

REQUIEM & *Revelation*

St. Bartholomew's Church
American Symphony Orchestra
Leon Botstein, Conductor

Thursday, November 13, 2025

8PM Concert

7PM Pre-concert talk with

Leon Botstein



Mid-Manhattan Performing Arts Foundation

REQUIEM & REVELATION

LEON BOTSTEIN, CONDUCTOR

PETER CORNELIUS (1824-1874)

Stabat Mater (1849)

- I. Stabat Mater dolorosa
- II. O quam tristis et afflicta
- III. Qui est homo, qui non fleret
- IV. Pro peccatis suae gentis
- V. Eja Mater, fons amoris
- VI. Sancta Mater
- VII. Fac me vere tecum flere
- VIII. Virgo virginum praeclara
- IX. Fac me plagis vulnerari
- X. Fac me cruce custodiri

U.S. Premiere

WENDY BRYN HARMER, Soprano

KRYSTY SWANN, Mezzo-soprano

ERIC TAYLOR, Tenor

HAROLD WILSON, Bass

BARD FESTIVAL CHORALE

James Bagwell, Director

Intermission

LUIGI CHERUBINI (1760-1842)

Requiem in C minor (1816)

- I. Introitus
- II. Graduale
- III. Dies Irae
- IV. Offertorium
- V. Sanctus
- VI. Pie Jesu
- VII. Agnus Dei

BARD FESTIVAL CHORALE

James Bagwell, Director

Tonight's concert will run approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes, including a 20-minute intermission.

Presented in collaboration with the Mid-Manhattan Performing Arts Foundation.

The ASO's Vanguard Series is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

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For more information and tickets, please visit our website: americansymphony.org

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The latest release is a short film about the American Symphony Orchestra's massive undertaking of Arnold Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder*. The film takes a behind-the-scenes look at the rehearsal process leading up to the highly anticipated March 22, 2024 performance at Carnegie Hall with context provided by Music Director Leon Botstein and Chorus Director James Bagwell. The film was released in September in conjunction with the 150th anniversary of Schoenberg's birthday.

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The American Symphony Orchestra (ASO) was founded in 1962 by Leopold Stokowski with the mission of providing great music for everyone. Leon Botstein expanded that focus when he joined the ASO as music director in 1992 by creating concerts that explore music through the lens of the visual arts, literature, religion, and history, as well as by reviving rarely performed works that audiences would otherwise never hear performed live. The ASO's signature programming includes its **Vanguard Series**, which features concerts of seldom-performed orchestral repertoire presented at **Carnegie Hall, Bryant Park**, and other historic venues, and its **Chamber Series**—curated by ASO's musicians—offering concert programs dedicated to reflecting the diverse perspectives of American culture. During the summer, the ASO is the orchestra in residence at Bard's SummerScape and performs at the Bard Music Festival. All of the ASO's presentations comprise a year-round series of vital and innovative programming for audiences of all backgrounds. As part of its commitment to expanding the standard orchestral repertoire and ensuring accessibility to musical masterpieces, the ASO offers free streaming of exclusive live recordings on its digital platform, **ASO Online**. Content includes SummerScape operas, chamber performances, and short films. In many cases, these are the only existing recordings of some of the forgotten works that have been restored through ASO performances.

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December 14, 2025 · 7:30pm
Adoration of the Magi
Jeff Morrissey, baritone

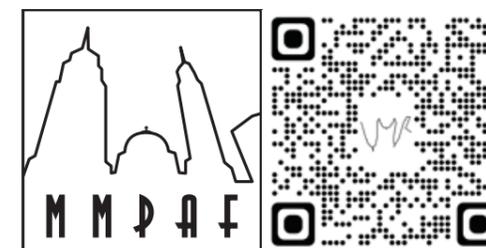
February 4, 2026 · 7:30pm
The King's Singers

December 16, 2025 · 7:30pm
A Joyous Christmas Concert
St. Bartholomew's Choir
Paolo Bordignon, conductor

Tuesday, May 5, 2026 · 7:30pm
St. Bartholomew's Choir in concert
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A NOTE FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

By Leon Botstein

Today's concert at St. Bartholomew's brings to light, with live performance, two sacred works from the first half of the nineteenth century. The earlier work—the Cherubini Requiem from 1816 closes our concert. However, it provides a foundation for understanding the character and place of sacred music during the Romantic era.

The conventional account of the early nineteenth century argues that the so-called Age of Enlightenment or Age of Reason came to an end during the Reign of Terror of the French Revolution, the subsequent rise of Napoleon and his reinvention of monarchy as a distinctly imperial enterprise. There seemed to be no question that the *ancien régime*, the political system before the Revolution, had come to an end. But its demise turned out to be temporary and partial. Napoleon was a symbol of a new age in which an individual might transcend the limitations of birth and rise to a position of power. He not only became a monarch, but invented a new aristocracy and ruled over a vast territory acquired by conquest. The same unprecedented career characterized his sometime associate and rival, Marshal Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte, the French commoner who ascended the Swedish throne through fame achieved by military prowess. It could be argued that these self-made men simply exploited old hierarchies and gave only lip service to the revolutionary ideas of equality, fraternity and liberty. Yet they paved the way politically for scientific and technological progress, industrialization and democratization during the nineteenth century.

The terror of the Napoleonic Wars and the repressive restoration that dominated Europe between 1815 and 1848 led to several shifts in cultural taste. Given the

rapid economic development that began in England in the mid-eighteenth century and continued throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, it comes as no surprise that there was a profound expansion of literacy and cultural consumption in the rapidly expanding major cities of Europe. Modern nationalism developed out of a reaction to Napoleon's triumphs.

In contrast to the eighteenth century during which the secular skepticism of Voltaire predominated, the early nineteenth century witnessed an intense interest in human subjectivity and sentiment, in spirituality, metaphysics and even the gothic and occult. The religious experience enjoyed a revival as confidence dwindled in the faith that reason could be the governor of human behavior.

Luigi Cherubini (1760-1842) was an Italian who made his career in France initially under the patronage of the Bourbon monarchy. He maneuvered deftly through the various stages of the French Revolution and Napoleonic rule only to emerge after 1815 as the official representative of music during the Bourbon restoration of Louis XVIII. This Requiem was written to commemorate the reburial of the Bourbon monarchs, which itself was an event designed to ritually mark the defeat of the Revolution.

The ironic fact that decades earlier Cherubini had written music to celebrate the execution of Louis XVI suggests the elusive power and ambiguity of music as a form of life and communication. Arthur Schopenhauer's influential notion that music expressed the "Will," the driving force of life in the universe, in a manner inaccessible to visual art and language is perhaps the most well-known articulation of the early nineteenth-century

obsession with music as the most spiritual of the arts, whose power lay beyond ordinary rationality and whose nature and character defied adequate verbal description and representation.

The Requiem may have been written to curry favor with the restored monarchy, but its traditional text and stunning music reveal no palpable stable political meaning. As has been often repeated, Beethoven considered Cherubini the greatest composer of his own lifetime. He deeply admired this work as exemplifying excellence in the art of music.

Although the music of Cherubini has been championed in recent history by Arturo Toscanini and Riccardo Muti, the works of this consummate master of musical thinking have all but vanished from the concert platform. There are great string quartets, operas, and sacred music, but the prevailing image of Cherubini remains that of an outdated pedant, a caricature Hector Berlioz helped to promote. But expressions of admiration by composers from Chopin to Brahms never wavered, and, as this Requiem makes clear, for good reason.

Carl August Peter Cornelius (1824-1874), whose Stabat Mater from 1848-49 opens this concert, presents a striking contrast to the life and work of Cherubini. Cornelius died relatively young, and his career took place entirely within the regions of German-speaking Europe. If he is remembered at all it is for two operas, the 1858 *Barber of Bagdad* (which was a scandalous failure in Weimar at its premiere but later enjoyed success) and the 1865 *El Cid* (which never became popular), both on subjects whose exotic character made them popular to mid-nineteenth century German-speaking audiences. Cornelius is also known for a set of Christmas songs which continue to be sung today. His musical output, unlike Cherubini's, was limited. Cornelius had literary ambitions, writing in addition to music criticism

several lyric poems which he set to music. He had longstanding connections to the "New German School" but his friendships with Wagner and Liszt were complicated. Cornelius was the nephew of one of the great German painters of the early nineteenth century, Peter von Cornelius (1783-1867), a leader of the Nazarene movement that sought spiritual nourishment from medieval and early Renaissance Italian painting. Peter von Cornelius's canvases are striking in their beauty, and they anticipate the artistic movement from the later nineteenth century known as the pre-Raphaelites. The idea of spiritual rebirth through music and religion and the distant past that the composer Cornelius pursued can be traced to the influence and ambitions of his uncle.

The Stabat Mater on today's program is an American premiere. The work's first performance took place in 1929, well after its composition and the death of the composer, so we can assume that Cornelius, who died in 1874, never heard the work performed. Listeners will immediately recognize that this is not a run-of-the-mill composition by a talentless imitator of others. It shows the influence of Liszt and Mendelssohn, but the music projects and retains a distinctive voice.

Cherubini's Requiem in C minor was once famous and has been the object of period revival. Although it deserves to have the public's sustained attention, it hasn't quite managed to do so. Cornelius's Stabat Mater was never famous. Nonetheless, it merits the same acknowledgment through performance. Both works deserve the currency that only a few warhorses of the choral orchestral repertoire have retained. By performing the Stabat Mater for the first time in its history in the United States and reviving Cherubini's Requiem, perhaps choral societies and orchestras can follow the lead of the ASO and bring to the public something new, different and superb from music's own buried and forgotten past.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

By Sonja Wermager, Lecturer in Music at Columbia University

Peter Cornelius

Born December 24, 1824, in Mainz, Germany
Died October 26, 1874, in Mainz, Germany

Stabat Mater

Composed 1848-49
Premiered on August 11, 1929 in Salzburg, Austria
Conducted by Joseph Messner

In 1906 a columnist for *The Musical Times* lamented that Peter Cornelius's life was "the usual story of a genius-gifted composer's struggle for recognition which refused to come." During his fascinating life distinguished by association with some of the titans of nineteenth-century European musical culture, Cornelius was a valued colleague, supporter, and friend. Yet he never achieved the fame of those friends and associates like Wagner, Berlioz, and Liszt. Tonight's United States premiere of his *Stabat Mater* for soloists, chorus, and orchestra provides a rare and welcome opportunity to hear this "genius-gifted composer."

Cornelius was born in the city of Mainz, present-day Germany, in 1824. Born to two actors, Cornelius was trained from a young age to be both a musician and actor. He spent much of his early life in Mainz theaters, either playing violin in the orchestra pit or performing onstage. In many ways, this training prefigured his years-later declaration that "my life revolves around two poles: word and sound."

This commitment to the marriage of word and sound is evident in the *Stabat Mater*, which Cornelius composed in 1848 and 1849 while studying in Berlin. The composition marked the pinnacle of his studies with teacher Siegfried Dehn, for whom sacred polyphony represented the highest level of compositional study. To support his student's training, Dehn gave Cornelius a copy of Luigi Cherubini's 1835 treatise on polyphony,

and Cornelius copied out Cherubini's 1806 "Credo" in his notebook.

During this time Cornelius lived with his uncle, the renowned Nazarene painter Peter von Cornelius. The Nazarene movement was a collective of German Romantic visual artists who sought inspiration in the religious artwork of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, with the goal of rediscovering a spiritual vitality in art that they felt had dissipated during the Enlightenment. Perhaps young Peter Cornelius, a lifelong Christian, saw his composition of the *Stabat Mater* in similar terms: seeking musical and spiritual inspiration in a text that had inspired musicians for over 500 years.

The *Stabat Mater* ("The sorrowful mother was standing") is a thirteenth-century Catholic hymn text that meditates on the suffering of the Virgin Mary as she stands watch at Christ's Crucifixion. The text drew the attention of composers from Palestrina to Pergolesi to Haydn to Schubert and Rossini, among many others who set its words to music. Cornelius, following the model of predecessors, divided the text into movements, allowing himself opportunity to explore the dramatic and devotional potential of each verse.

The composition makes manifest Cornelius's training as a musician-dramatist. The first movement is united by a repeated motive that surges upwards, only to fall back down as if exhausted. Minor mode creates a somber aura to match the text, with sorrowful swells accompanying words like "moaning" and

"weeping." Yet Cornelius does not risk monotony. Responding sensitively to the text, he uses a rich harmonic palette to explore glimmers of hope, perhaps reminding his listeners that within the theological world of the text, the Crucifixion is only the beginning of a story that ends in resurrection and salvation.

Another highlight is an especially expressive soprano solo in "Eja Mater." Poetically, this marks a transition in the text from the third-person descriptive sections of the poem (i.e. "the sorrowful mother was standing") to a first-person plea to the Virgin (i.e. "Come now, O mother"). To fully emphasize this shift to the personal, Cornelius uses an individual voice, the soprano soloist, who addresses the Virgin with a moving simplicity and sincerity.

The following movement, *Sancta Mater* expands her prayer from the individual to the collective: a chorus of *a cappella* voices. Cornelius returns to this *a cappella* scoring in the final two movements, as well. The sound of voices without instrumental accompaniment recalls the style of Renaissance masters like Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594). Indeed, during the month that Cornelius was intently working on the *Stabat Mater*, he was also reading a biography of Palestrina and copying out his music, at Dehn's suggestion. Cornelius quipped that in transcribing Palestrina's music, he was "nourished on good examples." In these *a cappella* sections of the *Stabat Mater*, it is as if Cornelius is giving a characteristically generous nod of acknowledgement to those composers who set the text before him.

Luigi Cherubini

Born September 14, 1760, in Florence, Italy
Died March 15, 1842, in Paris, France

Requiem in C minor

Composed 1816
Premiered on January 21, 1817 in Paris, France
Conducted by Charles-Henri Plantade

Those who insist that art should rise above the fray of politics would do well to look at the life and career of Luigi Cherubini. A central figure in French musical life from the Revolution to the Restoration, Cherubini successfully weathered the seismic shifts of French politics by continually providing music to meet the moment. His *Requiem in C minor* is a remarkable case in point.

Although born in Florence, Cherubini lived most of his life in Paris. He first moved there in 1786, quickly finding success through his political savvy as much as his compositional talent. Cherubini gained entrance to the musical circle of Marie Antoinette and won the financial backing of Louis XVI's brother (later, Louis XVIII) to launch an Italian opera company. In mid-1789, however, the political landscape transformed dramatically with the start of the French Revolution; Cherubini wisely scrapped a planned opera about royal heroism. In 1794 he became a naturalized French citizen and joined the *Garde Nationale*, providing music for political festivals. It was in this capacity that he led musical festivities

at a 1796 celebration to commemorate the execution of the former king, three years prior.

Fast forward 20 years to 1816, when Cherubini was commissioned once again to commemorate the execution of Louis XVI: this time not to celebrate, but to mourn. After the upheaval of Napoleonic rule, which Cherubini navigated with characteristic political survivorship, he was appointed superintendent of the Royal Chapel by the restored Bourbon King Louis XVIII. In this role Cherubini produced a wealth of sacred music; in fact, from 1816 to 1822 he devoted himself to the genre almost exclusively.

The *Requiem in C minor* was composed for a solemn public event on January 21, 1817: the re-entombment of the French monarchs whose remains had been removed from the Basilica of Saint-Denis during the Revolution. Cherubini's setting of the *Requiem*, the Mass for the Dead in the Catholic tradition, sets an appropriate mood. The *Introitus* begins in the depths: Cherubini opts for low-pitched

THE ARTISTS



Leon Botstein, Conductor
Photo by 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. Botstein is also active as a guest conductor and can be heard on numerous recordings with the London Symphony (including a GRAMMY-nominated recording of Popov's First Symphony), the London Philharmonic, NDR-Hamburg, and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. Botstein has revived numerous neglected works, creating once-in-a-lifetime experiences for concertgoers and global audiences, including rare repertoire such as Schoenberg's massive *Gurre-Lieder* and the accompanying short film, which documented the monumental undertaking, Strauss's first opera, *Guntram*, and the U.S. premiere of Sergei Taneyev's final work, *At the Reading of a Psalm*. His recording of Paul Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner* with the ASO 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*. 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."

instruments—bassoons and cellos—that play a tentatively rising melody in unison. Violas join as the choir enters, hushed, singing the opening words of the Requiem text in a somber rhythmic lockstep. These words, "Give them eternal rest, O Lord" must have been particularly poignant at the first performance, with all present aware that the eternal rest of the French royals had been disrupted not long ago.

Later in the movement, the anguished harmonies of "exaudiorationem meam" ("hear my prayer") give way to a musical ray of light: Cherubini unexpectedly shifts to the major mode for "ad Te omnis caro veniet" ("unto Thee shall all flesh come"), as if to gently remind that these words are a promise, not a threat. The French composer Hector Berlioz, later a student of Cherubini's at the Conservatoire, praised the older composer for this kind of "chiaroscuro," or extreme contrast between light and dark.

The middle movements of the Requiem emerge from the gloom. Listen for the violins, suddenly shimmering high in the register, that herald the Archangel Michael and his holy light. Note also how God's promise to Abraham and his heirs, repeated in an extended section of cascading polyphony, evokes the patriarch's numberless descendants.

The Sanctus is likewise celebratory. But the sense of triumph is temporary. In the final two movements, Cherubini brings us back to the sobriety with which the work began. The Pie Jesu is characterized by a motive that reaches upwards before falling chromatically back down the scale, allowing Cherubini to play once again with the dividing line between major and minor.

The Agnus Dei oscillates between *pianissimo* and sudden flashes of *forte*, punctuated by dotted rhythms reminiscent of French tragic opera. These outbursts, however, eventually subside and the music begins a slow fade to the end. In a remarkable compositional choice, Cherubini pares back to choral monotone for the final two lines of text (which are also the first two lines of text). Of this ending Berlioz wrote: "It is the gradual decline of a suffering being, we see it fading and dying, we hear it expire.... The Agnus in decrescendo surpasses everything that has ever been written of the kind."



Wendy Bryn Harmer, Soprano
Photo by Arielle Doneson

The Seattle Times heralds Wendy Bryn Harmer as "a standout Senta with a big, radiant voice." In the 2025-26 season, she returns as Leonore in *Fidelio* with Utah Opera and Boston Baroque to debut Elettra in *Idomeneo* in addition to singing Vaughan William's *Sea Symphony* with the Oregon Symphony and Cornelius's *Stabat Mater* with the American Symphony Orchestra. She also returns to The Metropolitan Opera roster for its production of *Turandot*. Future seasons include her return to the Teatro Municipal de Santiago.

A thrilling interpreter of German dramatic repertoire, she has sung Senta in *Der fliegende Holländer* (Staatsoper Hamburg, Teatro Municipal de Santiago, Seattle Opera, Utah Opera), Chrysothemis in *Elektra* (Metropolitan Opera), Leonore in *Fidelio* (Opera Omaha, Boston Baroque), the title role of *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Palm Beach Opera), and Eglantine in *Euryanthe* (Bard Summerscape). She has also joined Seattle Opera as well as The Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Detroit Opera, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the Tanglewood Music Festival for operas that comprise Wagner's *Ring Cycle*. Her countless previous performances within the epic work encompass the roles of Sieglinde, Gerhilde, and Ortlinde in *Die Walküre*; Freia in *Das Rheingold*; and Guttrune and Third Norn in *Götterdämmerung*; Brunnhilde in *Die Walküre* is also in her repertoire.

Other performances include *Turandot* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City), Marilyn in the world premiere of *The Righteous and Miss Jessel* in *The Turn of the Screw* (Santa Fe Opera), Adalgisa in *Norma* (Palm Beach Opera), Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* (Houston Grand Opera), Desdemona in *Otello* (Kalamazoo Symphony),

Fata Morgana in *The Love for Three Oranges* (Opera Philadelphia), Kitty Hart in *Dead Man Walking* and 58 performances of Erste Dame in *Die Zauberflöte* (Metropolitan Opera).

On the concert stage, she has sung Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the San Francisco Symphony and Tulsa Symphony Orchestra. With the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, she sang Beethoven's "Ah! Perfido" and Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*.

She is a graduate of The Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program and holds a Bachelor of Music from Boston Conservatory.



Krysty Swann, Mezzo-soprano
Photo by Dario Acosta

Acclaimed mezzo-soprano Krysty Swann has been hailed for her beautiful and rich voice, as well as her captivating presence on stage. *The Washington Post* declared, "Krysty Swann has a voice, and she knows how to use it... [She] displayed an instrument of immense power, natural beauty of tone and luscious legato line."

Last season, Swann returned to the Lyric Opera of Chicago to sing *Girlfriend 3* and cover the Mother in *Blue*. She also joined Oberlin Conservatory to sing Fatima in *Omar* and New Haven Symphony for *The Ordering of Moses*. She workshoped Dana Franklin in *Kindred* at the Apollo Theater, and she closed the season with a return to Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as Beulah in the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon, Lynn Nottage, and Ruby Aiyo Gerber's *This House*. This season she joined Bard Music Festival as the Bird Seller in Martinů's *Julieta*.

Swann opened the previous season as Jade

Boucher in *Dead Man Walking* with The Metropolitan Opera, which was followed by the Mother in New Orleans Opera's production of *Blue*. She continued the season with Cousin Blanche in *Champion* with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder* with the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, Messiah with the Evansville Philharmonic, and *Sanctuary Road* with Princeton Pro Musica. Swann also joined the Rochester Philharmonic for the finale of their centennial season, featuring Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and the world premiere of Derrick Skye's *To Seek is Jubilance*; she sang on concerts with Maryland Opera and On Site Opera; and she joined Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for a series of workshops as part of their New Works Collective.

In recent seasons, Swann returned to The Metropolitan Opera as Cousin Evelyn in *Champion*, and sang Rossweisse in Detroit Opera's *The Valkyries*, *Elijah* with Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra, Verdi's Requiem with the Bach Festival Society of Winter Park, *The Ordering of Moses* for Oberlin Conservatory, and Handel's Messiah for Pacific Symphony. She debuted at The Metropolitan Opera as the Third Maid in *Elektra* and appeared in the revival of Philip Glass' *Akhmaten*.



Eric Taylor, Tenor
Photo by Daniel Welch

Noted for the "exceptional quality of his tenor" by *First Row*, in the 2025–26 season tenor Eric Taylor will make his Metropolitan Opera debut as First Armored Man in *Die Zauberflöte*, and perform his signature role of Lieutenant Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with the Glimmerglass Festival, Opera North Carolina, and Opera Grand Rapids in three house debuts. He will also join the roster of the Lyric Opera of Chicago for the same title, as well as debut with the American Symphony

Orchestra for Cornelius's *Stabat Mater*.

Taylor joined the roster of The Metropolitan Opera in the 2024–25 season for Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded*, before returning to the role of B.F. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with Utah Opera and Pittsburgh Opera. He also joined Palm Beach Opera as Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*.

In the 2023–24 season, Taylor returned to Houston Grand Opera as Pinkerton and made his Detroit Opera debut in the same role. He appeared as Rodolfo in *La bohème* with Wolf Trap Opera as a Filene Artist and was named a Grand Finalist in The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

A graduate of the Butler Studio at Houston Grand Opera, his credits there include Narraboth in *Salome*, Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, First Armored Man in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Benvolio in *Roméo et Juliette*. He also covered Werther and Mark in *The Wreckers*.

An alumnus of the Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program, he appeared as Melot in *Tristan und Isolde* and covered Don José in *Carmen*. Additional training includes Central City Opera and Utah Lyric Opera.

Taylor holds a Master of Music from Rice University and a Bachelor of Music from Westminster College. He was the first prize winner of the 2023 Houston Saengerbund Competition.



Harold Wilson, Bass
Photo by Ken Jones

A member of the Deutsche Oper Berlin for five seasons, bass Harold Wilson sang over 30 roles

with the company including: Arkel (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), Raimondo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), Zuniga (*Carmen*), and the Hermit (*Der Freischütz*). In the United States, he has been seen in over a dozen productions at The Metropolitan Opera.

The 2025-2026 season begins in Mexico City with Beethoven's 9th Symphony at the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería. He then returns to The Met to sing the Speaker in *The Magic Flute* and covers König Marke in Yuval Sharon's *Tristan und Isolde*, and Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula*. He joins Nashville Opera as Ashby/Jake Wallace (*La fanciulla del West*), and debuts with North Carolina Symphony for Mozart's Mass in C minor.

Wilson made a number of debuts and returns during the 2024-2025 season. At The Met, he sang performances of the King (*Aida*); 1st Soldier (*Salome*); while also covering Ramfis (*Aida*) and Rocco (*Fidelio*). He made a house and role debut at San Diego Opera as Colline (*La bohème*), and an orchestral debut with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in Mozart's Mass in C Minor. In 2023-2024, he returned to The Met roster as Reinmar (*Tannhäuser*) and in *Nabucco* and *Turandot*. He appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra (Nathalie Stutzmann) for Mozart's Requiem at both Verizon Hall and Carnegie Hall. Other engagements at The Metropolitan Opera include: the Sprecher (Simon McBurney's new staging of *Die Zauberflöte*); Hobson (*Peter Grimes*), and Ramfis in a performance of Verdi's *Aida*. In addition, his assignments extended to *Tosca*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Armida*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Boris Godunov*, *Don Carlos*, *Les Troyens*, *Turandot*, *Macbeth*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, *The Fiery Angel*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Nabucco*, *Iolanta*, and *Das Rheingold*.

Across North America, he made his Canadian Opera Company debut as Daland (*Der fliegende Holländer*). With Opera Colorado, Daland (*Der fliegende Holländer*), Basilio (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Ashby (*La fanciulla del West*), Ramfis (*Aida*), and Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*); Ramfis (*Aida*) with Dayton Opera, Tulsa Opera, and Birmingham Opera; Timur (*Turandot*) with Dayton Opera and Hawaii

Opera; the Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*) with Opera Memphis and Portland Opera; Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*) with Opera Birmingham and Chautauqua Opera; Rocco (*Fidelio*) and Mustafa (*L'italiana in Algeri*) with Sarasota Opera; the High Priest of Baal (*Nabucco*) with Palm Beach Opera; and with the Caramoor Festival, Ernesto (*Il Pirata*).

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS

PETER CORNELIUS STABAT MATER

Translation by Hans van der Velden, adapted by Dr. Heidi A. Schneider

I.

Stabat Mater dolorosa
juxta crucem lacrymosa
dum pendebat Filius.

The grieving Mother stood
weeping beside the cross
where her Son was hanging.

Cujus animam gementem,
contristatam et dolentem,
pertansivit gladius.

Through whose weeping soul,
saddened and grieving,
a sword has passed.

II.

O quam tristis et afflicta
fuit illa benedicta Mater
Unigeniti,

O how sad and afflicted
was that blessed Mother
of the only-begotten,

Quae moerebat et dolebat,
Pia Mater, dum videbat
Nati poenas incliti.

who mourned and grieved,
Holy Mother, seeing and bearing the torment
of her glorious child.

III.

Quis est homo, qui non fletet,
Christi Matrem si videret
in tanto supplico?

Who is it that would not weep,
seeing Christ's Mother
in such agony?

Quis non posset contristari
Christi Matrem contemplari
dolentem cum Filio?

Who could not feel compassion
on beholding the Holy Mother
suffering with her Son?

IV.

Pro peccatis suae gentis,
vidit Jesum in tormentis
et flagellis subditum.

For the sake of His peoples' sins,
she saw Jesus tormented
and subjected to whips.

Vidit suum dulcem Natum
moriendo desolatum
dum emisit spiritum.

She saw her sweet Child
dying, desolate,
as He gave up His spirit.

V.

Eja Mater, fons amoris,
me sentire vim doloris,
fac, ut tecum lugeam.

O Mother, fountain of love,
make me feel the power of sorrow,
grant that I may grieve with you.

Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
in amando Christi Deum,
ut sibi complaceam.

Grant that my heart may burn
in the love of Christ my God,
that I may greatly please Him.

VI.

Sancta Mater, istud agas
Crucifixi fuge plagas
cordi meo valide.

Holy Mother, affix
the wounds of the Crucifixion
in my own heart.

Tui Nati vulnerati
tam dignati pro me pati,
poenas mecum divide.

Let me share the pain
of your own wounded Son,
who chose to suffer so much for me.

VII.

Fac me vere tecum flere
Crucifixo condolere
donec ego vixero.

Let me truly weep with you
and show compassion for the crucified
as long as I live.

Juxta crucem tecum stare,
te libenter sociare
in planctu desidero.

I wish to stand with you next to the Cross,
and willingly be your companion
in tearful lamentation.

VIII.

Virgo virginum praeclara,
mihi jam non sis amara,
fac me tecum plangere.

Most illustrious Virgin of virgins,
do not be harsh with me,
allow me to weep with you.

Fac ut portem Christi mortem
Passionis fac consortem
et plagas recolare.

Grant that I might bear
the suffering and death of Christ,
and receive His wounds.

IX.

Fac me plagis vulnerari,
cruce fac inebriari
et cruore Filii.

Let me be wounded by His wounds,
make me inebriated with the Cross
through the blood of your Son.

Inflamatus et accensus,
per te, Virgo, sim defensus
in die judicii.

Burning and on fire,
by Thee, Virgin, may I be defended
on the Day of Judgment.

X.

Fac me cruce custodiri,
morte Christi praemuniri,
confoveri gratia.

May I be guarded by the Cross,
protected by the death of Christ,
urtured by grace.

Quando corpus morietur,
fac, ut animae donetur
Paradisi gloria.

When my body dies,
let my soul be given
to the glorious Paradise.

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS

LUIGI CHERUBINI REQUIEM IN C MINOR

Translation by antonin-dvorak.cz, adapted by Dr. Heidi A. Schneider

I. Introitus

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,
et Tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam,
ad Te omnis caro veniet.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
A hymn becomes you, O God, in Zion,
and to You shall a vow be repaid in Jerusalem.
Hear my prayer,
to You shall all flesh shall come.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Kyrie, eleison,
Christe, eleison.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
Lord, have mercy,
Christ, have mercy.

II. Graduale

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
In memoria aeterna erit justus,
ab auditione mala non timebit.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
He shall be justified in everlasting memory,
and shall not fear evil reports.

III. Dies Irae

Dies irae, dies illa,
solvat saeculum in favilla,
teste David cum Sibylla.
Quantus tremor est futurus,
quando Judex est venturus,
cuncta stricte discussurus.

The day of wrath, that day,
will dissolve the world in ashes,
as foretold by David and the Sibyl.
How much tremor there will be,
when the judge will come,
investigating everything strictly.

Tuba, mirum spargens sonum
per sepulcra regionum,
coget omnes ante thronum.
Mors stupebit et natura,
cum resurget creatura
Judicanti responsura.
Liber scriptus proferetur,
in quo totum continetur,
unde mundus judicetur.
Judex ergo cum sedebit,
quidquid latet, apparebit:
nil inultum remanebit.

The trumpet, scattering a wondrous sound
through the sepulchres of the regions,
will summon all before the throne.
Death and nature will marvel,
when the creature arises
to respond to the Judge.
The written book will be brought forth,
in which all is contained,
from which the world shall be judged.
When therefore the Judge will sit,
whatever hides, will appear:
nothing will remain unpunished.

Quid sum miser, tunc dicturus?
Quem patronem rogaturus,

What am I, miserable, then to say?
Which patron to ask,

cum vix justus sit securus?
Rex tremendae majestatis,
qui salvandos salvas gratis,
salva me, fons pietatis.

when even the just may only hardly be sure?
King of tremendous majesty,
who freely savest those that have to be saved,
save me, source of mercy.

Recordare, Jesu pie,
quod cum causa tuae viae:
ne me perdas illa die.
Quaerens me, sedisti lassus:
redemisti crucem passus:
tantus labor non sit cassus.
Juste Judex ultionis,
donum fac remissionis
ante diem rationis.
Ingemisco, tamquam reus:
culpa rubet vultus meus.
Supplicanti parce, Deus.
Qui Mariam absolvisti,
et latronem exaudisti,
mihi quoque spem dedisti.
Preces meae non sunt dignae:
sed tu bonus fac benigne,
ne perenni cremer igne.
Inter oves locum praesta,
et ab haedis me sequestra,
statuens in parte dextra.

Remember, merciful Jesus,
that I am the cause of thy way:
lest thou lose me in that day.
Seeking me, thou sat tired:
thou redeemed me having suffered the cross:
let not so much hardship be lost.
Just Judge of revenge,
give the gift of remission
before the day of reckoning.
I sigh, like the guilty one:
my face reddens in guilt.
Spare the supplicating one, God.
Thou who absolved Mary,
and heardest the robber,
gave hope to me, too.
My prayers are not worthy:
however, thou, good Lord, do good,
lest I am burned up by eternal fire.
Grant me a place among the sheep,
and take me out from among the goats,
setting me on the right side.

Confutatis maledictis,
flammis acribus addictis,
voca me cum benedictis.
Oro supplex et acclinis,
cor contritum quasi cinis:
gere curam mei finis.

Once the cursed have been rebuked,
sentenced to acrid flames,
call, thou, me with the blessed.
I meekly and humbly pray,
my heart is as crushed as the ashes:
perform the healing of mine end.

Lacrymosa dies illa,
qua resurget ex favilla
judicandus homo reus.
Huic ergo parce, Deus:
Pie Jesu Domine,
dona eis requiem.
Amen.

Tearful will be that day,
on which from the ashes arises
the guilty man who is to be judged.
Spare him therefore, God:
Merciful Lord Jesus,
grant them rest.
Amen.

IV. Offertorium

Domine Jesu Christe,
Rex gloriae,
libera animas omnium
fidelium defunctorum
de poenis inferni
et de profundo lacu.
Libera eas de ore leonis,
ne absorbeat eas Tartarus,
ne cadant in obscurum:

Lord Jesus Christ,
King of glory,
free the souls of all the
faithful departed
from infernal punishment
and the deep pit.
Free them from the mouth of the lion,
do not let Tartarus swallow them,
nor let them fall into darkness:

TEXT & TRANSLATIONS

sed signifer sanctus Michael
repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam,
quam olim Abrahae promisisti
et semini ejus.

Hostias et preces tibi, Domine,
laudis offerimus:
Tu suscipe pro animabus illis
quarum hodie
memoriam faciemus.
Fac eas, Domine,
de morte transire ad vitam.

V. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth!
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis!
Benedictus qui venit in
nomine Domini.

VI. Pie Jesu

Pie Jesu Domine,
dona eis requiem sempiternam.

VII. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem sempiternam.

Lux aeterna luceat eis,
Domine,
cum Sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua
luceat eis.

but may the standard-bearer Saint Michael
lead them into the holy light,
which you once promised to Abraham
and his seed.

Sacrifices and prayers, O Lord,
we offer praise:
to You, on behalf of those souls
whom on this day
we will remember.
Let them, O Lord,
pass over from death to life.

Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of Hosts!
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in
the name of the Lord.

Merciful Lord Jesus,
grant them eternal rest.

Lamb of God,
you who take away the sins of the world,
grant them eternal rest.

May everlasting light shine upon them,
O Lord,
with your Saints forever,
for you are kind.
Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
and may everlasting light
shine upon them.

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James Bagwell, Music Director of the 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 the ensemble 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.

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.

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