coca-Cola Holiday series and many community and education concerts. The ASO presents many vibrant, wide-ranging events and artists through its Delta Atlanta Symphony Hall Live presentations. Outside of the concert hall, the ASO's Behind the Curtain video concert series enables the Orchestra to reach audiences beyond city limits.

The ASO performs with the world-renowned 200+ voice, all-volunteer ASO Chorus, originally founded in 1970 by Robert Shaw, and currently under the direction of Norman Mackenzie. The Chorus is featured on nine of the ASO's 27 Grammy® Award-winning recordings.

## ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CHORUS

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus (ASOC) was founded in 1970 by former ASO Music Director Robert Shaw. An auditioned ensemble composed entirely of volunteers, the chorus meets weekly for rehearsals and performs regularly with the ASO. Led by ASO Director of Choruses Norman Mackenzie, the ASO Chorus is known for its precision and expressive singing quality. Current Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann, a world-renowned contralto, is sure to expand on the chorus's already incredible repertoire and reputation.

In addition to its regular performances with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the chorus is featured on many of the ASO's recordings, which have won multiple Grammy® Awards, including nine for Best Choral Performance, four for Best Classical Recording and one for Best Opera Recording. Those include Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* and Berlioz's Requiem.

The chorus made its debut at New York's Carnegie Hall in 1976 in a performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the ASO, led by Robert Shaw. The chorus



also performed in Washington, D.C., for President-elect Jimmy Carter's inaugural concert in 1977 and traveled to Germany three times with ASO Principal Guest Conductor Donald Runnicles to be a special guest of the Berlin Philharmonic: in December 2003 for performances of Britten's *War Requiem*, in May 2008 for Berlioz's *Requiem* and in December 2009 for *Brahms' Ein deutsches Requiem*.

## Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chamber Chorus

**Nathalie Stutzmann**, Music Director  
*The Frannie and Bill Graves Chair*

**Hannah Davis**, Choral and Artistic Manager  
**Peter Marshall**, Accompanist

### SOPRANO

Tierney Breedlove  
Khadijah Davis  
Liz Dean  
Michelle Griffin  
Amanda Hoffman  
Megan Littlepage  
Arietha Lockhart \*\*  
Mindy Margolis \*  
Joneen Padgett \*  
Mary Martha Penner  
Marianna Schuck  
Lydia Sharp  
Anne-Marie Spalinger \*  
Wanda Yang Temko \*\*  
Brianna Turgeon \*\*

### ALTO

Ana Baida  
Angelica Blackman-Kiem  
Donna Carter-Wood  
Marcia Chandler  
Katherine Fisher  
Alyssa Harris  
Unita Harris  
Kathleen Kelly George  
Virginia Little  
Katherine Mackenzie  
Linda Morgan  
Kathleen Poe Ross  
Laura Rappold

### TENOR

Christian Bigliani  
David Blalock  
Mark Borkowski  
John Brandt  
Jack Caldwell  
Daniel Compton  
Justin Cornelius  
Philip Crumbly  
Leif Gilbert-Hansen  
John Harr  
Keith Langston  
Timothy Parrott  
Michael Parker  
Chris Patton  
Mark Warden

### BASS

Marcel Benoit  
Philip Barreca  
Russell Cason  
Trey Clegg  
Michael Cranford  
Michael Devine  
Timothy Gunter  
Jameson Linville  
Peter Mackenzie  
Jason Maynard  
Jackson McCarthy  
John Newsome  
Edgie Wallace

\*20+ years of service \*\*30+ years of service

## Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Musician Roster 2023/24 Season

**Nathalie Stutzmann**  
Music Director  
*The Robert Reid Topping Chair*

**William R. Langley**  
Associate Conductor &  
Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra  
Music Director  
*The Zeist Foundation Chair*

**Norman Mackenzie**  
Director of Choruses  
*The Frannie and Bill Graves Chair*

### FIRST VIOLIN

David Coucheron  
Concertmaster  
*The Mr. and Mrs. Howard R. Peevy Chair*  
Justin Bruns  
Associate Concertmaster  
*The Charles Mackenzie Taylor Chair*  
Vacant  
Assistant Concertmaster  
Jun-Ching Lin  
Assistant Concertmaster  
Anastasia Agapova  
Acting Assistant Concertmaster  
Kevin Chen  
Carolyn Toll Hancock  
*The Wells Fargo Chair*  
John Meisner  
Christopher Pulgram  
Juan R. Ramirez Hernández  
Olga Shpitko  
Kenn Wagner  
Lisa Wiedman Yancich  
Sisi Yuqing Zhang

### SECTION VIOLIN ‡

Judith Cox  
Raymond Leung  
*The Carolyn McClatchey Chair*  
Sanford Salzinger

### SECOND VIOLIN

Vacant  
Principal  
*The Atlanta Symphony Associates Chair*  
Sou-Chun Su  
Acting/Associate Principal  
*The Frances Cheney Boggs Chair*  
Jay Christy  
Acting Associate/Assistant Principal  
Dae Hee Ahn  
Robert Anemone  
Noriko Konno Clift  
David Dillard  
Eun Young Jung  
Eleanor Kasek  
Yaxin Tan  
Rachel Ostler

### VIOLA

Zhenwei Shi  
Principal  
*The Edus H. and Harriet H. Warren Chair*  
Paul Murphy  
Associate Principal  
*The Mary and Lawrence Gellerstedt Chair*

Catherine Lynn  
Assistant Principal  
Marian Kent  
Yang-Yoon Kim  
Yiyin Li  
Lachlan McBane  
Jessica Dudin  
Madeline Sharp

### CELO

Vacant  
Principal  
*The Miriam and John Conant Chair*  
Daniel Laufer  
Acting/Associate Principal  
*The Livingston Foundation Chair*  
Karen Freer  
Acting Associate/Assistant Principal  
Thomas Carpenter  
Joel Dalgow  
*The UPS Foundation Chair*  
Ray Kim  
Isabel Kwon  
Nathan Mo  
Brad Ritchie  
Denielle Wilson

### BASS

Joseph McFadden  
Principal  
*The Marcia and John Donnell Chair*  
Gloria Jones Allgood  
Associate Principal  
*The Lucy R. & Gary Lee Jr. Chair*  
Karl Fenner  
Michael Kenady  
*The Jane Little Chair*  
Michael Kurth  
Nicholas Scholefield  
Daniel Tosky

### FLUTE

Christina Smith  
Principal  
*The Jill Hertz Chair*  
*The Mabel Dorn Reeder Honorary Chair*  
Robert Cronin  
Associate Principal  
C. Todd Skitch  
Gina Hughes

### PICCOLO

Gina Hughes

### OBOE

Elizabeth Koch Tiscione  
Principal  
*The George M. and Carrie Hoyt Brown Chair*

Zachary Boeding  
Associate Principal  
*The Kendeda Fund Chair*  
Samuel Nemeč\*  
Jonathan Gentry  
Emily Brebach

### ENGLISH HORN

Emily Brebach

### CLARINET

Jesse McCandless  
Principal  
*The Robert Shaw Chair*  
Ted Gurch\*  
Associate Principal  
Marcy Gurnow  
Acting/Associate Principal  
Alcides Rodriguez

### E-FLAT CLARINET

Ted Gurch\*

### BASS CLARINET

Alcides Rodriguez

### BASSOON

Vacant  
Principal  
*The Abraham J. & Phyllis Katz Foundation Chair*  
Anthony Georgeson  
Acting/Associate Principal  
Laura Najarian  
Juan de Gomar

### CONTRA-BASSOON

Juan de Gomar

### HORN

Ryan Little  
Principal  
*The Betty Sands Fuller Chair*  
Jack Bryant  
Kimberly Gilman  
Bruce Kenney

### TRUMPET

Vacant  
Principal  
*The Madeline and Howell Adams Chair*  
Michael Tiscione  
Acting/Associate Principal  
Anthony Limoncelli\*  
Mark Maliniak  
William Cooper

### TROMBONE

Vacant  
Principal  
*The Jarence L. Neal Chair, Honoring his dedication and service to the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra*  
Nathan Zgonc  
Acting/Associate Principal  
*The Home Depot Veterans Chair*  
Jason Patrick Robins

### BASS TROMBONE

Chance Gompert  
Jordan Milek Johnson  
Fellow

### TUBA

Michael Moore  
Principal  
*The Delta Air Lines Chair*  
Joshua Williams  
Fellow  
*Zeist Foundation ASO Fellowship Chair*

### TIMPANI

Mark Yancich  
Principal  
*The Walter H. Bunzl Chair*  
Michael Stubbart  
Assistant Principal

### PERCUSSION

Joseph Petrasek  
Principal  
*The Julie and Arthur Montgomery Chair*  
Michael Jarrett  
Assistant Principal  
*The William A. Schwartz Chair*  
Michael Stubbart  
*The Connie and Merrell Calhoun Chair*

### HARP

Elisabeth Remy Johnson  
Principal  
*The Sally and Carl Gable Chair*

### KEYBOARD

*The Hugh and Jessie Hodgson Memorial Chair*  
Peter Marshall †  
Sharon Berenson †

### LIBRARY

Joshua Luty  
Principal  
*The Marianna & Solon Patterson Chair*  
Sara Baguyos  
Assistant Principal Librarian

Players in string sections are listed alphabetically

‡ Rotate between sections \* Leave of absence † Regularly engaged musician