

Thursday Evening, March 23, 2023, at 8:00
Conductor's Notes Q&A with Leon Botstein at 7:00
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage



presents

Daphne

LEON BOTSTEIN, *Conductor*

RICHARD STRAUSS *An den Baum Daphne*
Choral Epilogue to *Daphne*

BARD FESTIVAL CHORALE
JAMES BAGWELL, *Director*

Intermission

RICHARD STRAUSS *Daphne (Bucolic Tragedy in One Act), Op. 82*
Libretto by Joseph Gregor

Daphne: JANA MCINTYRE, *Soprano*
Apollo: KYLE VAN SCHOONHOVEN, *Tenor*
Leukippos: AARON BLAKE, *Tenor*
Gaea: RONNITA MILLER, *Mezzo-soprano*
Peneios: STEFAN EGERSTROM, *Bass*
Two Maids: MARLEN NAHHAS, ASHLEY DIXON
Four Shepherds: KENNETH OVERTON, JACK COTTERELL,
PAUL HOLMES, BLAKE AUSTIN BROOKS

BARD FESTIVAL CHORALE
JAMES BAGWELL, *Director*

This evening's concert will run approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes including one 20-minute intermission.

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FROM THE Music Director

Beauty in Dark Times: Richard Strauss' Daphne
by Leon Botstein

The myth of Daphne has come down to us from a myriad of ancient Greek and Roman sources. The most well-known perhaps is the version in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In all its variants, however, three central issues animate the Daphne myth.

First, is beauty and its consequences. Daphne is so uncommonly beautiful and so mesmerizing that she becomes Apollo's obsession and his object of pursuit. Of the Olympians, Apollo was himself the most beautiful; Daphne's beauty puts her in danger not only on account of amazement and desire, but also because of envy and jealousy masquerading as wonderment.

Second, is the matter of human nature. In the ancient Greek account of the universe, humans share the world with immortal gods. The Olympian gods did not create either the universe or humanity. But the gods hold dominion over humans. They exercise their power unpredictably. Our fate is in their hands. The gods see humans as competitors and seek to curb their ambition. Above all, they envy the human experience of love (a subject Strauss deals with in his *Die Liebe der Danae*, completed a few years after *Daphne* and which the ASO participated in at the Bard SummerScape Festival). Love, as humans experience it, particularly its transgressive ecstatic passions, is denied the gods on account of their immortality. They seek nonetheless to share in human love. But they must resort to deceit, mixed with fear, and intimidation to get what they want.

Third, is fate. Humans are vulnerable to the whims of the gods and find themselves wittingly and unwittingly caught in the web of the rivalries and intrigues among them. In the human struggle to stay alive, they band together in communities and attempt to live harmoniously with the gods without incurring their wrath. They seek to defend themselves and even prosper. But humans are repeatedly thwarted. The human condition is unenviable, framed as it is by uncertainty and danger.

Daphne is innocent and pure; she is not tainted by the physical side of love. Rather she is repelled by it. She seeks to preserve the carefree joy of childhood. A narcissistic undertone emerges in her resistance to the inevitability of maturity. Growing up might compromise the unblemished perfection of her beauty. Daphne's impeccable beauty however extracts a cruel psychological toll. Her beauty heightens the desire for her and yet deepens her internal resistance to the physical experience of human love. The perfection of Daphne's beauty traps her. It is incompatible with human love and renders her defenseless in the face of human and divine conceit. Aesthetic perfection inspires in Daphne, however, a love of nature.

The opera is set on the eve of a festival of Dionysus, son of Zeus, the deity of pleasure, wine, fertility and the unchecked celebration of sexuality. Daphne dreads the arrival of the celebrations. Leukippos' desire is intense; he is no longer the companion without carnal desire. Daphne wishes for "brotherly" love, the spiritual companionship she had when they were children.

A tree she loved is the emblem of the warmth and joy of that innocent friendship; it is the symbol of her childhood. When Leukippos emerges from behind it, with his flute, and seeks to seduce her, she recoils. For her music is merely about beauty and perfection, not the emotions of desire and passion. Leukippos smashes his flute, rejecting the limitation of music to express spiritual contemplation.

Apollo enters, having been invited by Daphne's father. He comes in disguise as a mortal, a deception he later regrets. The human community, its piety notwithstanding, offers no protection from Apollo. Smitten by Daphne's beauty he begins to seduce her. Surrounded by the Dionysian revels, she wavers. But she evades the god and returns to her mortal friend, now Apollo's rival. Jealousy between man and god erupts. Apollo kills Leukippos. Daphne realizes the error of her conceit that she might elude human destiny and the mundane joy of all that Dionysus represents.

Apollo witnesses Daphne's human loyalty. Although he is rejected in favor of a mortal, he is overcome with shame. Leukippos will take his side on Mount Olympus as Dionysus' flute and Daphne's wish never to sacrifice her beauty and chastity is granted.

The Daphne myth suggests that the greatest gift the gods can give the exemplary human is to grant a gentle death, a painless exit from life. Apollo's remorse for his transgression results in a gift to Daphne comparable to death. Daphne remains unblemished by human life. She remains on earth as an object of human veneration. She becomes that universal living symbol of nature, its beauty and the synthesis of the Apollonian and the Dionysian: a tree. The tree preserves Daphne's perfection; it delays and circumvents her death.

The tree can sing, especially with the wind. In Strauss' opera, the tree that Daphne becomes is a reminder of the superiority of music as a medium of pure beauty. Music, alone and without words, commands the opera's final moments. Apollo's transformation vindicates the capacity of humans to create beauty uniquely of their own invention. The last we hear from Daphne is her wordless singing over the orchestra towards the very end.

For all of Richard Strauss' fame as the "second Richard," the heir of Richard Wagner, Strauss revealed, late in his career, his true aesthetic ideals. In the terms set by the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who elaborated the opposition between the Apollonian and the Dionysian, Strauss idealized Mozart rather than Wagner. Mozart's music embodied the Apollonian ideal of beauty. That ideal is one of perfection in form and sound and uniquely suggestive of the divine spark in humanity.

For Strauss, only beauty in music can truly transcend the limits of the human experience and exceed the power of language. In order to create beauty, the artist must render aesthetic beauty an antidote to and refuge from the sufferings and compromises of everyday life, the tyranny of physical needs, the vulnerability of our bodies and the inexorable ravages of time. In his late work, Strauss turned away from perfecting music's capacity to be realistic and imitate life. Instead, Strauss pursued an Apollo-like aesthetic transformation of the everyday. Musical beauty could redeem the seemingly drab physical realities that mark our ordinary mortal lives and which Daphne dreaded.

Strauss' turn to the Apollonian ideal in music, as suggested in the elegant notes for this performance by Bryan Gilliam, the eminent Strauss scholar, was influ-

enced by the historical circumstances surrounding *Daphne's* composition. Strauss collaborated with the Nazis. His ambitions led him to set aside the self-evident imperatives of ethics and human justice. His mistaken conceit was that he was superior to all politics and politicians.

He ran afoul of the Nazis early on in their dictatorship, owing to his collaboration with Stefan Zweig on *Die schweigsame Frau*. After 1935, Strauss struggled to maintain his presence in the Nazi era as Germany's leading composer and also protect himself and his immediate family. Strauss' turn to the Apollonian was self-protective, self-deceptive and self-congratulatory. But it generated music of uncommon beauty and transparency, including this opera, that breaks free from the prison of its historical origins.

Strauss was no egalitarian or partisan of democracy. He believed that an escape from the catastrophes of human behavior was open only to those who pursued the making of art and had the gift of realizing true beauty through the exercise of the human imagination. The synthesis of myth and music in *Daphne* offered Strauss the inspiration to create a work of beauty in the midst of an unimaginable display of human hate, violence, and cruelty. By creating beauty that could survive the unprecedented barbarism of his times, Strauss bequeathed to future generations a glimmer of hope in humanity. Humanity's capacity for art might be its redeeming quality.

In *Daphne*, Strauss expresses, however, more than empty hope; the

opera acknowledges and projects sadness, loss, powerlessness and regret. It reminds us that despite our mortal condition, we might cheat death of its finality through beauty of our own invention, and preserve the renewability of life and love. The tree *Daphne* may wither, but it will blossom again.

I wish to express my gratitude to my fellow musicians who are performing this evening. A Strauss opera is a daunting undertaking. He makes unrelenting demands on every person on stage. No part of tonight's performance makes that point more clearly than the extended a cappella work with which the concert opens.

Strauss believed children should first learn music and only later become literate. The decisive mark of a civilized person was their musicality, their ear for pitch. This meant more than listening; it meant the active command of the grammar of tonality in its most elaborate form, chromaticism. Strauss' skepticism of much of musical modernism in the 20th century was based on its abandonment of tonality and the mistaken belief that tonality's potential had been already exhausted.

An den Baum Daphne is a virtuosic example of Strauss' command of the expressive potential of tonal harmony; it is also a tribute to the ability of musicians to bring to life the logic of music in real time and space by the use of the greatest of all our gifts, the capacity to sing. Although *Daphne* ends in a glorious display of purely orchestral sound, the opera celebrates music's only truly essential instrument — the human voice.

THE Program

by Bryan Gilliam

Richard Strauss

Born June 11, 1864, in Munich, Germany

Died September 8, 1949, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

An den Baum Daphne (Epilogue from Daphne)

Composed in 1943

Text by Joseph Gregor (1888-1960)

Premiered on January 5, 1947 in Vienna, Austria by the Vienna State Opera Chorus with the Vienna Boys' Choir conducted by Felix Prohaska.

Performance Time: Approximately 16 minutes

Instruments for this performance: Unaccompanied SATB Chorus.

**Daphne: Bukolische Tragödie in einem Aufzuge
(Bucolic Tragedy in One Act), Op. 82**

Composed in 1936-37

Libretto by Joseph Gregor (1888-1960)

Premiered on October 15, 1938 in Dresden at the State Opera House by Semperoper Dresden conducted by Karl Böhm and directed by Max Hofmüller with Margarete Teschemacher as Daphne, Torsten Ralf as Apollo, Martin Kremer as Leukippos, Helen Jung as Gaea, and Sven Nilsson as Peneios.

Performance Time: Approximately 104 minutes

Instruments for this performance: 3 flutes, 1 piccolo, 2 oboes, 1 English horn, 1 C-clarinet, 2 A-clarinets, 1 basset horn, 1 bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, 1 contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 2 trombones, 1 bass trombone, 1 tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, Tam-tam), organ, 2 harps, 18 violins, 8 violas, 6 cellos, and 5 double-basses, Alphorn, 11 vocal soloists, and chorus

Today's opera, *Daphne: A Bucolic Tragedy*, was conceived as a one-act double bill with *Friedenstag* (Day of Peace), peace in nature and peace among nations, respectively. The celebration of peace in both works was to take the form of a chorus ending each work, but, as we shall see, the plan fell through. The addition of the chorus *An den Baum Daphne* (To the Daphne Tree), in a sense, restores the original intent, a first here in the United States.

Daphne premiered in 1938 and was preceded by his only other one-act Greek tragedy, *Elektra*, three decades earlier.

But we might argue that there is another one-act mythological opera in between, if we ignore its "opera-within-an opera" status, and that is the second part of the Prologue-Opera pair, *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1912/16). Though separated by more than two decades, with texts by two dissimilar librettists, *Ariadne* and *Daphne* are linked in three ways: 1) by the vital presence of Bacchus (whether on stage or as an integral part of the narrative), 2) by the extensive use of a light *Heldentenor* as the central male role (a rarity for Strauss), and 3) by the fact that both operas are centered around the theme of transformation.

Yet for Hofmannsthal, the librettist for *Ariadne*, transformation meant something quite different from what Joseph Gregor intended for his *Daphne* text. In the former, transformation was a process of becoming at one with the society, with civilization, and the community of humanity, assuring the continuity of life. For Daphne, transformation involved the very act of leaving that human community and joining nature. The humanity that young Daphne saw around her was one of deceit; Apollo came to her as a brother and yet seduced her. Realizing the wrongness of his transgression, he asks Zeus to transform Daphne from human form to an object of nature—the laurel tree.

Around the time of *Daphne*, it was not difficult for Strauss to see deception and corruption on a regular basis in Nazi Germany. Indeed, the decade of the 1930s was the most turbulent in the composer's life. It began with the loss of his treasured librettist Hofmannsthal, who died in 1929, it saw the rise of National Socialism and, thus the emigration of his next librettist, Stefan Zweig (a Jew), and the beginning of his troublesome relationship with his next librettist, Joseph Gregor, the author of *Daphne*.

Daphne was Gregor's only original libretto, and it is arguably his best. The preceding *Friedenstag* (1936) was based

on a scenario by Stefan Zweig, and *Die Liebe der Danae* (1940) originated from an earlier sketch by Hofmannsthal. Gregor wrote a two-page scenario to *Daphne* in June 1935, and in overall shape it is not far from the final version, save the inclusion of the character Zeus, an unwieldy pantomime, and, most importantly, a final choral hymn to the transformed Daphne tree. Gregor's general proposal interested the composer who received a completed draft three months later.

But now that Gregor's broad ideas had been spelled out in the specific terms of practical theater, its inherent flaws became alarmingly clear. At bottom, it lacked focus, human conflict, and a sense of shape that would suggest felicitous musical possibilities. Gregor sent the composer a second draft in January 1936, but Strauss was still dissatisfied with the characterizations of Daphne, Apollo, and Leukippos. After some prodding and outside consultation, Gregor submitted a third draft in April. Now the opera had an opening monologue for Daphne, a dialogue with her mother (Gaea), and a monologue for Apollo at the end. Strauss was delighted, and he began composing.

Thanks to Strauss, the libretto is remarkably concise and compellingly organized into four parts:

Exposition (of the characters):

Daphne
Leukippos
Gaea
Peneios
Apollo

Complication (betrayal):

Apollo's and Daphne's illicit love scene

Catastrophe:

Leukippos' death

Apotheosis:

Daphne's transformation

By early spring 1937, Strauss had got as far as the final scene when he reached a serious creative impasse, and the trouble, not surprisingly, lay with Gregor's text. Gregor consulted Stefan Zweig, who recommended a gradual build-up to the choral finale, reaching a climax at the completion of Daphne's transformation into a laurel tree: "The sky will fill with stars—lovers come to pay homage before the Daphne tree—Daphne herself becomes a symbol of purest love—a great myth is created." As moved as Strauss was by Zweig's suggestion, he needed something more than pageantry. Without informing his librettist, Strauss consulted his friend, Clemens Krauss. "Just read through it once," the composer implored, "I can't get on with the ending." Krauss replied that the idea of bringing people on stage to sing to a tree "was absurd," and suggested that Strauss "close the piece with the visible transformation [of Daphne] and the gradual transition of human language into the voice of nature."

The impasse was broken, and an elated Strauss wrote Gregor within days. The letter epitomizes their working relationship, for what Strauss offered his collaborator was less a suggestion than a direct order: "No other human beings should be on stage except Daphne, no solo voices, no Peneios—no chorus—in short, no oratorio." He added:

"In the moonlight, but still fully visible, the miracle of transformation is slowly worked upon her: only with orchestra alone! During the transformation Daphne still speaks, at most a few words, which dissolve into wordless melody! Perhaps not even that! In any case, right at the end, when the tree is fully transformed, she sings—as a voice of nature—eight more bars of the laurel motive."

By rejecting the choral finale and em-

bracing the instrumental realm, he eliminated words and found a deeper, inward mode of expression. This famous passage, with its soaring melodies, seemingly effortless contrapuntal interplay of returning motives, skillful harmonic pacing, and mastery of orchestral sound is at once rich and refined. This culminating miniature tone poem, with vocal *obbligato*, is the most magical finale of any late opera by Strauss.

Stefan Zweig, as a Jew in exile, committed suicide in 1942. Strauss was devastated, and he may well have thought of the unused choral finale so nicely recast by the great Austrian writer when he was asked to compose a work for the Vienna Philharmonic Chorus. Whatever the case, that year Strauss informed Gregor that he would like to compose the chorus after all, but as a separate *a cappella* work—a secular motet—for nine-part mixed chorus of some 20 minutes duration.

Like many of his *a cappella* works, *An den Baum Daphne* is extremely difficult and usually performed by professional choral ensembles. It exploits a full range (especially the upper), it is highly chromatic, and the sometimes-thick textures have tricky melismatic voice leadings. But Strauss weaves these vocal lines in an astoundingly beautiful sonic, vocal web of radiance and luminosity. This work is a culmination of the composer's *a cappella* vocal writing, beginning with the unaccompanied men's choruses of the late 19th century through the famed *Deutsche Motette* (1914), his greatest *a cappella* work, through the *Drei Männerchöre* of the mid 1930s, which serve as a lead up to *Friedenstag* and *Daphne*.

The original plan was for the chorus characters to surround the transformed Daphne tree and sing her praises. Today's offering allows us to experience both the final version of the opera (as premiered in October 1938) and, in a

sense, the original concept with chorus after the opera ends with the transformed tree. It should be noted, however, that this chorus is far longer, and more complex, than the original one. Strauss asked his librettist, Joseph Gregor, for new text, now in seven stanzas (introduction, five stanzas, and a coda). The coda is most notable for its blissful melismas and, finally, vocalizing in Daphne's voice in tandem with another soprano voice, which had been the

voice of the oboe (paired with Daphne) in the original opera. They sing a song:

Stronger than the songs of mortals:
A song of love,
Of eternity.
Daphne, tree divine
Beloved tree!

*Bryan Gilliam is a Professor Emeritus
of Music at Duke University.*

THE Artists

LEON BOTSTEIN, *Conductor*

RIC KALLAHER



Leon Botstein has been music director and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra since 1992. He is also music director of The Orchestra Now, an innovative training orchestra composed of top musicians from around the world. He is co-artistic director of Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival, which take place at the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College, where he has been president since 1975. He is also conductor laureate and principal guest conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, where he served as music director from 2003–11. In 2018 he assumed artistic directorship of the Grafenegg Academy in Austria.

Mr. Botstein is also active as a guest conductor and can be heard on numerous recordings with the London Sympho-

ny (including a GRAMMY-nominated recording of Popov's First Symphony), the London Philharmonic, NDR-Hamburg, and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. Many of his live performances with the American Symphony Orchestra are available online. His recording with the ASO of Paul Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner* was named one of the top recordings of 2015 by several publications, and his recent recording of Gershwin piano music with the Royal Philharmonic was hailed by *The Guardian* and called "something special . . . in a crowded field" by *Musicweb International*.

Mr. Botstein is the author of numerous articles and books, including *The Compleat Brahms* (Norton), *Jefferson's Children* (Doubleday), *Judentum und Modernität* (Böhlau), and *Von Beethoven zu Berg* (Zsolnay). He is also the editor of *The Musical Quarterly*. For his contributions to music he has received the award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and Harvard University's prestigious Centennial Award, as well as the Cross of Honor, First Class from the government of Austria. Other recent awards include the Bruckner Society's Julio Kilenyi Medal of Honor for his interpretations of that composer's music; and the Leonard Bernstein Award for the Elevation of Music in Society. In 2011 he was inducted into the American Philosophical Society.

AARON BLAKE, *Tenor*

The recipient of a 2017 George London Foundation Award, tenor Aaron Blake has earned international recognition for his stylistically diverse performances of repertoire ranging from Martinů to Rossini. He has been praised for his “endearing sweet sound as well as his youthful fervor and stamina” by *The New York Times*. This season, Mr. Blake makes his Canadian debut with Vancouver Opera in *Les pêcheurs de perles* and his Italian debut in recital with pianist Maria Nikitin in Rome. He returns to Walt Disney Concert Hall with the Los Angeles Symphony, and to The Metropolitan Opera for *Don Giovanni*. He appears with the Haifa Symphony as Tamino, a role he has performed with The Israeli Opera, Komische Oper Berlin, and Cincinnati Opera, among others. This summer, he returns to the Bard SummerScape Festival for *Henry VIII*. In 2022, Mr. Blake was recognized for his role as the High Priest of Amon on



DARDO ACOSTA

The Metropolitan Opera’s GRAMMY Award-winning recording of *Akhmaten*. His creation of the role of Timothy Laughlin in the world premiere of *Fellow Travelers* (Spears/Pierce) brought critical and international acclaim: in 2017, *The New Yorker* named the live recording of these performances one of the top 10 classical recordings of the year.

ASHLEY DIXON, *Mezzo-soprano*

Mezzo-soprano Ashley Dixon is a Grand Finals Winner of The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a former Adler Fellow with San Francisco Opera. She made her critically acclaimed debut with LA Opera in *Roberto Devereux* (Sara) with conductor Eun Sun Kim and alongside Ramon Vargas and Angela Meade.

This season, Ashley makes her debut with Amarillo Opera in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Rosina), participates in the final workshop of Heggie’s new opera *Intelligence* (Elizabeth Van Lew), and embarks on a duet recital tour with her husband, tenor Carlos Santelli. On the concert stage, she makes debuts with Erie Philharmonic in *Alexander Nevsky* and the Boston Philharmonic for performances of Beethoven’s Ninth



JOHN MYERS

Symphony at Symphony Hall in Boston and Carnegie Hall in New York City. Future engagements include the world premiere production of *Intelligence* at Houston Grand Opera in 23/24.

Last season she made debuts at Opera Louisiane in Bolcom's *Lucrezia* (title role), Hawaii Opera Theatre in *The Tragedy of Carmen* (Carmen), Festival Opera in *Norma* (Adalgisa), Tel Aviv

Summer Opera in *Carmen* (title role), and returned to the Ravinia Festival for *La clemenza di Tito* (Annio) conducted by James Conlon and San Francisco Opera for a Schwabacher Debut Recital.

STEFAN EGERSTROM, Bass

JINYANG CHEN



During the 2022-2023 season, bass Stefan Egerstrom makes his debut at The Metropolitan Opera as Fourth Nobleman in the new François Girard production of *Lohengrin* conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. He returns to San Francisco Opera to sing Geisterbater in the David Hockney production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* with Sir Donald Runnicles on the podium.

As a previous San Francisco Opera Fellow, Mr. Egerstrom appeared in

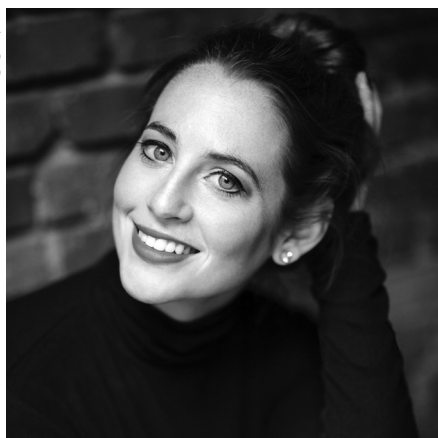
Eugene Onegin; worked on productions conducted by Music Director Eun Sun Kim including *La traviata* (covering Dottore Grenvil), *Tosca* (Jailer), and *Fidelio* (Second Prisoner); and was a participant of the 2019 Merola Opera Program. Previous appearances include Hunding in *Die Walküre* and King René in *Iolanta* with Cincinnati's Queen City Opera. As part of the "Opera Fusion: New Works" initiative between Cincinnati Opera and the University of Cincinnati-Conservatory of Music, he performed in workshops of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Morning Star* and Gregory Spears's *Fellow Travelers*. Additional roles include Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), Siroco (*L'Étoile*), Carlino (*Don Pasquale*), and Kecal (*The Bartered Bride*). Mr. Blake has also been the soloist in Bach's *Johannes-Passion*.

Mr. Egerstrom trained as a young artist with Des Moines Metro Opera and is a 2022 Sara Tucker Study Grant recipient.

Stefan Egerstrom appears courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera.

JANA MCINTYRE, *Soprano*

JYANG CHEN



Jana McIntyre continues to forge a path for herself with her “dancer’s grace, mercurial wit, and vibrant soprano tone” (*Opera News*).

Ms. McIntyre makes her debut with the American Symphony Orchestra and her Carnegie Hall debut in this evening’s performance of Richard Strauss’s *Daphne*. In the current season, she returns to Opera Santa Barbara to sing the role of Giulia in Rossini’s comic one-act opera *La scala di seta*. She also sings the role of Cinderella in Sondheim’s *Into the Woods* with Tulsa Opera. She makes her debuts in her first performances of *Carmina Burana* with the Seattle Symphony and Santa Barbara Symphony.

Ms. McIntyre’s 2021-2022 season included her first performances of the title role in Handel’s *Semele* with Opera Santa Barbara, as well as Aminta in a new production of Strauss’s *Die schweigsame Frau* at the Bard Summer-

Scape Festival. She created the role of Marianne in a workshop and recording of Aferidan Stephens and Marella Martin Koch’s *Elinor and Marianne* based on Jane Austen’s novel *Sense and Sensibility*, and she performed in concert with Jerod Impichchaachaaha Tate and Tulsa’s Signature Symphony. She sang the role of Ännchen in Heartbeat Opera’s new production of *Der Freischütz* and joined The Santa Fe Opera for their workshop of the completed version of *M. Butterfly*.

Some career highlights include her critically acclaimed portrayal of Andromède in the American premiere of Ibert’s *Persée et Andromède*, which made *The New York Times* “Best Classical Music of 2016.” She made her professional debut singing the role of Amore in Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice* alongside Anthony Roth Costanzo in an installment of “Orphic Moments” with Brooklyn’s National Sawdust Theater under the baton of Matthew Aucoin.

Ms. McIntyre was a grand finalist in The Metropolitan Opera National Council Opera Auditions, and a top prizewinner in the George and Nora London Foundation Competition. She has been an apprentice artist with The Santa Fe Opera, Tulsa Opera, and San Francisco Opera’s Merola Opera Program. She is an award winner from the Jensen Foundation, Giulio Gari Foundation, George London Foundation, and Art Song Preservation Society.

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RONNITA MILLER, *Mezzo-soprano*

GRAMMY-nominated mezzo-soprano Ronnita Miller enjoys a richly varied 2022-2023 season. In the summer of 2022, she joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic as Schwertleite in *Die Walküre* at the Hollywood Bowl. The autumn season included a return to San Francisco Opera as Filippjevna in *Eugene Onegin*, before reprising the role of Ella in *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* with Opera Omaha. She recently returned to Omaha as La Principessa in *Suor Angelica*, and will return to Atlanta Opera as Erda in *Das Rheingold*. In concert, she appears during the season at Carnegie Hall with Oberlin College as the mezzo soloist for Dett's *The Ordering of Moses*.

During the 2021-2022 season on stage and in concert, Ms. Miller joined The Metropolitan Opera as Big Stone in Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice*, and Detroit Opera as Ella in a new production of *X: The Life and Times of*



ZACH MENDEZ

Malcolm X. Highlights of recent appearances include Amando in *Le Grand Macabre* under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle with the London Symphony Orchestra and the Berlin Philharmonic, and the Semperoper Dresden, as Erda, under the baton of Christian Thielemann. She was a member of the ensemble at Deutsche Oper Berlin for seven seasons.

MARLEN NAHHAS, *Soprano*

This season, Mexican-Lebanese soprano Marlen Nahhas makes her debut with El Paso Opera in *La traviata* (Violetta). Recent appearances include debuts at Opera Ithaca for *Hansel and Gretel* (Gretel) and Virginia Opera in *La bohème* (Musetta), Detroit Opera for *Frida* (Cristina Kahlo) and *La bohème* (Mimi), Cincinnati Opera for *Pirates of Penzance* (Edith), and the Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival for *Le nozze di Figaro* (Contessa cover).

Ms. Nahhas recently completed the Cafritz Young Artists program with Washington National Opera. She was seen in *The Magic Flute*, *La traviata* directed by Francesca Zambello, Tesori's *The Lion*, *The Unicorn and Me*,



ARIELLE DONESON

The Consul, and the world premiere of Sankaram's *Taking Up Serpents*. Ms. Nahhas was also an Apprentice Artist at The Santa Fe Opera where she covered in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Countess).

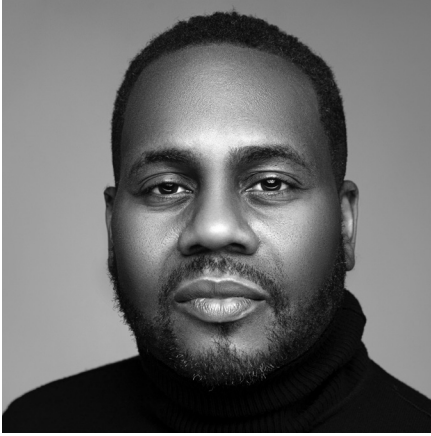
Orchestral credits include the National Symphony Orchestra in excerpts from *La bohème* (Mimi) conducted by NSO music director Maestro Gianandrea Noseda and Kansas City Symphony for excerpts from *Le nozze di Figaro* (Susanna). Ms. Nahhas was a member of

the Merola Opera program at the San Francisco Opera Center and an Apprentice Artist with Central City Opera.

Ms. Nahhas was a National Semi-Finalist in The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

KENNETH OVERTON, *Baritone*

KIA CALDWELL PHOTOGRAPHY



Kenneth Overton is lauded for blending his opulent baritone with magnetic, varied portrayals that seemingly “emanate from deep within body and soul.” Kenneth Overton’s symphonious baritone voice has sent him around the globe, making him one of the most sought-after opera singers of his generation. Mr. Overton is a 2020 GRAMMY Award-winner for Best Choral Performance in the title role of Richard Dan-

ielpour’s *The Passion of Yeshua* with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by JoAnn Falletta.

This fall, Mr. Overton performed in two world premieres with the Welsh National Opera; he led the production of *Migrations* and performed the role of Duncan in *The Shoemaker*. Additionally, Mr. Overton sings Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* in a co-production by Opera Carolina and North Carolina Opera. Concert engagements include performances of Duruflé’s *Requiem* and Undine Smith Moore’s *Scenes from the Life of a Martyr*. Mr. Overton’s performances this season include a concert staging of *Porgy and Bess* with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra in Hamburg, *A Knee on the Neck* and *Dona Nobis Pacem* with the New York Choral Society, the African American Music Festival at Pennsylvania State University, and concerts with the Howland Chamber Music Circle and Spartanburg Philharmonic.

KYLE VAN SCHOONHOVEN, *Tenor*

American tenor Kyle van Schoonhoven, a Metropolitan Opera National Council Grand Finals winner, is a Wagnerian star on the rise. *The New York Times* praises him for possessing a “gleaming, potent” instrument with a “steady, burnished sound.” Of a concert performance with the San Francisco Opera, the *San Francisco Chronicle* raved: “the title character’s prayer from the final act of Wagner’s *Rienzi* elicited a gleaming, potent performance from tenor Kyle van Schoonhoven, marked by suave phrasing and tonal freshness.”

Last season, Mr. van Schoonhoven made his European début with Opera de Rouen as Laca in *Jenůfa*, performed the role of Don José in *The Tragedy of Carmen* with Hawaii Opera Theatre, joined the Bard Music Festival for Chausson’s rarity *Le roi Arthus*, and joined The Metropolitan Opera for Matthew Aucoin’s *Eurydice*, covering Loud Stone, and the Carnegie Hall concert performance of *Die Walküre*, covering Siegmund.



PAUL SROCHMAN

This season, Mr. van Schoonhoven returns to The Metropolitan Opera as the Messenger in *Aida* after covering Zinovy Ismailov in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. Kyle will also sing performances of Tamino in *The Magic Flute* for the Buffalo Philharmonic and Britten’s *War Requiem* with the Prague Philharmonic Choir, in support of the crisis in Ukraine.

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Now in its 61st season, the American Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1962 by Leopold Stokowski, with a mission of providing great music within the means of everyone. Music Director Leon Botstein expanded that mission when he joined the ASO in 1992, creating thematic concerts that explore music from the perspective of the visual arts, literature, religion, and history, and reviving rarely-performed works that audiences would otherwise never have a chance to hear performed live.

The ASO’s signature programming includes its Vanguard Series, which presents concerts of rare orchestral repertoire at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center

and various other events dedicated to enriching and reflecting the diverse perspectives of American culture. During the summer months, the ASO is the orchestra-in-residence at Bard’s Summer-Scape Festival and performs at the Bard Music Festival.

As part of its commitment to expanding the standard orchestral repertoire, the ASO has released recordings on the Telarc, New World, Bridge, Koch, and Vanguard labels, and live performances are also available for digital download. In many cases, these are the only existing recordings of some of the forgotten works that have been restored through ASO performances.

BARD FESTIVAL CHORALE

The Bard Festival Chorale was formed in 2003 as the resident choir of the Bard Music Festival. It consists of the finest ensemble singers from New York City and surrounding areas. Many of

its members have distinguished careers as soloists and as performers in a variety of choral groups; all possess a shared enthusiasm for the exploration of new and unfamiliar music.

JAMES BAGWELL, *Director, Bard Festival Chorale*

James Bagwell maintains an active international schedule as a conductor of choral, operatic, and orchestral music. He was most recently named associate conductor of The Orchestra Now (TÖN) and in 2009 was appointed principal guest conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra, leading them in concerts at both Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. From 2009–15 he served as Music Director of The Collegiate Chorale, with whom he conducted a number of rarely performed operas-in-concert at Carnegie Hall, including Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda*, Rossini's *Möise et Pharaon*, and Boito's *Mefistofele*. He conducted the New York premiere of Philip Glass's *Toltec Symphony* and Golijov's *Oceana*, both at Carnegie Hall. His performance of Kurt Weill's *Knickerbocker Holiday* at Alice Tully Hall was recorded live for Gaslight Records and is the only complete recording of this musical. Since 2011 he has collaborated with singer and composer Natalie Merchant, conducting a number of major orchestras across the country, including the San Francisco and Seattle Symphonies.

Mr. Bagwell has trained choruses for a number of major American and international orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic; Los Angeles Philharmonic; San Francisco, NHK (Japan), and St. Petersburg Symphonies; and the Budapest Festival, Mostly Mozart Festival, American Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Cincinnati Pops, and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestras. Since 2003 he has been Director of Choruses for the Bard Music Festival, conducting and preparing choral works during the summer festival at The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College.

He conducted some 25 productions as music director of Light Opera Oklahoma. At Bard SummerScape Festival he has led various theatrical works, most notably *The Tender Land*, which received glowing praise from *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, and *Opera News*. From 2005–10 he was Music Director of The Dessoff Choirs in New York, who under his leadership made numerous appearances at Carnegie Hall in addition to their regular season.

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Leon Botstein, *Conductor*

VIOLIN I

Cyrus Beroukhim,
Concertmaster
Yukie Handa
Yana Goichman
Patricia Davis
John Connelly
Ashley Horne
Diane Bruce
Samuel Katz
Bruno Peña
Margarita Milkis

VIOLIN II

Pauline Kim Harris,
Principal
Wende Namkung
Ragga Petursdottir
Alexander Vselensky
Dorothy Strahl
Dilyana Tsenov
Jeremiah Blacklow
Naho Parrini

VIOLA

William Frampton,
Principal
Sally Shumway
Adria Benjamin
Rachel Riggs
Martha Brody
Veronica Salas
Jason Mellow
William Hakim

CELLO

Eugene Moye,
Principal
Jordan Enzinger
Annabelle Hoffman
Sarah Carter
Maureen Hynes
Zsaz Rutkowski

BASS

John Beal, *Principal*
Jordan Frazier
Louis Bruno
Richard Ostrovsky
William Ellison

FLUTE

Laura Conwesser,
Principal
Rie Schmidt
Diva Goodfriend-
Koven, *Piccolo*

OBOE

Alexandra Knoll,
Principal
Julia DeRosa
Melanie Feld,
English horn

CLARINET

Alec Manasse,
Principal
Christopher Cullen
Benjamin Baron
David Gould,
Basset horn
Lino Gomez,
Bass clarinet

BASSOON

Oleksiy Zakharov,
Principal
Josh Hodge
Zachary Feingold
Gilbert Dejean,
Contrabassoon

HORN

Chris Komer,
Principal
David Smith
Steven Sherts
Rachel Drehmann
Chad Yarbrough,
Assistant

TRUMPET

Maximilian Morel,
Principal
John Dent
John Sheppard

TROMBONE

Richard Clark,
Principal
Nicole Abissi
Jeffrey Caswell,
Bass trombone

TUBA

Kyle Turner, *Principal*

TIMPANI

David Fein, *Principal*

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Principal
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HARP

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Kendra Berentsen
Nina Berman
Kirby Burgess
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Leonie Donato
Lori Engle
Jennifer Gliere
Amy Goldin
Manami Hattori
Jessica Marsten
Kathryn McCreary
Nina Negri
Katherine Peck
Abigail Raiford
Rachel Rosales
Ellen Taylor Sisson
Christine Sperry
Kiena Williams
Amanda Yachechak

ALTO

Sarah Bleasdale
Jennifer Borghi
Teresa Buchholz
Sishel Clavierie
Brooke Collins
Stephanie Feigenbaum
Laura Green
Allison Gish
Erica Koehring
Sarah Nordin
Lara Stevens Ryan
Carla Wesby
Denise Woods
Abigail Wright

TENOR

Jack Cotterell
Rashard Deleston
Joseph Demarest
Mark Donato
John Easterlin
Sean Fallen
Ethan Fran
Brandon Hornsby-
Selvin
Matthew Krenz
Eric William Lamp
Alex Longnecker
Alexander McCoy
Nicholas Prior
Erik Rasmussen
Nathan Riehl

BASS

Jordan Barrett
Dennis Blackwell
Blake Austin Brooks
Ivan Conrad
Roosevelt Credit
David Flight
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