

Monday, May 29, 2023 at 7:00 PM
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

40th Anniversary Season
1983 to 2023
1,470th Concert Worldwide, 1,136th in New York, 678th in Carnegie Hall

MIDAMERICA PRODUCTIONS
PETER TIBORIS, *Founder, General Director and Music Director*
JOHN RUTTER, CBE, *Conductor Laureate*

presents

New England Symphonic Ensemble

PRESTON HAWES, Artistic Director

CLIF HARDIN: *Requiem*

- I. Tibor Mortis Conturbat Me
- II. Telos
- III. Dirge Without Music (stanzas 1 and 4);
When I Am Dead My Dearest
- IV. Holy Light
- V. Dirge Without Music (stanzas 2 and 3)
- VI. Never More Will the Wind
- VII. The First Day's Night Had Come
- VIII. To Everything There Is a Season
- IX. Time; We Breaved
- X. Thernody
- XI. Wherever You Go Now

JENNIFER RODGERS, *Conductor*
APRIL MARTIN, *Soprano*
JOHN VISCARDI, *Tenor*
ELIAM RAMOS, *Bass-baritone*

Participating Choruses
Ames Chamber Artists, Ames, IA (Jennifer Rodgers, Director)
DC Area Chorus, Washington, DC (Clifton Hardin, Director)
Everett Chorale, Everett, WA (Heather MacLaughlin Garbes, Director)

Intermission

(program continued)

PLEASE SWITCH OFF YOUR CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

JOHN RUTTER: *TARANTO: A Cathedral Triptych (US Premiere)*

JOHN RUTTER: *Requiem*

- I. Requiem Aeternam
- II. Out of the Deep
- III. Pie Jesu
- IV. Sanctus
- V. Agnus Dei
- VI. The Lord is My Shepherd
- VII. Lux Aeterna

FRANCESCA FREDERICO, *Soprano*

JOHN RUTTER, *Te Deum*

JOHN RUTTER, *Conductor*

Participating Choruses

Ames Chamber Artists, Ames, IA (Jennifer Rodgers, Director)

*Continuo Arts Symphonic Chorus, Westfield, NJ (Candace Wicke, Director)

DC Area Chorus, Washington, DC (Clifton Hardin, Director)

Everett Chorale, Everett, WA (Heather MacLaughlin Garbes, Director)

*First Presbyterian Church, Florence, SC (Ann Rodgers Chandler, Director)

*Henderson Presbyterian Church, Las Vegas, NV (Adrienne Mondeau, Director)

The Highland High School Chamber Choir and Women's Chorus, Palmdale,

CA (John P. Crocker, Jr., Director)

Providence School of Jacksonville, Jacksonville, FL (Scott Giddens, Director)

*The Southern Union Sound, Wadley, AL (Trey Rayfield, Director)

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

Notes ON THE PROGRAM

CLIF HARDIN: *Requiem*

Born May 28, 1955, Washington, D.C.

From the Director: My experiences with Clif Hardin's *Requiem* have been utterly compelling. Singers and audiences alike have been moved beyond words and yet, in this work, have found expressions of grief and the experience of surviving loss that had eluded them. It is my very great privilege to bring this work to a national stage.

From the Composer: The first performances of *Requiem* took place in the spring of 1993 at River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Bethesda, Maryland. It had been commissioned by a small group within the congregation that wished for a choral work on the themes of death, grief, remembrance, and gratitude that used an alternative text than that of the traditional Roman Catholic rite. With that inspiration, texts for this piece are drawn from a wide variety of poems and writings, mostly by 19th and 20th century authors.

There is no question in my mind that the texts in this *Requiem* are central to its appeal. Besides being wonderful in themselves, they were also chosen because they could be used in a meaningful order to depict the time before a person's death, the experience of death, and the human experience of loss of a loved one.

The first movement serves as a choral overture. The stanzas from Dunbar's poem draw our attention to the inevitability of death. The Latin refrain, *Timor mortis conturbat me*, gives voice to the fear and uncertainty about death that is innate to humankind. The second movement, *Telos*, expresses the acceptance of death by one who is dying, and the desire to reach out to a loved one: "Give me

your hand." The third movement contrasts acceptance of death, in both bass and soprano solos (*When I Am Dead, My Dearest*) with defiance of death by the chorus (first and last stanzas of *Dirge Without Music*). In the fourth movement, final surrender to death comes, here sung by a women's chorus.

It was my intention in conveying the universality of death to avoid assigning the role of the dying person to any particular soloist or ensemble. This was my reason for using both male and female soloists, as well as a women's chorus, for that role.

From the fifth movement on, the flow of events and mood requires no explanation. All of the remaining movements deal with the emotions of bereavement, with mourning, with consolation, and with the assurance that love is more powerful than death. In both movements nine and ten, the words of two poems are intertwined. In these cases, the combined texts are meant to show not contrasting thoughts and emotions, but complementary ones.

Settings of the Roman Catholic *Requiem* text often conclude by repeating the prayer, *Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine ...* "Rest eternal give unto them, O Lord." In the last movement of this piece, with John Buxton's beautiful poem, there is a turn of idea. The voice is not that of the mourner, praying for the loved one's eternal rest. Rather, it is the voice of the departed, in a comforting and sustaining presence, saying to the bereaved, and I hope, to all of us who have been bereaved, "You may rest now."

JOHN RUTTER: *TARANTO: A Cathedral Triptych*

A note from the composer:

Taranto is a city located in the Puglia region of southern Italy, a historic and beautiful area I have been privileged to visit as conductor and tourist.

In 2021 I was invited by the City of Taranto to write an orchestral tone-poem celebrating their cathedral and its patron saint, Cataldo – he was a seventh-century Irish monk who was shipwrecked off the coast of southern Italy returning from pilgrimage to Jerusalem and liked Taranto so much that he never returned to Ireland. After his death, they built the cathedral in his honor and he was declared a saint.

JOHN RUTTER: *Requiem*

Composed in 1985, and first performed in October of that year in Dallas, Texas, the *Requiem* by John Rutter is one of the latest works in a grand tradition of the settings of texts in commemoration of the dead, settings intended essentially or completely as concert works rather than for liturgical usage.

As with many past composers in this tradition, Rutter has treated his texts freely and has used the title of *Requiem* as an umbrella for a work that is not strictly tied to the Roman Catholic Office of the Dead. Rutter specifically cites the examples of Fauré and Brahms as precedents, and his choices put him somewhere between those two. Whereas Fauré's *Requiem* retains the traditional Latin liturgical texts, if in abridged and selected form, Brahms' *A German Requiem* abandons them completely in favor of highly personalized Scriptural selections from the Luther Bible in German, with contemplative rather than liturgical intent.

By contrast, Rutter takes a middle ground, choosing texts both from liturgical Latin and Scriptural vernacular. The selection is, again, highly personal, dis-

The music falls into four sections that play without a break:

1. The sea voyage of Cataldo as he returns from Jerusalem
2. The beautiful brightly-colored mosaics in the cathedral depicting him and the events of his life
3. The dark and mysterious cathedral crypt where we seem to hear the chanted prayers of monks from long ago
4. A day of fiesta and celebration in the cathedral piazza with dancing, then a gentle sunset to bring the festivities to a close

posed so as to form “an arch-like meditation on the themes of life and death,” to use the composer's own words. “The first and last movements, which are set to the ‘correct’ liturgical texts [i.e. from the Latin Requiem Mass], are prayers to God the Father; the second and sixth movements are English psalm settings, both with important instrumental obligatos; the third and fifth (from the *Missa pro defunctis* again) are prayers to Christ, and the central *Sanctus* is an affirmation of divine glory. Texts from the Anglican Burial Service of 1662 [from *The Book of Common Prayer*] are woven into the fifth and seventh movements, as commentary and prelude, respectively.”

John Rutter has come by all these sources legitimately. Born in 1945, Rutter was trained at Cambridge University, and later held posts there. He began serious composition in his teens, first with arrangements of Christmas carols. He has ranged from choral into orchestral composition, producing concert and film scores and music for the stage. He has been active as a musicologist, as well as a performing musician. But his base of perspective has continued to be the

Anglican choral style. He has composed a significant amount of choral music, both sacred and secular. Prior to his *Requiem*, his most successful composition was his *Gloria*, composed in a direct concert style. Dating from 1974, it also, like the later work, has American associations, having been composed for and performed first in Omaha, Nebraska.

Another of Rutter's involvements, however, explains qualities of his *Requiem*. In his capacity as a musicologist, Rutter began exploring the very complicated evolution of Fauré's *Requiem* score, recognizing that the beloved version of this work now "standard" as a repertoire staple, the version completed in 1900, was only an indirect and several-stages-removed extension of the composer's original ideas. Not only was the work

as a whole revised repeatedly, but its original scoring, for small orchestra, was expanded in several stages and finally given its full-orchestra form for the 1900 edition, not by the composer himself, apparently, but by his student, Jean Roger-Ducasse. Rutter dug into the sources and came up with a reconstruction of the work as of its 1893 state, recapturing a leaner, more intimate and more liturgical texture. This reconstruction has been both published and recorded by Rutter. In addition, Rutter has furthered analogies by preparing his own *Requiem* in alternate performing editions, one for organ and six instruments, as well as the original, with full-orchestral accompaniment (the one used in this performance).

- by John Barker

JOHN RUTTER: *Te Deum*

The *Te Deum* was written in 1988 for a service of thanksgiving in Canterbury Cathedral. Liturgical considerations and the spacious acoustics of the great building dictated a brief, straightforward setting of the ancient and inspiring text—not in Latin but, according to Anglican custom, in the lofty, noble translation of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

—Louise Luegner

Translation of the Latin "Te Deum" text:
We praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting. To thee all angels cry aloud: the heavens, and all the powers therein. To thee Cherubin and Seraphin continually do cry: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory. The glorious company of the apostles praise thee. The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee. The noble army of martyrs praise thee. The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowl-

edge thee, the Father of an infinite majesty. Thine honourable, true, and only Son; also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. Thou art the King of glory, O Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb. When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father. We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge. We therefore pray thee, help thy servants, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood. Make them to be numbered with thy saints, in glory everlasting. O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine heritage. Govern them, and lift them up for ever. Day by day we magnify thee; and we worship thy Name, ever world without end. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us. O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in thee. O Lord, in thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

THE Artists

JENNIFER RODGERS, *Conductor*



Jennifer Rodgers is the Assistant Director of Choral Activities and a professor of voice at Iowa State University. She holds a bachelor's in voice performance from Ithaca College, a master's in opera theatre from the University of Maryland,

and a doctorate in choral conducting from the University of Washington. Her solo performances span from opera and concert work to musical theater and jazz, and her solo voice pedagogy focuses on bridging contemporary and traditional styles. In ensemble settings, Jennifer is dedicated to choral pedagogy and theatre, and the healthy expression of vocal sounds from a host of traditions. Her choirs have sung at Carnegie Hall in New York, the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, and Benaroya Hall in Seattle, WA. Jennifer has presented nationally and internationally on the topic of musical self-image and avocational adult singers and has a growing body of published work and presentation in choral relevance – a movement to examine the field of choral music through a lens of inclusivity and connective dialogue.

APRIL MARTIN, *Soprano*



“An infinitely pleasing and lively soprano” who possesses a “fun irreverence and palpable sarcasm,” April Martin is a singing-actress to watch. Recent

premieres include Nora in the world premiere of *A Doll's House* and Lili (*City of Ashes*). Thrilling on the opera or concert stage, Ms. Martin has sung with Virginia Opera, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Central City Opera, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Richmond Symphony, the Kansas City Symphony and the Knoxville Symphony. Role highlights include Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Kitty Hart (*Dead Man Walking*), Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), the Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) Frasquita (*Carmen*), Musetta (*La bohème*), Niece 1 (*Peter Grimes*), and Blanche de la Force (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*). April garnered awards from the Metropolitan Opera National Council, the Heafner/Williams Vocal

Competition (2nd Place) and the Opera Carolina Guild Competition (2nd

Place). She studied with tenor Vinson Cole.

JOHN VISCARDI, *Tenor*

John Viscardi has moved audiences around the world with his vocal beauty and dramatic intensity, having performed with Santa Fe Opera, Opera Philadelphia, New York City Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Des Moines Metro Opera, and Opera Carolina. Winner of both the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition and Concorso Internazionale F.P. Tosti, Mr. Viscardi has appeared in both recital and concert at venues that include Carnegie Hall (New York), Geffen Hall (New York), Tokyo Opera City (Tokyo), Verizon Hall (Philadelphia) and David Geffen Hall (New York). Last season's engagements include the role of Pelleas in Opera Southwest's *Pelléas et Mélisande* and The Pilot in American Lyric Theater's production of *The Opposable Thumb*, as well as engagement with Classic Lyric Art



Berkshires. Viscardi welcomes the 22/23 season with his role debut as Cavardossi in Opera Carolina's *Tosca*, and goes on to perform Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* with Opera San Luis Obispo.

ELIAM RAMOS, *Bass-baritone*

Eliam Ramos is a "thrilling" Puerto Rican Bass-baritone who has performed opera and concert works with companies in the United States, Spain, Israel, Puerto Rico and Mexico. His artistic engagements range from traditional opera such as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, to Luis Nogales in the zarzuela *Luisa Fernanda*, to symphony concerts such as Fauré's Requiem to the title role of the modern composition of *El Cimarrón* by Hans Werner Henze. The Metropolitan Opera Guild featured Mr. Ramos in their Verdi's Baritones Series in their 2022-2023 season. Mr. Ramos' engagements for 2023 include cantatas with the Bach in Baltimore, Brahms' Requiem with the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, Masetto and the cover of Leporello for Opera in Williamsburg,



the premiere performance of the opera *Song of the Nightingale* with On Site Opera, as well as other solo and duo recitals in the New York area.

JOHN RUTTER, *Composer and Conductor*



John Rutter was born in London and studied music at Clare College, Cambridge. He first came to notice as a composer during his student years; much of his early work consisted of church music and other choral pieces including Christmas carols. From 1975–79 he was Director of Music

at his alma mater, Clare College, and directed the college chapel choir in various recordings and broadcasts. Since 1979 he has divided his time between composition and conducting. Today his compositions, including such concert-length works as Requiem, Magnificat, Mass of the Children, The Gift of Life, and Visions are performed around the world. His music has featured in a number of British royal occasions, including the two most recent royal weddings. He edits the Oxford Choral Classics series, and, with Sir David Willcocks, co-edited four volumes of Carols for Choirs. In 1983 he formed his own choir the Cambridge Singers, with whom he has made numerous recordings, and he appears regularly in several countries as guest conductor and choral ambassador. He holds a Lambeth Doctorate in Music, and in 2007 was awarded a CBE for services to music.

FRANCESCA FEDERICO, *Soprano*



Hailed as having a voice of “such strong presence and beauty of tone that she left one longing for more.” (*Opera News*), soprano Francesca Federico was born in Paris, and lives in New York City.

She was a 2021 Fulbright Scholar for the Arts, and completed a performance residency at the Irish World Academy in Limerick, Ireland. Engagements in the 2022-23 season include a return to the Teatro Nuovo bel canto festival to cover Anna in Rossini’s *Maometto Secondo*; Eurydice in Offenbach’s *Orphée aux enfers* with Opera Ithaca, and Nannetta in Verdi’s *Falstaff* with Salt Marsh Opera. In concert, Francesca is soloist with Raylynmor Opera for their season-opening concert, and with the American Contemporary Music Ensemble, performing Ravel’s *Chansons Madécasses* and Clarice Jensen’s *The Exaltation of Inanna*. She made her European debut in 2020 with Wexford Festival Opera, performing the role of Alice Ford in Verdi’s *Falstaff*. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019-20, she appeared with

the Children's Philharmonic of New Jersey, as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, and was named a finalist in the Vermont Vocal Competition and The American Prize. Ms. Federico received a Masters in Voice at the Mannes School of Music, where she studied

with Bonnie Hamilton. She completed her undergraduate degree at New York University, where she majored in Global Politics. She currently studies with Mark Schnaible in New York, and is represented by Martha Wade of Wade Artist Management.

PRESTON HAWES, *Artistic Director,*
New England Symphonic Ensemble

Hailed by the European Academy of Arts and Sciences as an “electrifying and virtuosic” performer with “exquisite taste and rare talent,” Canadian violinist Dr. Preston Hawes is a laureate of the Concours de musique du Canada, the Andrews International Music Competitions, and the Prix de Musique de Chambre à Fontainebleau, and is a recipient of the J.C. Van Hulsteyn Award and Peabody Career Grant. He has been heard as a soloist in more than 35 countries and in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, and Plovdiv Symphony Hall. Having earned a Master of Music degree and the coveted Artist Diploma at Yale University, Dr. Hawes completed his studies by earning a Doctorate of Musical Arts from The Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University.



Dr. Hawes is professor of music and director of strings at Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md., and is the artistic director of the New England Symphonic Ensemble.

NEW ENGLAND SYMPHONIC ENSEMBLE

With performances described as “flawless” (Rhodes Magazine), the New England Symphonic Ensemble (NESE), under the artistic direction of Dr. Preston Hawes, is among the most frequently featured organizations in Carnegie Hall. Since its inception in 1989, the NESE has drawn global critical acclaim in hundreds of concerts on the world’s most prestigious stages. In collaboration with MidAmerica Productions, the NESE has been led by a roster of guest conductors including John Rutter, Peter Tiboris, Sherrill Milnes, Helmuth Rilling, Simon Carrington, and Jonathan Willcocks, and regularly hosts international guest soloists. NESE world premieres

include Dinos Constantinides’ *Byron’s Greece, Hymn to the Human Spirit*, and *Midnight Fantasy II* for wind ensemble; John Rutter’s *Cantate Domino, Distant Land, Magnificat*, and *Mass of the Children*; and John Leavitt’s *A Christmas Garland*. The NESE boasts multiple U.S. premieres, including Mozart’s *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots*, Reimann’s Concerto for Violin and Cello, Tchaikovsky’s *Ode to Joy*, and René Clausen’s *Hellas: In the Name of Freedom*. The NESE can be heard on the Naxos label in an award-winning recording of spirituals with internationally renowned mezzo-soprano, the late Barbara Smith Conrad.

MIDAMERICA PRODUCTIONS

MIDAMERICA PRODUCTIONS
265 Sunrise Highway, Suite 1-183
Rockville Centre, NY 11570
Phone: (212) 239-0205
www.midamerica-music.com

MidAmerica Productions, Inc. was founded by Peter Tiboris in 1983. Now in its 40th season, MidAmerica presents conductors, soloists, and choral and instrumental ensembles from around the world in New York’s Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and Alice Tully Hall and David Geffen Hall, Lincoln Center. MidAmerica also presents concerts in international locations including Vienna; Salzburg; Florence; Verona; Venice; Paris; Prague; Berlin; Warsaw; Krakow; Lisbon; Porto; London; Oxford; and, since 2005, in Syros, Greece (The International Festival of the Aegean). To date, MidAmerica Productions has produced more than 1,400 concerts worldwide.