

HARMONIA

ORCHESTRA & CHORUS



2025–2026 SEASON

TESTAMENTS

HARMONIASEATTLE.ORG

WELCOME TO THE 2025–2026 SEASON OF HARMONIA!

Join us as we delve into the artistic testaments of history's most original composers. In works as varied as Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, Antonín Dvořák's *Te Deum* and George Frideric Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, we will explore these musical statements on life's grandest themes—from love to death to the universe itself.

PHOTO: John Cantello



WILLIAM WHITE
Music Director

The 2025–2026 season marks William White's eighth 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 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 and Itzhak Perlman. 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.

Maestro White maintains a significant career as a composer of music for the concert stage, theater, cinema, church, radio and film. His compositions—including major choral-orchestral works written specifically for Harmonia—have been performed throughout North America, as well as in Asia and Europe, and several have been released 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.

William 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, Maestro 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. He also serves as artistic director of the Sedona Symphony in Sedona, Arizona.

Israel in Egypt

Saturday, March 28, 2026 • 2:30 p.m.

First Free Methodist Church

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

William White, conductor and harpsichord



GEORG FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)

Israel in Egypt, HWV 54

Exodus

Recitative: "Now there arose a new king"⁷

Solo and Chorus: "And the children of Israel"⁵

Recitative: "Then sent he Moses"⁷

Chorus: "They loathed to drink of the river"

Air: "Their land brought forth frogs"⁵

Chorus: "He spake the word"

Chorus: "He gave them hailstones for rain"

Chorus: "He sent a thick darkness"

Chorus: "He smote all the first-born"

Chorus: "But as for his people"

Chorus: "Egypt was glad when they departed"

Chorus: "He rebuked the Red Sea"

Chorus: "He led them through the deep"

Chorus: "But the waters overwhelmed their enemies"

Chorus: "And Israel saw that great work"

Chorus: "And believed the Lord"

— intermission —

Moses' Song

Chorus: "Moses and the children of Israel"

Chorus: "I will sing unto the Lord"

Duet: "The Lord is my strength"^{1,2}

Chorus: "He is my God"

Chorus: "And I will exalt him"

Duet: "The Lord is a man of war"^{9,10}

Chorus: "The depths have covered them"

Chorus: "Thy right hand, O Lord"

Chorus: "And in the greatness of thine excellency"

Chorus: "Thou sentest forth thy wrath"

Chorus: "And with the blast of thy nostrils"

Air: "The enemy said, I will pursue"⁸

Air: "Thou didst blow with the wind"³

Chorus: "Who is like unto thee, O Lord"

Chorus: "The earth swallowed them"

Duet: "Thou in thy mercy"^{5,7}

Chorus: "The people shall hear"

Air: "Thou shalt bring them in"⁶

Chorus: "The Lord shall reign"

Recitative: "For the horse of Pharaoh"⁸

Chorus: "The Lord shall reign"

Recitative: "And Miriam the prophetess"⁸

Solo and Chorus: "Sing ye to the Lord"⁴

¹Kyla Roberts, soprano • ²Jennylynn Vidas, soprano • ³Cassandra Willock, soprano

⁴Alivia Jones, soprano • ⁵Anjali Chudasama, mezzo-soprano • ⁶Elyse Christensen, mezzo-soprano

⁷Lyon Stewart, tenor • ⁸Matt McLeod, tenor • ⁹Rabi Lahiri, baritone • ¹⁰Jeremy Pfister Schneider, bass

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

Refreshments will be available during intermission in the Fine Center.

Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus

William White, music director • George Shangrow, founder

1916 Pike Pl. Ste 12 #112, Seattle WA 98101 • 206-682-5208 • www.harmoniaseattle.org

Violin

Susan Beals
 Dean Drescher
 Jason Forman
 Jason Hershey
 Manchung Ho
 Mark Lutz
 Susan Ovens
 Jean Provine
 Stephen Provine**
 Janet Showalter*
 Kenna Smith-Shangrow
 June Spector

Viola

Colleen Chlastawa*
 Deborah Daoust
 Katherine McWilliams
 Stephanie Read

Cello

Max Lieblich
 Katie Sauter Messick
 Valerie Ross
 Matthew Wyant*

Bass

Jo Hansen
 Kevin McCarthy
 Steven Messick*

Oboe

Rebecca Salmon
 Margaret Siple*

Bassoon

Aaron Chang
 Jeff Eldridge*

Trumpet

Patrick Hunninghake*
 Janet Young

Trombone

John Griffin*
 Jon Kamrath
 Bruce Reed

Timpani

Dan Oie

Harpsichord

Sheila Bristow
 William White

Organ

Youngjin Joo

Theorbo

Daniel Frizzell

Soprano

Barb Anderson
 Ann Bridges
 Karen Dunstan
 Susanna Erber
 Peggy Hudson
 Alivia Jones
 Peggy Kurtz §
 Elena Loomis
 Veena Ramakrishnan
 Kyla Roberts
 Nancy Shasteen
 Cassie Van Pay
 Jennylynn Vidas
 Cassandra Willock

Alto

Sharon Agnew
 Elyse Christensen
 Anjali Chudasama
 Jennifer Chung
 Deanna Fryhle
 Pamela Ivezić
 Ellen Kaisse
 Jan Kinney
 Theodora Letz §
 Laurie Medill
 Esther Ranjbar
 Pamela Silimperi

Tenor

Dan Charlson §
 Sixing Chen
 Aaron Giles
 Jonah Heinen
 Aaron Keyt
 Matt McLeod
 Nick Stevens
 Lyon Stewart

Bass

Andrew Jones
 Rabi Lahiri
 Charles Liu
 Jeremy Pfister Schneider
 Glenn Ramsdell
 Will Rivitz
 Gabe Salmon
 William Willaford §
 Rick Wyckoff

** *concertmaster*

* *principal*

§ *section leader*

Maestro's Prelude

Dear Music Lover,

If you've been a fan of Harmonia for years, you almost certainly know that our organization is renowned for performances of Handel's *Messiah*. But if you've been a fan for *decades*, then you'll know that in the group's early years, it was Handel's second-most-popular oratorio, *Israel in Egypt*, that formed the backbone of our repertoire.

The ensemble's founder, George Shangrow, led his first performance of *Israel in Egypt* at a concert on Monday(!) April 23, 1973, and followed it up the next year with a second performance on April 21. It appeared again in February 1976, October 1977, October 1980, October 1984 and May 1989. After an eight-year gap, Maestro Shangrow performed the work only two more times prior to his death in 2010: October 1997 and April 2002.

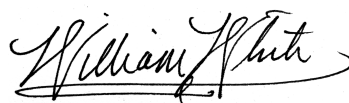
Harmonia has mounted one additional performance since then, in April 2015, conducted by George's longtime friend Roupén Shakarian (who sang in some of the early performances) and the only time the group presented the controversial three-part version. This afternoon we restore Maestro Shangrow's practice of staging the two parts that Handel himself presented after the work's premiere.

If you're keeping score, you'll have noted that today's performance is the group's 11th, which you might be surprised to learn outranks much more familiar fare such as Bach's *St. John Passion* (9) and Mass in B Minor (9), the Mozart Requiem (7) and Brahms' *German Requiem* (6).

This all raises the obvious question: why would a young George Shangrow (who was 19 when he founded the group) return time and again to such an obscure piece?

I never knew George myself, but I can guess at a couple of answers. First off, when George started tackling *Israel in Egypt*, the piece was not nearly as obscure as it is today; in the 19th century, the oratorio received nearly as many jumbo-wide festival performances as did *Messiah*. Secondly, it may have had to do with George's youth, because this piece is a romp through every musical jape that Handel can shake a stick at. Finally, it was just a really canny move on George's part—when you're trying to establish your reputation, it makes sense to define your group's identity with something off the beaten path.

Whatever the reason(s) may be, I am proud to continue this glorious tradition today, and I hope you will enjoy yourself very much.



P.S. The last time this group was performed *Israel in Egypt*, the concert directly adjacent to it featured Gustav Holst's *The Planets*. By sheer coincidence, the same is true this year, and so we hope that you will join us at Benaroya Hall on Friday, May 8 to hear that magnificent, colorful masterpiece, in the sonic splendor of our city's major concert venue.

Program Notes

George Frideric Handel *Israel in Egypt*, HWV 54

Handel was born in Halle, Germany, on February 23, 1685, and died in London on April 14, 1759. He composed the music heard this afternoon between October 1 and November 1, 1738. It received its first performance at the King's Theatre in London on April 4, 1739. In addition to double chorus and vocal soloists, the work employs 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, continuo and strings.

Georg Friedrich Händel, the son of a respected barber-surgeon and a clergyman's daughter, demonstrated an affinity for music from an early age, studying keyboard and composition with Friedrich Zachow in his hometown of Halle, about 35 km northwest of Leipzig in Saxony. The elder Händel died when Georg Friedrich was 11 and while the boy did matriculate at the University of Halle in 1702 (in accordance with his father's wishes that he study law), there is some question as to whether he actually attended any classes. Even though he was Lutheran, he served for a year as organist at the Calvinist Cathedral in Halle before moving to Hamburg, where he played second violin and harpsichord in the city's opera orchestra.

In Hamburg, Handel forged what would become life-long friendships with composers Georg Philipp Telemann and Johann Mattheson (in spite of a 1704 disagreement that led to Mattheson nearly killing Handel in a duel) and by 1705 had composed his first opera, *Almira, Königin von Castilien*, written (as was the fashion at the time) in the Italian style; three more (now mostly lost) quickly followed.

In the latter half of 1706 Handel headed to Italy (at the invitation of Prince Ferdinando de Medici, according to legend — if not fact), stopping in Florence and by the end of the year arriving in Rome. Unfortunately for Handel, who presumably sought to learn the art of Italian opera, an ongoing papal ban on staged performances forced him to instead compose liturgical music (including his *Dixit Dominus*, presented by Harmonia in November 2024) and at least 60 chamber cantatas during his visits to the Eternal City. He did, however, produce two operas during his years in Italy: *Rodrigo* debuted in Florence in October 1707, and *Agrippina* was a smash hit in Venice in January 1710, the Venetians hailing *il caro Sassone* ("the beloved Saxon").

Upon his return to Germany, Handel made a stop at the court of Georg Ludwig, Elector of Hanover, whose mother, Sophia, wrote about "the music of a Saxon who surpasses everyone who has ever been heard in harpsichord-playing and composition." The elector was similarly impressed and within 10 days had hired Handel as his Kapellmeister.

Sophia, it so happened, was a granddaughter of James I of England and 56th in line to the British throne, currently occupied by her first cousin, Queen Anne. But the 55 men and women ahead of Sophia were Catholic, so the British Act of Settlement of 1701 (which ensured a Protestant monarch) made her Anne's heir. Thus when Handel, upon gaining employment from Georg Ludwig, immediately requested

a year's leave of absence to visit London, the Elector of Hanover may have been motivated to acquiesce through a desire to curry favor there, or perhaps to have an employee who could report back on the goings-on at the court of Queen Anne.

In London, where Italian opera was just coming into vogue, Handel made a splash with several works that premiered at the Queen's Theatre on Haymarket Street. Between occasional trips back to Germany, he also composed an Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne and other works with political overtones (such as the *Utrecht Te Deum* and *Utrecht Jubilate*). Upon Anne's death on August 1, 1714, just weeks after the passing of her cousin Sophia, Georg Ludwig ascended to the British throne as King George I. The new monarch inherited the court composers of his predecessor, so Handel had no official position in spite of George I previously being his de facto employer, but he remained in London with the king's blessing and occasionally composed at his request, most notably the *Water Music* of 1717.

Over the next decade, Handel continued to produce highly successful operas for Haymarket. On February 20, 1727, the House of Lords passed legislation naturalizing the German composer and George I granted his assent, making Handel a British citizen. When George I died less than four months later, his son ascended to the throne as George II. Ordinarily, any new music for a coronation ceremony would have been the responsibility of the Organist and Composer of the Chapel Royal, but after that gentleman died, London newspapers reported in early September that "Mr Handel, the famous Composer to the opera, is appointed by the King to compose the Anthem at the Coronation which is to be sung in Westminster Abbey at the Grand Ceremony." Handel actually composed four anthems for the occasion, including *Zadok the Priest*, which has been featured at each subsequent coronation ceremony for a British monarch (including that of King Charles III in 2023).

From *Rinaldo* in 1711 to *Deidamia* in 1741, Handel composed some three dozen Italian-language operas for English audiences. A typical opera season extended from November to June, with Handel introducing one or two new operas each year, along with revivals of past successes and (beginning in 1734) the occasional *pasticcio* assembled from music of other composers. In 1733, Frederick, Prince of Wales (the future George III), helped establish the Opera of the Nobility, which competed with Handel's Royal Academy of Music (backed by Frederick's parents, King George II and Queen Caroline). Beginning with the 1734–1735 season, the Nobility Opera took up residence in the Haymarket, forcing Handel to move to Covent Garden. At the same time, Handel also began to face competition from English-language operas (by Thomas Arne and others) that appealed to a wider public. These circumstances helped spur Handel's transition to a brand-new genre: English-language oratorio.

Handel had composed a pair of oratorios (essentially unstaged operas, often on religious or mythological themes) during his time in Rome. Around 1718 he wrote a pair of English-language masques, *Esther* and *Acis and Galatea*,

while under the employ of the future Duke of Chandos. In 1732, a London troupe unaffiliated with Handel mounted a production of *Esther*, first privately and then at a public house. Anne, the Princess Royal, expressed her desire to attend a performance (at a more suitable venue), and so Handel himself presented a revised, unstaged version that ran for eight performances, garnering the composer much acclaim and an income of £4,000. Yet another company then did likewise with *Acis*, prompting Handel to present his own production of *that* work, featuring no stage action (not an artistic choice, but rather the result of a decree that forbade theatrical presentations of biblical tales).

The following season Handel premiered one Italian opera (*Orlando*) alongside two new English oratorios: *Deborah* (in London) and *Athalia* (in Oxford). Now considered a masterpiece, *Orlando* ran for 10 performances but failed to generate enough excitement to warrant a revival by Handel—it was not performed again until 1922. *Deborah*, on the other hand, with a double chorus and an expansive orchestra featuring trumpets and drums, fared better. Handel would continue to focus on opera for the next few years, but the commercial viability of oratorio had been established.

On April 13, 1737, Handel suffered some sort of stroke. A month later, the *London Evening Post* reported: “The ingenious Mr. Handell is very much indispos’d, and it’s thought with a Paraletick Disorder, he having at present no Use of his Right Hand, which, if he don’t regain, the public will be deprived of his fine Compositions.” Near the conclusion of a money-losing opera season, he traveled to the vapor-baths at Aix-la-Chapelle (now known as Aachen, Germany). Eventually restored to health, several months later he returned to London, where the opera season was already underway, and made plans to compose two operas and a *pasticcio*. Then, on November 20, the death of Queen Caroline closed theaters for a six-week period of mourning.

On December 7, the royal family commissioned a funeral ode from Handel, who produced *The Ways of Zion Do Mourn* in under a week. The work was premiered at the queen’s funeral in Westminster Abbey on December 17, after which Handel turned his attention to completing his two new operas, *Faramondo* and *Serse*.

The following summer, a dearth of subscriptions caused the cancellation of the 1738–1739 opera season. “But Handel had seen the warning signs in time,” writes Christopher Hogwood; “two days earlier he had started work on the oratorio *Saul*.” Working from a libretto prepared by Charles Jennens (who would later provide the text for *Messiah*), Handel spent two months writing the music, some of which was reworked from his earlier compositions and a decades-old *Te Deum* by the Italian composer Francesco Urio. Initially, he had planned to incorporate much of his Funeral Ode for Queen Caroline into Act III, but eventually composed new music for this episode.

Handel then launched into another biblical project: *Moses’ Song*, a choral anthem setting the text of Exodus 15, a song of praise to God for liberating the Israelites from the Pharaoh. The scope of the work soon expanded, with

Moses’ Song (which Handel completed in a mere two weeks) becoming the conclusion of a tripartite oratorio, *Israel in Egypt*. Handel finished the second section (*Exodus*, recounting the Ten Plagues of Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea) in another two weeks, and reworked his Funeral Ode for the first part as *Lamentations of the Israelites for the Death of Joseph*. (The librettist remains unknown, although the most likely candidate is Jennens.)

The Funeral Ode was not the only pre-existing material Handel employed in *Israel in Egypt*. In addition to the aforementioned *Urio Te Deum* that had found its way into *Saul*, he also drew upon large swaths of a serenata (*Qual prodigio è ch’io miri?*) by Alessandro Stradella and a *Magnificat* for double chorus by Dionigi Erba, which Handel had copied out during his Italian sojourn three decades prior. (Not to mention a pair of his own harpsichord fugues and still more works by other composers.)

Handel presented his first oratorio season at the King’s Theatre across 12 dates from January through April of 1739. The first of six performances of *Saul* took place on January 16. New presentations of the ode *Alexander’s Feast* and his 1707 Italian oratorio *Il trionfo del Tempo e della Verità* followed in February and March, respectively. Finally, on April 4, *Israel in Egypt* premiered.

The first audience to hear *Israel in Egypt* was shocked at the sheer number of choruses in the oratorio, perhaps expecting a succession of virtuosic arias, to which they had become accustomed in Handel’s operas. And a segment of the population was still uncomfortable with biblical texts in the theater, even without sets, costumes or stage action. Even the organ concertos that Handel interspersed throughout the work (he was a renowned virtuoso on the instrument) could not win over the opening-night crowd.

Handel replaced several choruses with arias sung by an Italian soprano for a second and final performance, which found at least one ardent supporter with the initials A.Z., who wrote a letter to the editor of the *Daily Post* praising the oratorio to no end. “I must beg leave, by your means, to convey not only my own, but the Desires of several others, that [Handel] will perform this again some time next Week.” Handel acquiesced, and on April 17 the Prince and Princess of Wales were in attendance for a third and final performance, which prompted another letter to the *Daily Post*, this time by one R.W., that further extolled the work’s virtues. On May 10, the (actual) final 1739 performance of *Israel in Egypt* took place under the auspices of the Academy of Ancient Music, but with only the first and third parts.

In hindsight, the Academy excised the wrong part. Eventually it was the first segment, with its rather tedious lamentations on the death of Joseph, that proved the least-popular element of *Israel in Egypt*. The definitive version now consists of the second and third parts only. “Nobody had written anything quite like *Israel in Egypt* before,” says Handel biographer Jonathan Keates, “and its singularity, both in form and expression, placed it beyond the intellectual grasp of Handel’s contemporaries, for whom he was seldom inclined to revive it.”

After writing his final two Italian operas, Handel composed at least one oratorio each year from 1742 (*Messiah*) through 1752 (*Jephtha*). Around this time, his eyesight began to fail and he produced little if any new music thereafter.

A Handel oratorio typically begins with an instrumental overture or grand chorus, but due to the omission of the Funeral Ode, *Israel in Egypt* now opens *in media res*, with a stage-setting tenor recitative (an expository recitation of text resembling speech by a solo singer with spare accompaniment, usually a harpsichord and single cello) leading directly to a solo alto, who begins a double chorus (“And the children of Israel sigh’d”) that juxtaposes lamenting phrases about the plight of the Israelites (listen for the sighing violin phrases in response to the word “sigh’d”) with more vigorous passages detailing their oppression.

Another tenor recitative leads to “They loathed to drink in the river,” the music for which comes from an A-minor keyboard fugue (HWV 609) that Handel composed around 1716. Although not a strict tone-row in the Schoenberg sense, the fugue subject incorporates all 12 pitches of the chromatic scale, its wide leaps and strange intervals mirroring the revulsion and queasiness of the Egyptians at the prospect of drinking blood-laden water.

Handel now begins a survey of the 10 plagues with the only aria in this part of the oratorio. A dotted-rhythm melody in the violins depict frogs leaping about as a solo alto describes the first three plagues. Frogs continue to jump in the strings as she mentions “blotches and blains.”

The lower choral voices, supported by trombones and woodwinds, intone “He spake the word,” then violins scurry about with racing thirty-second notes depicting “all manner of flies.” The vocal phrases get passed around the double chorus as lice and locusts descend, capped by a coda featuring oboes and bassoon.

Handel drew upon the opening sinfonia and a bass aria from the aforementioned Stradella serenata for the Hailstone Chorus, which begins quietly with a few isolated drops of precipitation but quickly evolves into a full-fledged downpour. Trumpets and timpani reinforce the exclamations of the double chorus.

The rather lighthearted tour through the first seven plagues takes a sudden turn with “He sent a thick darkness,” as the four-part chorus, in hushed tones, shifts through an ever-changing key center that evokes the sensation of wandering about in the dark.

Another of Handel’s early keyboard fugues (HWV 605, in G minor but here transposed to A minor) forms the basis for the dramatic double chorus recounting the smiting of the first-born Egypt, with percussive orchestral notes graphically depicting death blows.

The plagues now complete, Handel again utilizes an aria from the Stradella serenata as the basis for a gentle chorus describing the Israelites being brought forth “like sheep,” accompanied by pastoral strains from the orchestra, which glimmers for the mention of “silver and gold.” Bolder choral statements underline the lack of even “one feeble person among their tribes.”

Handel uses an organ canzona by German composer Johann Caspar Kerll (1627–1693) with little alteration for “Egypt was glad,” with Egyptians expressing relief, first in legato tones, the music becoming more vigorous as they recall the fear they experienced during the plagues.

The next sequence begins with a choral declamation about the parting of the Red Sea, which leads to a fugue taken from Handel’s early *Dixit Dominus* (with a plunge of a seventh corresponding to each instance of the word “deep”). Running sixteenth notes evoke the Israelites scurrying across the seabed “as through a wilderness.”

A soprano aria (“It is the Lord that ruleth the sea”) from one of Handel’s earlier Chandos Anthems forms the basis for the conclusion to this sequence, a furious chorus with pounding timpani as the waters of the Red Sea overwhelm the pursuing Egyptians. The first part closes with a grand choral statement that yields to a solemn concluding double chorus based on a Stradella soprano aria.

The second part, *Moses’ Song*, begins with a stately instrumental introduction leading to a brilliant, energetic fugue that sings “unto the Lord” and celebrates “the horse and his rider” (accompanied by a galloping figure in the orchestra) being “thrown into the sea.”

A duet and chorus from the Erba *Magnificat* form the basis for a soprano duet and grand chorus in praise of the Lord, capped by a old-style fugue on “I will exalt Him” (inspired by a Gabrieli *ricercare*). Next, two basses attempt to outdo each other in recalling the end of the Red Sea sequence; here Handel combines an instrumental passage from the Urlo *Te Deum* with vocal material from the Erba *Magnificat*. The chorus continues with a more solemn reminiscence of that episode (“The depths have covered them”) with deep notes in orchestra evoking “they sank into the bottom as a stone”; this is also based on Erba, as is the next trumpet-and-drums chorus (“Thy right hand, O Lord”). A brief declamation leads to a grand fugue (“Thou sentest forth thy wrath”), again drawn from Erba, as is “And with the blast of thy nostrils,” in which sopranos singing “the floods stood upright as an heap” lead to basses singing “and the depths” two-and-a-half octaves below.

There follows a pair of arias: The first has a tenor celebrating the vanquishing of enemies with militaristic bravado, the second (for soprano) features a rising-and-falling sixteenth note accompaniment from lower instruments that suggests the blowing of the wind. This leads to another declamatory chorus and fugue (once again taken from Erba). A contemplative duet for alto and tenor (more Erba) gives way to a minor-key chorus with dotted-rhythm accompaniment, followed by the work’s final aria (“Thou shalt bring them in”), as an alto celebrates the arrival in the promised land.

The final sequence alternates two statements of a grand trumpet-and-drums chorus (“The Lord shall reign for ever and ever”) with tenor recitatives, then concludes with a reprise of the “horse and his rider” chorus that opened *Moses’ Song*.

—Jeff Eldridge

Exodus

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph; and he set over Israel taskmasters to afflict them with burdens, and they made them serve with rigour.

Exodus 1:8, 11, 13

And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. They oppressed them with burthens, and made them serve with rigour; and their cry came up unto God.

Exodus 2:23; 1:11, 13

Then sent he Moses, his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen; these shewed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham. He turned their waters into blood.

Psalm 105: 26–27, 29

They loathed to drink of the river. He turned their waters into blood.

Exodus 7:18; Psalm 105:29

Their land brought forth frogs, yea, even in their kings' chambers. He gave their cattle over to the pestilence; blotches and blains broke forth on man and beast.

Psalm 105:30; Exodus 9:9

He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies, and lice in all their quarters. He spake; and the locusts came without number, and devoured the fruits of their ground.

Psalm 105: 31, 34–35

He gave them hailstones for rain; fire mingled with the hail ran along upon the ground.

Psalm 105:32; Exodus 9:23, 24

He sent a thick darkness over all the land, even darkness which might be felt.

Exodus 10:21, 22

He smote all the first-born of Egypt, the chief of all their strength.

Psalm 105:36

But as for his people, he led them forth like sheep: he brought them out with silver and gold; there was not one feeble person among their tribes.

Psalm 78:52; 105:37

Egypt was glad when they departed, for the fear of them fell upon them.

Psalm 105:38

He rebuked the Red Sea, and it was dried up.

He led them through the deep as through a wilderness.

Psalm 106:9

But the waters overwhelmed their enemies, there was not one of them left.

Psalm 106:11

And Israel saw that great work that the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord,

And believed the Lord, and his servant Moses. *Exodus 14:31*

Moses' Song

Moses and the children of Israel sung this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying:

I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and my song; he is become my salvation.

He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation: my father's God,

And I will exalt him.

The Lord is a man of war: Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.

The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.

Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee.

Thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.

And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

Thou didst blow with the wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchest out thy right hand,

The earth swallowed them.

Thou in thy mercy hast led forth thy people which thou hast redeemed; thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

The people shall hear, and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold on them: all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away: by the greatness of thy arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O Lord, which thou hast purchased.

Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them:

Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Exodus 15:1–21

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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-plus decades, the ensemble has performed all of the greatest choral-orchestral masterpieces, including Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*, Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms' *German Requiem*, Haydn's *The Seasons* and 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 from 2013 to 2017, and William White began his tenure in 2018. In 2021, the organization rebranded as Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus.

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 **Commissioning Club** sponsors the creation of new works, including some you will hear this season.

Our planned-giving program, the **George Shangrow Society**, is named in honor of our founder, and accepts gifts in wills, trusts or beneficiary designations.

To contribute, navigate to harmoniasseattle.org/support, scan the QR code below, or visit the lobby during intermission or after the concert.



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A JOYOUS TRILOGY

Saturday * October 4, 2025 * 7:30 P.M.

Shorecrest Performing Arts Center • Shoreline

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Serena Eduljee *soprano*

Charles Robert Stephens *baritone*

Quinn Mason *A Joyous Trilogy*

Antonín Dvořák *Te Deum*

Johannes Brahms *Symphony No. 1*

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * October 25, 2025 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

DANCES OF DEATH

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

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Zachary Lenox *baritone*

Alfred Schnittke *Agitato*

Sergei Rachmaninov "Blessed Art Thou, O Lord"

William C. White *Dies Irae* **WORLD PREMIERE**

Sergei Rachmaninov *Symphonic Dances*

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * November 22, 2025 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Saturday * December 13, 2025 * 2:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Sunday * December 14, 2025 * 2:30 P.M.

Bastyr University Chapel • Kenmore

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Ellaina Lewis *soprano*

Sarah Larkworthy *mezzo-soprano*

Edward Graves *tenor*

José Rubio *baritone*

Handel *Messiah*

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * January 24, 2026 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

REFLECTIONS

Saturday * February 7, 2026 * 7:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Chorus

Samuel Barber *Reincarnations*

Huntley Beyer *Reflections* **WORLD PREMIERE**

plus music by **Esmail, Burleigh, Purcell, Paulus, Bristow** and **Runestad**

PATHOS

Saturday * February 28, 2026 * 7:30 P.M.

Northshore Concert Hall • Kenmore

Harmonia Orchestra

Rachel Lee Priday, *violin*

Jean Sibelius *Karelia* Overture

Carlos Garcia *Violin Concerto* **WORLD PREMIERE**

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 6 ("Pathétique")*

ISRAEL IN EGYPT

Saturday * March 28, 2026 * 2:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

George Frideric Handel *Israel in Egypt*

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * April 11, 2026 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

THE PLANETS

Friday * May 8, 2026 * 8:00 P.M.

Benaroya Hall • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Wellspring Ensemble

Rose Beattie *mezzo-soprano*

Robert Kechley *Fanfare*

Lili Boulanger *Psaume XXIV*

Lili Boulanger *Du fond de l'abîme*

Gustav Holst *The Planets*

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Friday * May 29, 2026 * 6:00 P.M.

Brockey Center at South Seattle College

William C. White *La Bonne Chose*