

HARMONIA

ORCHESTRA & CHORUS



2024–2025 SEASON

PINNACLES

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WELCOME TO THE 2024–2025 SEASON OF HARMONIA!

Join Harmonia as we scale the peaks of the choral and orchestral repertoire, tackling some of the most inspiring, challenging and beloved music written over the last 300 years. From stone-cold classics (Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra and Beethoven's seventh symphony) to lesser-known delights (Handel's *Dixit Dominus* and Mendelssohn's *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*) to the uncontested Everest that is Bach's Mass in B minor, this is a season that ascends to high altitude and dances at the top of the world.

PHOTO: John Cornicello



WILLIAM WHITE
Music Director

The 2024–2025 season marks William White's seventh as Harmonia's music director. Maestro White is a conductor, composer, teacher, writer and performer whose musical career has spanned genres and crossed disciplines. For four seasons (2011–2015) he served as assistant conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, working closely with music director Louis Langrée and an array of guest artists, including John Adams, Philip Glass, Jennifer Higdon, Itzhak Perlman and James Conlon. A noted pedagogue, he has led some of the nation's finest youth orchestra programs, including Portland's Metropolitan Youth Symphony and the Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Mr. White has long-standing associations with a number of musical organizations, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Pierre Monteux School for Conductors and the Interlochen Academy.

In addition, Mr. White maintains a significant career as a composer of music for the concert stage, theater, cinema, church, radio and film. His music—which includes a symphony, an oratorio, chamber music of all varieties, and several works intended for young audiences—has been performed throughout North America as well as in Asia and Europe. Several of his works have been recorded on the MSR Classics, Cedille and Parma record labels. Recordings of his music can be heard at www.willcwhite.com, where he also maintains a blog and publishing business.

Mr. White earned a master's degree in conducting from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music, studying symphonic and operatic repertoire with David Effron and Arthur Fagan. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of Chicago, where his principal teachers were composer Easley Blackwood and conductor Barbara Schubert. In 2004, he began attending the Pierre Monteux School for Conductors under the tutelage of Michael Jinbo, later serving as the school's conducting associate, and then as its composer-in-residence.

Hailing from Bethesda, Maryland, Mr. White began his musical training as a violist. (You can keep any jokes to yourself.) He is active as a clinician, arranger and guest conductor, particularly of his own works. Mr. White is editor of *Tone Prose*, a weekly Substack newsletter about the ever-changing world of classical music. From 2020 to 2022, he produced and co-hosted a podcast, *The Classical Gabfest*, and he has dabbled in the world of educational YouTube videos with *Ask a Maestro*.

On May 3, 2018, William White was named the third music director of Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers, now known as Harmonia.

Salvation

Saturday, October 5, 2024 • 7:30 p.m.

Shorecrest Performing Arts Center

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

William White, conductor



GRAŻYNA BACEWICZ (1909–1969)

Overture

Allegro — Andante — Allegro energico

SAMUEL BARBER (1910–1981)

Prayers of Kierkegaard, Op. 30

Grave and remote — *Moderato* —

Andante con moto tranquillo — *Un poco mosso* — Gradually increasing in intensity —

Allegro molto — Frenzied —

Quietly — Broad and straightforward

Cassandra Willock, soprano

Karen Dunstan, soprano

Lyon Stewart, tenor

— intermission —

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881–1945)

Concerto for Orchestra, Sz. 116

Introduzione: *Andante non troppo* — *Allegro vivace*

Giuoco delle coppie: *Allegro scherzando*

Elegia: *Andante non troppo*

Intermezzo interrotto: *Allegretto*

Finale: *Presto*

Please silence cell phones and other electronics, and refrain from the use of cameras and recording devices during the performance.

Harmonia wishes to thank Marc McCartney and the Shorecrest Performing Arts Center team for their assistance this evening.

Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus

William White, music director • George Shangrow, founder

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Maestro's Prelude

Dear Listener,

I bid you welcome and salutation to the first concert of Harmonia's 2024–2025 season! With every one of our "Pinnacles" performances, we will scale a new musical height. I am so glad that you have joined us on our first expedition.

Tonight's program, "Salvation," presents three works, each of which was a lifeline of sorts for its composer. Two were written in the midst of the second world war: Grażyna Bacewicz's Overture and Béla Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra, both from 1943. Bartók was a fervent opponent of the Nazi regime, and had emigrated from Europe to the U.S. in 1940, but he wrestled with homesickness and serious illness (leukemia) during the entirety of his life in America. Feeling abandoned and unsuccessful—and spending increasing amounts of time in the hospital—he was nearly ready to give up on music and on life itself until his friend and fellow émigré, Serge Koussevitzky, asked him to write a major piece for orchestra. The resulting Concerto has become his most popular work, and it is as joyous and life-affirming a composition as he ever wrote.

Grażyna Bacewicz found herself in rather the opposite position during the war, unable to escape her native Poland. She made the best of a bad situation, producing underground concerts in Warsaw to raise money for the resistance. During the Warsaw uprising, she was able to escape the city with her newborn daughter and save all of her music—apart from her Overture, which she later managed to reconstruct. Salvation, indeed.

The choral work on tonight's program, one of the lesser-known efforts of Samuel Barber, was commissioned by Koussevitzky a year before Bartók's Concerto, but took a decade to come to fruition. In setting words of the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, Barber wrestles with the idea of the salvation of the human soul itself. This piece has interested me for several years, and I am so glad that I've finally found the perfect context in which to present it: a "Three B's" concert quite unlike any other.

If you're anything like me, you have probably found your own salvation through music at points during your life, and perhaps this concert will offer you comfort in some way tonight. This is not easy-listening music, but it does make for a compelling listening experience. The dramatic arcs in these works are beset with thickets and thorns, but that's what makes their conclusions all the more satisfying.

Finally, let me just say that this concert offers little in the way of salvation for the musicians on stage—all three of these pieces are quite challenging! But without great ambition there can be no great achievement, and that's what this season is all about. So, once again, thanks for being part of a "pinnacle performance" and we look forward to seeing you as we scale our next peak.



Solo Artists

Soprano **Cassandra Willock** has performed a number of operatic roles, appeared as featured soloist on the concert stage, and toured elementary schools in the Pacific Northwest as Pamina/2nd Lady in NOISE's outreach production of *The Magic Flute*. Other notable roles include Angelica from Handel's *Orlando*, Fiordiligi, the Countess and Rose Maurrant. She is currently a staff singer in the music program at Blessed Sacrament Church and is a student of Cynthia Sieden, with whom she studied as an undergraduate at Pacific Lutheran University before obtaining a Master's of Music in Voice and Opera Performance from McGill University, where she studied with Dominique Labelle.

Soprano **Karen Dunstan**, a native of Ypsilanti, Michigan, holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music and in 2023 completed a Master of Music in Vocal Performance at the University of Washington. She has performed in many opera productions, including *La bohème*, *Dido and Aeneas* and *L'Elisir d'Amore*, as well as the role of Grimgerde in the "Flight of the Valkyries" scene from *Die Walküre*.

Tenor **Charles Lyon Stewart** hails from Washington, DC, where he began singing with the Washington National Cathedral Choir at age 9 and made his solo debut with the National Symphony in the annunciation scene of Handel's *Messiah* at age 13. He holds a Bachelor of Music in vocal performance from Indiana University and is a cardiothoracic intensive care nurse enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice program at the University of Washington.

Program Notes

Grażyna Bacewicz Overture

Bacewicz was born February 5, 1909, in Łódź, Poland, and died in Warsaw on January 17, 1969. She composed this work in 1943. Mieczysław Mierzejewski conducted the Kraków Philharmonic in the world premiere at the Kraków Festival of Contemporary Music on September 1, 1945. The score calls for pairs of woodwinds (plus piccolo and bass clarinet), 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings.

Grażyna Bacewicz began studying violin and piano with her father, before enrolling at age 10 in a conservatory in her hometown of Łódź. In 1923, she moved with her family to Warsaw and eventually took up studies at the Warsaw Conservatory, from which she earned diplomas in violin and composition in 1932. A grant then allowed her to study with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, where she produced a prize-winning wind quintet. Between 1936 and 1938, Bacewicz served as concertmaster of the Polish National Radio Symphony in Warsaw and toured Europe as a recitalist. After the onset of World War II, she performed concerts in secret and continued to compose until the destruction of the city by the Nazis in 1944 forced her to flee to Lublin (about 170 km southeast of Warsaw). Following the war, she became a professor of composition in Łódź and gradually gave up performing in favor of composing music.

Bacewicz's catalog contains an impressive number of chamber and symphonic works, many featuring the violin (including seven concertos for the instrument), but for decades her music remained largely unknown outside of her native Poland. Recently, long-overdue interest in the music of female composers has sparked recording projects as well as numerous performances of her first work for full orchestra — an overture dating from 1943 — that has vaulted from obscurity to prominent concert presentations by many of America's leading orchestras, as well as multiple recordings by European ensembles.

The overture betrays little of the dire circumstances faced by the composer and her fellow Warsaw residents during the time of its composition. Instead, it overflows with life-affirming optimism, more likely reflecting the mood at the time of its premiere just months after V-E Day.

Samuel Barber
Prayers of Kierkegaard, Op. 30

Samuel Osmond Barber II was born March 9, 1910, in West Chester, Pennsylvania, and died January 23, 1981, in New York. He began this work in the summer of 1953, completing it in January of the following year. Charles Munch conducted the Boston Symphony and the Cecilia Society Chorus in the premiere on December 3, 1954. In addition to solo soprano (plus incidental tenor and alto solos) and chorus, the score calls for pairs of woodwinds (plus piccolo, English horn and bass clarinet), 4 horns, trumpets, trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano and strings.

During his quarter century helming the Boston Symphony, Serge Koussevitzky was responsible for commissioning a number of 20th-century masterpieces, many of them resulting from grants by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, established in 1942 in conjunction with the Library of Congress. The first round of Foundation commissions resulted in Benjamin Britten's opera *Peter Grimes* and Bohuslav Martinů's Symphony No. 1, both premiered within three years, as well as Samuel Barber's *Prayers of Kierkegaard*, which had a much longer gestation.

At age 14, Samuel Barber was the second student

through the door at the newly opened Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. The precocious young musician had some years earlier served notice to his mother that he "was not meant to be an athlet[e]. I was meant to be a composer and will be I'm sure." At Curtis he studied piano, voice, composition and theory. His compositions at Curtis leaned heavily on chamber music, including a serenade for string quartet (his Op. 1), *Dover Beach* for baritone and string quartet, and a cello sonata, but during a 1931 visit to Italy he began writing his first published orchestral work, the Overture to *A School for Scandal*, which would attain great popularity. He won the Prix de Rome in 1935, resulting in his Symphony No. 1. A November 5, 1938, broadcast performance by Arturo Toscanini of Barber's *Adagio* for Strings and first Essay for Orchestra brought widespread recognition and his first major commission: a violin concerto.

During a visit to Rome in December 1950, Barber attended a midnight service at "St. Anselmo, on the Aventine, a plain, cold little church where a choir of 60 Benedictine monks sang a Gregorian Mass to a few onlookers. The simplicity and sincere style with which they sang this overwhelming music warmed all the corners of my heart." Barber would return to this church upon future visits to Rome, calling the Gregorian chant "the only religious music possible" and taking notes as he "began to be able to distinguish the different modes of the chants and the tremendous variety which one does not perceive at first; and I never missed a day and several times went twice a day." By May 1953 his infatuation with Gregorian chant inspired him to turn to the long-overdue Koussevitzky commission.

Barber selected texts for his new work from the writings of Danish theologian Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) found in *Journals, The Unchangeableness of God and Christian Discourses*. "For Barber, who was by most accounts not conventionally religious," wrote Phillip Ramey in the New York Philharmonic program book, "perhaps the unorthodox, sometimes puzzling writings of Kierkegaard, with their emphasis on self-awareness and self-determination, were attractive as an intellectual approach to belief."

O Thou Who are unchangeable,
Whom nothing changes,
May we find our rest
And remain at rest
in Thee unchanging.
Thou art moved
and moved in infinite love by all things;
the need of a sparrow,
 even this moves Thee;
and what we scarcely see,
a human sigh,
the moves Thee, O infinite Love!
But nothing changes Thee,
 O Thou unchanging!

Lord Jesus Christ
Who suffered all life long
that I, too, might be saved,

and Whose suffering still knows no end,
this, too, wilt Thou endure;
saving and redeeming me,
this patient suffering of me
with whom Thou hast to do —
I, who so often go astray.

Father in Heaven,
well we know that it is Thou
that givest both to will and to do,
that also longing,
when it leads us to renew
the fellowship with our
 Savior and Redeemer,
is from Thee.
Father in Heaven, longing is Thy gift.
But when longing lays hold of us,
oh, that we might lay hold of the longing!

when it would carry us away, that we also
might give ourselves up!
when Thou art near to summon us,
that we also in prayer might stay near Thee!
When Thou in the longing
dost offer us the highest good, oh, that we
might hold it fast!

Father in Heaven,
Hold not our sins up against us
But hold us up against our sins,
So that the thought of Thee
 should not remind us
Of what we have committed,
But of what Thou didst forgive;
Not how we went astray,
But how Thou didst save us!

— Søren Kierkegaard

Prayers of Kierkegaard falls into four major sections, played without pause, opening with the tenors and basses of the chorus evoking the monks of St. Anselmo in melodic material that will reappear throughout the work. The orchestra enters quietly, building to a full-throated oration ("But nothing changes Thee!") from the entire chorus. In the second episode, an oboe introduces the solo soprano ("Lord Jesus Christ"), followed by a return of the chorus ("Father in Heaven") and then a new melody that seems to flirt with twelve-tone writing, building in waves to a declamatory climax. A "frenzied" orchestral march ensues, followed by a "broad and straightforward" chorale.

Reviewing a Carnegie Hall performance that followed the Boston premiere, *The New York Times* called *Prayers of Kierkegaard* "a work of imposing dimensions and grand and serious line. . . . The instrumentation is intensely dramatic. The final chorale is not more an imitation of Lutheran form any more than the choral recitative comes from the Catholic direction. Universality is the suggestion."

Béla Bartók

Concerto for Orchestra, Sz. 116

Bartók was born March 25, 1881, in Nagyszentmiklos, Austria-Hungary (now Romania), and died in New York City on September 26, 1945. He composed this work between August 15 and October 8, 1943. Serge Koussevitzky conducted the Boston Symphony in the premiere on December 1, 1944. The score calls for triple woodwinds (including piccolo, English horn, bass clarinet and contrabassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, tam-tam, triangle), 2 harps and strings.

Béla Bartók and his wife Ditta arrived in New York in October 1940, having fled their native Hungary due to the war in Europe. They had hoped to earn income playing duo-piano concerts, but audiences and critics did not warm to Bartók's unfamiliar music, so within a year their concert engagements dwindled considerably. Columbia University awarded the composer an honorary doctorate and offered him a part-time job as a musicologist, but the position was tenuous — in fact, the university's funds ran out and only through the covert intervention of some of Bartók's friends did his meager salary continue to be paid. Bartók stopped composing and his health was failing: his weight dropped to a mere 87 pounds, the result of previously undiagnosed leukemia. Confined to a hospital, his medical bills would have gone unpaid had ASCAP not stepped in to help.

Hoping to bolster the composer's spirits and provide him a bit of income, two of Bartók's fellow countrymen — violinist Joseph Szigeti and conductor Fritz Reiner — arranged (in secret) for the Koussevitzky Foundation to commission an orchestral work. Boston Symphony Orchestra music director Serge Koussevitzky visited Bartók in his hospital room to deliver a check for half of the amount up front — a mere \$500. Reluctantly, Bartók accepted, unsure that he could find the strength to compose music once again.

The commission did wonders for the composer's spirits, however, and his health improved enough for him to

spend the summer of 1943 at New York's Saranac Lake, where he was able to complete the work. The first performance took place just over a year later, on December 1, 1944, with Koussevitzky conducting the Boston Symphony. Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra achieved instant acclaim, sparking a renewed interest in the composer and his music. Although new commissions flooded in, Bartók was only able to complete a third piano concerto and (most of) a viola concerto before succumbing to his illness in September 1945. At the time of the work's premiere, Koussevitzky told Bartók that his Concerto for Orchestra was "the best orchestral piece of the last 25 years." It now stands as one of the undisputed masterpieces of 20th-century music, a rare combination of musical substance, immediate accessibility and bravura showmanship.

Bartók was not the first to title a work "Concerto for Orchestra," a modern reimagining of the Baroque concerto grosso form. Paul Hindemith, Walter Piston and Zoltán Kodály had written such pieces in the 1920s and '30s, and notable compositions by Michael Tippett, Elliott Carter and Roger Sessions (among others) have followed. Yet only Witold Lutosławski's 1954 Concerto for Orchestra has achieved even a fraction of the fame of Bartók's.

For the 1944 BSO premiere, Bartók wrote: "The general mood of the work represents, apart from the jesting second movement, a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death song of the third to the life assertion of the last one.

"The title of this symphony-like orchestral work is explained by its tendency to treat single instruments or instrumental groups in a concertante or soloistic way. The 'virtuoso' treatment appears, for instance, in the fugato sections of the development of the first movement (brass instruments) or in the *perpetuum mobile*-like passage of the principal theme in the last movement (strings), and, especially, in the second movement, in which pairs of instruments consecutively appear with brilliant passages.

"As for the structure . . . the first and fifth movements are written in a more or less regular sonata form. The development of the first fugato contains sections for brass; the exposition in the finale is somewhat extended, and its development consists of a fugue built on the last theme of the exposition. Less traditional forms are found in the second and third movements. The main part of the second movement consists of a chain of independent short sections; I used here wind instruments, which are consecutively introduced in five pairs (bassoons, oboes, clarinets, flutes, muted trumpets). . . . A kind of trio — a short chorale for brass instruments and side drum — follows, after which the five sections are repeated in a more elaborate instrumentation.

"The structure of the third movement is also chain-like; three themes appear successively. These constitute the core of the movement, which is enframed by a hazy texture of rudimentary motifs. Most of the thematic material of the movement derives from the introduction of the first movement. The form of the fourth movement — *Intermezzo interrotto* — could be rendered by the letter symbols A–B–A–

Interruption–B–A.” The fourth movement’s “interruption” is a burlesque treatment of the endlessly repeated theme from the opening movement of Dmitri Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 7, which Bartók heard on the radio at the time we was composing his Concerto for Orchestra. Writers have often claimed that Bartók found the Shostakovich work banal and was thus parodying it, but Bartók’s son Peter later insisted that the melody had reminded his father of a Viennese cabaret tune, and it was this cabaret song to which Bartók referred.

The overall shape of the work is palindromic, the large-scale outer movements bookending the more lighthearted second and fourth movements, which themselves surround the highly atmospheric central slow movement. Just as Bartók builds the third movement out of musical material

from the slow, quiet opening of the first, other such allusions and cross-references abound throughout the Concerto.

The finale opens with a declamatory horn statement marked by an opening octave leap. Scurrying string passages then quicken the tempo, interrupted by Hungarian dance tunes, until bassoons attempt to begin a fugue based on the opening horn motive. Instead, a tranquil woodwind interlude ensues, leading to another energetic string passage over which trumpets introduce a heroic new theme, which horns then play in inverted form; this melody undergoes a fugato development, building to a slightly slower fugal section initially dominated by strings. Material from the opening of the movement then returns, ushering the work to its thrilling conclusion.

—Jeff Eldridge

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Harmonia, a non-profit 501(c)3 arts organization, thanks all of the supporters who have made our first 55 years possible. The above list includes tax-deductible gifts received from August 1, 2023, through September 26, 2024. Please e-mail giving@harmoniaSeattle.org if you notice omissions or inaccuracies. Contributions are fully tax-deductible. To make a donation, please visit [harmoniaSeattle.org/support](https://www.harmoniaSeattle.org/support) or call 206-682-5208.



About Harmonia

Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus is a vocal-instrumental ensemble unique among Pacific Northwest musical organizations, combining a 75-member orchestra with a 55-voice chorus to perform oratorio masterworks alongside symphonic and a *cappella* repertoire, world premieres and chamber music.

Founded by George Shangrow in 1969 as the Seattle Chamber Singers, from its inception the group performed a diverse array of music—works of the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods to contemporary pieces and world premieres—accompanied by an ad hoc group of instrumentalists for Bach cantatas and Handel oratorios (many of which received their first Seattle performances at SCS concerts). Over the past five decades, the ensemble has performed all of the greatest choral-orchestral masterpieces, from Beethoven's Ninth and *Missa Solemnis* to Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* to Brahms' *German Requiem*, and Haydn's *The Seasons* to Britten's *War Requiem*. Meanwhile, the orchestra, partnering with world-class soloists, has explored the symphonic repertoire, programming beloved warhorses alongside seldom-performed gems.

After George Shangrow lost his life in a car crash in 2010, the volunteer performers of Harmonia partnered with a number of distinguished guest conductors to carry on the astounding musical legacy he had created. Clinton Smith served as the ensemble's second music director, a period that saw musical growth, new partnerships and increased engagement in the community.

Support Harmonia

As with any performing-arts organization, ticket proceeds provide only a fraction of our operating costs. In order to continue our mission of bringing great music to Seattle-area audiences, we depend on financial support from individuals, foundations and corporations. Every gift, no matter what size, enables us to perform more music and reach more people. Donors are acknowledged in our concert programs (unless they prefer to remain anonymous) and receive special benefits, including invitations to exclusive events.

Harmonia accepts gifts in many forms beyond one-time cash donations, including **financial instruments** such as stocks, properties and annuities. We also encourage donors to consider a recurring monthly contribution as part of our **Ostinato Giving Program**. Our planned-giving program, the **George Shangrow Society**, is named in honor of our founder, and accepts gifts in wills, trusts or beneficiary designations. And our **Commissioning Club** sponsors the creation of new works, including some you will hear this season.

To contribute, visit harmoniasattle.org/support or visit the lobby during intermission or after the concert.

Land Acknowledgement

Harmonia acknowledges that our performances take place on Indigenous land: the traditional territory of Coast Salish peoples, specifically the dx̣w̓dəw̓ʔabš (Duwamish), "The People of the Inside." Harmonia is proud to participate in the Duwamish Real Rent program. (Visit realrentduwamish.org for more information.)

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SALVATION

Saturday * October 5, 2024 * 7:30 P.M.

Shorecrest Performing Arts Center • Shoreline

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Cassandra Willock *soprano*

Béla Bartók composed his final masterpiece in poor health, yet he produced a work of striking power that calls upon every musician to display virtuoso talents. The Harmonia Chorus takes the lead in Samuel Barber's *Prayers of Kierkegaard*, which draws on choral traditions from several styles and centuries. Grażyna Bacewicz's exultant overture, composed in 1943 amid the terrors of WWII, opens the program.

Grażyna Bacewicz Overture

Samuel Barber *Prayers of Kierkegaard*

Béla Bartók Concerto for Orchestra

MAJESTY

Saturday * November 9, 2024 * 7:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

This program of beloved favorites presents two aspects of Handel's art—the majestic and the groovy—side by side, followed by Beethoven's Seventh, a work in which he captured the majesty and the grooviness of his favorite composer (Handel) in a symphony so compelling that it draws its listeners along as if they were reading a page-turning novel.

George Frideric Handel *Zadok the Priest*

George Frideric Handel *Dixit Dominus*

Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No. 7

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * November 23, 2024 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

MESSIAH

Saturday * December 14, 2024 * 2:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Sunday * December 15, 2024 * 2:30 P.M.

Bastyr University Chapel • Kenmore

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Ellaina Lewis *soprano* **Soon Cho** *mezzo-soprano*

Andrew Etherington *tenor* **José Rubio** *baritone*

Handel's *Messiah* is a revered institution—in Harmonia's hands, it's a party. Dueling harpsichords, vocal theatrics and a maximalist approach to every bar have set Harmonia's interpretation of this score apart for so many years. You won't hear a *Messiah* with such dash and flair anywhere else.

Handel *Messiah*

INNOCENCE

Saturday * February 8, 2025 * 7:30 P.M.

Northshore Concert Hall • Kenmore

Harmonia Orchestra

Katherine Goforth *tenor*

Gustav Mahler was so enchanted by *The Boy's Magic Horn*, a collection of Romantic German folk poems, that he set 14 of them for voice and orchestra. The innocence of childhood in these songs stands in contrast to the innocence of a guileless artist, Dmitri Shostakovich, whose symphonies were deeply influenced by those of Mahler. Shostakovich's multi-layered fifth symphony served as a form of atonement to the Soviet government, which had found him guilty of artistic sins.

Carl Maria von Weber Overture to *Oberon*

Gustav Mahler selections from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*

Dmitri Shostakovich Symphony No. 5

INVENTION

Saturday * March 1, 2025 * 7:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Chorus

This program displays our vocal artists at the pinnacle of their versatility. Our concert explores several strains of contemporary choral composition, most notably with world premieres from two of our own musicians.

Johann Sebastian Bach/arr. Swingle Invention in C Major

Morten Lauridsen "Quando son più lontan" from *Madrigali*

Eric Whitacre *Leonardo Dreams of His Flying Machine*

Marques Garrett *The Lesson*

R. Nathaniel Dett *O Holy Lord*

Ken Burton *A Prayer*

Carol Sams "Stone" from *The Earthmakers*

Sheila Bristow *At harbor, waiting for wind* **WORLD PREMIERE**

Aaron Key *Nizina* **WORLD PREMIERE**

Johann Sebastian Bach "Confiteor" from Mass in B minor

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * March 8, 2025 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

MASS IN B MINOR

Saturday * March 29, 2025 * 7:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Arwen Myers *soprano*

Brendan Tuohy *tenor*

Clarice Alfonso *soprano*

Sarah Larkworthy *mezzo-soprano*

Zachary Lenox *baritone*

In his final completed work, Bach left not only a masterpiece but also a mystery: to this day, nobody knows for certain why this most devout Lutheran composer composed a gargantuan setting of the Roman Catholic mass as his dying statement. Whatever the reason, Bach's B-minor mass now stands as one of the uncontested peaks of the oratorio repertoire, a masterpiece that must be experienced live to be fully appreciated.

Johann Sebastian Bach Mass in B minor, BWV 232

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * April 19, 2025 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

SPRING RITES

Saturday * May 3, 2025 * 7:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Carson Ling-Efird *cello*

Die Erste Walpurgisnacht tells the story of a band of pagan druids who are beset upon by Christian invaders and—unlike in any other Romantic oratorio—the pagans win! Druids were in the air in 1831: they were also the subject of Bellini's great dramatic opera *Norma*. The centerpiece of our concert is Robert Schumann's cello concerto, performed by a phenomenal young soloist: Seattle native Carson Ling-Efird, who joins Harmonia on a break from her studies at the Curtis Institute of Music.

Vincenzo Bellini Overture to *Norma*

Robert Schumann Cello Concerto

Felix Mendelssohn *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*

GALA: AMADE-ISH

Friday * May 30, 2025

Brockey Center at South Seattle College