



**AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA GIVES RARE PERFORMANCE OF
ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S MASSIVE *GURRE-LIEDER*
WITH MORE THAN 200 ARTISTS ON STAGE AT CARNEGIE HALL
MARCH 22, 2024**

Concert Marks *Gurre-Lieder's* Centennial and the 150th Anniversary of Schoenberg's Birth

**Soloists are Soprano Felicia Moore, Mezzo-Soprano Krysty Swann,
Tenors Dominic Armstrong and Brenton Ryan, and Bass-Baritones Carsten Wittmoser
and Alan Held, with James Bagwell Leading the Bard Festival Chorale**



New York, NY, February 14, 2024 — Music Director **Leon Botstein** leads the **American Symphony Orchestra** (ASO) and the Bard Festival Chorale in a rare performance of Schoenberg's massive cantata, *Gurre-Lieder*, at Carnegie Hall on Friday, March 22 at 8 PM. Infrequently performed due to the unusually large number of musicians required and the logistical challenges it poses, the work is scored for more than 200 musicians, including six soloists, chorus, and a grand orchestra.

The performance celebrates the 150th anniversary of Schoenberg's birth, and the centennial of *Gurre-Lieder's* 1913 world premiere in Vienna. It has been more than 90 years since the work's 1932 American premiere by American Symphony Orchestra founder Leopold Stokowski with the Philadelphia Orchestra. It was recorded the next day for a remarkable twenty-seven 78 RPM discs. This concert closes the ASO's 2023-24 season at Carnegie Hall.

The guest artists are soprano **Felicia Moore**, noted by *The Wall Street Journal* for her "opulent, Wagner-scaled soprano," who sang in this year's Metropolitan Opera premiere of Anthony Davis' *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*; mezzo-soprano **Krysty Swann**, who recently appeared at The Met as Jade Boucher in *Dead Man Walking*; tenor **Dominic Armstrong**, who this season sings Cavaradossi in Maryland Opera's production of *Tosca*; tenor **Brenton Ryan**, hailed by *Opera News* for his "remarkable tonal suavity and refined phrasing," who returned to The Met as Monostatos in the new Simon McBurney staging of *Die Zauberflöte*; bass-baritone **Carsten Wittmoser**, a frequent performer in major opera houses ranging from Deutsche Oper

Berlin to The Met; and bass-baritone **Alan Held**, winner of a Brigit Nilsson Prize with a repertoire including title roles in *Wozzeck* and *Der fliegende Holländer*.

Schoenberg's Gurre-Lieder

Friday, March 22, 2024, 8 pm at Carnegie Hall, Isaac Stern Auditorium

Conductor's Notes Q&A 7 pm

American Symphony Orchestra

Leon Botstein, conductor

Dominic Armstrong, Waldemar

Felicia Moore, Tove

Krysty Swann, Waldtaube

Alan Held, Bauer

Brenton Ryan, Klaus Narr

Carsten Wittmoser, Narrator

Bard Festival Chorale

James Bagwell, music director

Arnold Schoenberg: *Gurre-Lieder*

Wagnerian in conception, Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder* is his largest work. It was written during the composer's tonal period and represents the ideal of late Romanticism, full of lush, colorful orchestration along with endless melodies and a highly chromatic harmonic language. The complexity of the work can be demonstrated in part by its gargantuan orchestration, which includes 40 violins; 6 timpani, tenor, snare, and bass drums; 3 four-part male choruses and an eight-part mixed chorus; cymbals, triangle, tam-tam, ratchet, glockenspiel, xylophone, and even large iron chains. Met with a standing ovation at its Viennese premiere, the cantata springs from a sonnet in an 1868 novella titled *A Cactus Blooms* by the young Danish poet Jens Peter Jacobsen. The story is based on a 14th-century Gurre legend about King Waldemar, his passion for the maiden Tove Lille, their love tryst at Gurre Castle, and Tove's subsequent murder by the king's jealous wife.

Tickets: Priced at \$25–\$65, tickets are available at carnegiehall.org, by calling CarnegieCharge at 212.247.7800, or visiting the box office at 57th St. & 7th Ave.

American Symphony Orchestra

The American Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1962 by Leopold Stokowski with the mission of providing 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, 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 SummerScape, performs at the Bard Music Festival, and offers chamber music performances throughout the New York City area.

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 streaming](#). In many cases, these are the only existing recordings of some of the forgotten works that have been restored through ASO performances.

For more information, please visit americansymphony.org.

Leon Botstein

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 Campus Grafenegg and the Grafenegg Academy in Austria. Mr. Botstein also has an active career as a guest conductor with orchestras around the globe and has made numerous recordings. He is a prolific author and music historian and the recipient of numerous honors for his contributions to the music industry. In 2019, *The New York Times* named Leon Botstein a “champion of overlooked works...who has tirelessly worked to bring to light worthy scores by neglected composers.” More info online at LeonBotstein.com.

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