

MSM WOMEN'S CHORUS

Kent Tritle, Ronnie Oliver, Jr., Hannah Nacheman, and Alejandro Zuleta, Conductors

Vanessa May-lok Lee, piano Francesca Leo, flute Liana Hoffman and Shengmu Wang, horn Minyoung Kwon and Frances Konomi, harp Tamika Gorski (MM '17), marimba Elliot Roman and Alexandros Darna, percussion



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PROGRAM

STEPHEN PAULUS

(1949-2014)

The Earth Sings

I. Day Break II. Sea and Sky

III. Wind and Sun

Alejandro Zuleta, Conductor Vanessa May-lok Lee, piano

Elliot Roman and Alexandros Darna, percussion

GUSTAV HOLST (1874–1934) Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda, Group 3, H. 99,

Op. 26

Hymn to the Dawn Hymn to the Waters

Hymn to Vena (Sun rising through the mist)

Hymn of the Travellers

Hannah Nacheman, Conductor

Minyoung Kwon, harp

VINCENT PERSICHETTI (1915–1987) Winter Cantata, Op. 97

I. A Copper Pheasant

II. Winter's First Drizzle
III. Winter Seclusion

IV. The Woodcutter

V. Gentlest Fall of Snow

VI. One Umbrella

VII. Of Crimson Ice

VIII. The Branch Is Black

IX. Fallen Leaves

X. So Deep

XI. The Wind's Whetstone

XII. Epilogue

Ronnie Oliver, Jr., Conductor

Francesca Leo, flute

Tamika Gorski (MM '17), marimba

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

Vier Gesänge (Four Songs), Op. 17

I. Es tönt ein voller Harfenklang (The harp resounds)

IV. Gesang aus Fingal

Kent Tritle, Conductor Liana Hoffman, horn Shengmu Wang, horn Frances Konomi, harp

PROGRAM NOTES

The Earth Sings Stephen Paulus

Prolific American composer Stephen Paulus earned his Bachelor's, Master's, and doctoral degrees at the University of Minnesota, where he studied composition with Paul Fetler and Dominick Argento. Immediately upon receiving his doctorate he received a commission from the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis that resulted in *The Village Singer* (1979), which in turn led to *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1982), the first American opera to be presented at the Edinburgh Festival. His more than 600 works also include music for chorus, orchestra, chamber ensemble, solo voice, concert band, piano, and organ, written for renowned ensembles and artists in the U.S. ranging from the Minnesota Orchestra and New York Choral Society to Doc Severinson and Thomas Hampson.

Paulus's many honors include Guggenheim and NEA fellowships, the Kennedy Center Friedheim prize, and composer residencies with the orchestras of Atlanta, Minnesota, Tucson, and Annapolis. He also earned posthumous Grammy Awards in 2016 for Best Contemporary Classical Composition (*Prayers and Remembrances*) and Best Classical Compendium (*Stephen Paulus: Three Places of Enlightenment, Veil of Tears & Grand Concerto*). A strong champion of contemporary music, Paulus founded the Minnesota Composers Forum together with fellow graduate student Libby Larsen in 1973. Now known as the American Composers Forum, it has become the largest composer service organization in the U.S.

Thousands of performances of Paulus's more than 400 choral works have graced the world's stages and churches. His basically tonal idiom is laced with chromaticism, simultaneous inflections of more than one key, and fluid rhythms, all bound up in a style that switches easily from lyric expressivity to propulsive energy. He composed *The Earth Sings* in 1995 on a commission from the Young Singers of Callanwolde and their director Stephen J. Ortlip. (The publication date of 1997 is often incorrectly given as the date of composition.) Made up of three pieces that celebrate nature, the work was premiered on May 21, 1995, at Altanta's Rosewell United Methodist Church, sung by four choirs—Harmony Youth Chorus, Spivey Hall Children's Chorus, Gwinnet Young Singers, and Young Singers of Callanwolde—all conducted by Henry Leck.

Paulus scored *The Earth Sings* for three-part treble chorus with percussion and piano accompaniment, making the percussion parts—maracas, tambourine, finger cymbals, low wood block, and bell tree—suitable

for members of the choral ensemble to play. For "Day Break" he chose an anonymous text from the Mudbara tribe of Wave Hill, Australia (translated by Australian anthropologist Ronald M. Berndt), which portrays the sun as a goddess. Paulus sets up a catchy syncopated rhythmic pattern, over which the chorus enters in sustained chords that soon break into lines that aptly fit the text rhythms. The lively first section, with its signature "daylight breaking" and "stretching her arms" gestures, returns to cap the three-part form.

Slow and sustained until just before the end, "Sea and Sky" sets a famous text by Uvavnuk, a 19th-century spiritual healer and oral poet of the Arctic Inuit people, whose story was transmitted through Greenlandic-Danish explorer Knud Rassmussen (English translation by Tom Lowenstein). When Uvavnuk experienced her spiritual transformation, a poem-song came to her that has been translated many times and frequently analyzed by anthropologists, ethnographers, and poets. Paulus's setting particularly highlights the piano, which begins in its low range, as do the voices. Soon, chiming chords underlie the sustained vocal lines, which become especially picturesque for "carries me with it" and jubilant for "So I shake with joy."

For "Wind and Sun" Paulus selected a medieval Latin text from the famous 11th-century collection of Goliardic song texts, *Carmina cantabrigiensia* (Cambridge songs), from a codex whose surviving leaves are held at the Cambridge University Library. The poem is actually a lament about a woman's loneliness (scholars debate whether it was written by a man or woman), but Paulus wanted to conclude joyfully and selected only the poem's first fifteen lines, which celebrate spring. His opening shimmer of sound opens into a buoyant, rhythmic celebration. These two styles of expression alternate and eventually combine just before the ringing conclusion.

Text

The Earth Sings

I. Day Break

The day breaks—the first rays of the rising Sun, stretching her arms. Daylight breaking, as the Sun rises to her feet,

Sun rising, scattering the darkness, lighting up the land
With disk shining, bringing daylight, lighting up the land . . .
People are talking, moving about, feeling the warmth,
Burning through the gorge she rises, walking westwards,
Wearing her waistband of human hair.
She shines on the blossoming coolibah tree, with its sprawling roots,
Its branches spreading.

-Anon. (Mudbara tribe, Australia), trans. Ronald M. Berndt

II. Sea and Sky
The great sea stirs me.
The great sea sets me adrift,
it sways me like the weed
on a river-stone.

The sky's height stirs me. The strong wind blows through my mind. It carries me with it, so I shake with joy.

-Uvavnuk (lgulik Inuit text), trans. Tom Lowenstein

III. Wind and Sun Wind is thin, sun warm, the earth overflows with good things.

Spring is purple jewelry; flowers on the ground, green in the forest:

Quadrupeds shine and wander. Birds nest. On blossoming branches they cry joy!

My eyes see, my ears hear so much, and I am thrilled.

-Anon. (medieval Latin text), trans. Aliki and Willis Barnstone

Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda, Group 3, H. 99, Op. 26 Gustav Holst

For the majority of his career, Holst divided his time between teaching and composing. After succeeding Vaughan Williams for a two-year stint at James Allen's Girls' School in Dulwich, Holst accepted the appointment in 1905 as head of music at St. Paul's Girls' School, Hammersmith, where he remained for the rest of his life. He concurrently held a number of other posts, such as those at Morley College and eventually at the Royal College of Music and University College, Reading, but he always did his composing at St. Paul's during weekends and school holidays when all was quiet.

In 1914 Holst wrote, "As a rule I only study things that suggest music to me. That's why I worried at Sanskrit." He had studied Sanskrit at University College, London, because he was unhappy with existing translations of Hindu poems that he wanted to set to music. Though he never became entirely fluent, he was able to provide himself with texts, setting his first group, *Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda*, Op. 24, in 1908–10. He added a second group in 1909, a third in 1910, and a fourth in 1912. He had not heard any Indian music and was apparently not interested in evoking it in these songs. Rather, he sought to portray the poetry in his own largely Romantic musical idioms.

Holst dedicated Group 3 to "Frank Duckworth and his Ladies' Choir, Blackburn," who gave the premiere with harpist Harold Jarvis in the Blackburn Town Hall on March 16, 1911. This set has become the most frequently performed group of the four owing to its lovely use of the harp in combination with its four-part treble chorus.

Hymn to the Dawn creates an ethereal atmosphere with its rocking, ascending harp patterns under a lovely shimmer of voices that enter from lowest to highest on the interval of a rising fifth. Holst asks that the second soprano part be brought out since it "has the melody," but it is the addition of the first soprano part above it that creates such a poignant harmonic effect. Happily, Holst sets the three verses to the same music, giving the listener further chances to drink in its sublimity.

One of the products of Holst's Sanskrit studies was an interest in irregular meter, which carried through much of his mature music. The sprightly *Hymn to the Waters* bears the unusual time signature 21/8, with Holst's marking for the dancelike bars of the opening and closing sections to be divided into 4 + 3 beats and the rising lines of the central section into 3 + 4 beats. In the second half of the middle section he cleverly superimposes

just a few voices with the dancelike 4 + 3 music on the rising 3 + 4 music before bringing back the playful opening. Cascading harp figures add the perfect water imagery.

Hymn to Vena (Sun rising through the mist) runs the gamut from slow repeated-note "chanting" and crystalline harp chords to majestic peaks, a harp cadenza, and a sweetly flowing section—all in service of the text. Holst returns the listener to the slow chanting of the opening at "Wise men," but he alters this section ingeniously to fit the text, concluding jubilantly.

In *Hymn of the Travellers*, Holst uses modal gestures and repeating patterns to give a sense of distant places. Here again he revels in an irregular meter—5/4—and superimposes increasingly elaborate strands on his repetitive gestures, sometimes below and sometimes above. The ending fades away as if the travellers are receding in the distance. Holst once proposed the piece as an overture for his opera *Sivitri*, signaling both his partiality for it and its familial connection with another of his Sanskrit-inspired creations.

Texts Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda

Hymn to the Dawn

Hear our hymn, O Goddess, Rich in wealth and wisdom, Ever young yet ancient, True to Law Eternal.

Wak'ner of the songbirds, Ensign of the Eternal, Draw thou near, O Fair One In thy radiant Chariot.

Bring to her your off'ring; Humbly bow before her: Raise your songs of welcome As she comes in splendour.

Hymn to the Waters

Flowing from the firmament forth to the ocean, Healing all in earth and air, never halting.

Indra, Lord of Heav'n formed their courses, Indra's mighty laws can never be broken. Cleansing waters flow ye on, hasten and help us.

Lo, in the waters, dwelleth One, Knower of all on earth and sea, Whose dread command no man may shun, Varuna, sovran Lord is He.

Onward, ye waters, onward hie, Dance in the bright beams of the sun, Obey the ruler of the sky Who dug the path for you to run.

Flowing from the firmament . . .

Hymn to Vena (Sun rising through the mist)

Vena comes, born of light; He drives the many-colour'd clouds onward. Here, where the sunlight and the waters mingle, Our songs float up and caress the new-born infant.

The child of cloud and mist appeareth on the ridge of the sky. He shines on the summit of creation.

The hosts proclaim the glory of our common Father.

He hath come to the bosom of his beloved.

Smiling on him

She beareth him to highest heav'n.

With yearning heart

On thee we gaze, O gold-wing'd messenger of mighty gods.

Wise men see him in their libations As the sacrifice mounts to the eternal heights, mingling with our solemn chant:

He stands erect in highest heav'n. Clad in noble raiment, arm'd with shining weapons, Hurling light to the farthest region, Rejoicing in his radiant splendour.

Hymn of the Travellers

The god invoked in this hymn is the Guide of travellers along the roads of this world and along that leading to the next.

Go thou on before us,

Guide us on our way,

Mighty One.

Make our journey pleasant,

Never let us stray.

Wonder-worker, hearken.

Come in thy splendour; come in thy mighty pow'r.

Trample on the wicked, All who would oppose, Mighty One. Drive away the robber; Drive away our foes. Wonder-worker, hearken.

Come in thy splendour; come in thy mighty pow'r.

As we journey onward,
Songs to thee we raise,
Mighty One.
Thou didst aid our fathers.
Guard us all our days.
Wonder-worker, hearken.
Come in thy splendour; come in thy mighty pow'r.

Feed us and inspire us; Keep us in thy care, Mighty One. Lead us past pursuers Unto meadows fair. Wonder-worker, hearken.

Come in thy splendour; come in thy mighty pow'r.

—Trans. from the Sanskrit by Gustav Holst

Winter Cantata, Op. 97 Vincent Persichetti

Persichetti's thorough music education and early teaching career centered around Philadelphia. From ages five(!) to twenty he attended the

Combs College of Music, where he studied piano, organ, double bass, and eventually theory and composition, earning his Bachelor's degree in 1935. He immediately became head of Combs's theory and composition department, a position he maintained even as he began graduate studies in 1937—piano and composition at the Philadelphia Conservatory and conducting with Fritz Reiner at the Curtis Institute. In 1941, the same year he earned his Master's degree, he left his Combs position and became head of theory, composition, and postgraduate study at the Philadelphia Conservatory, where he had already been teaching as a graduate assistant. In 1945 he earned his own doctorate there, where he continued to teach until 1962.

Meanwhile, in 1947 he also joined the faculty at the Juilliard School, where Leo Brouwer, Richard Danielpour, Philip Glass, Lowell Liebermann, Steve Reich, Peter Schickele, and Conrad Susa were just a few of the recipients of his legendary teaching. He further extended his influence as an educator through his valuable manual *Twentieth Century Harmony: Creative Aspects and Practice* (1961). He also aided the careers of many composers in his thoughtful, painstaking work as music editor and director of publications for Elkan-Vogel, Inc.

All the while Persichetti composed a prodigious amount of music—symphonies, an opera, and much band, piano, chamber, choral, and solo vocal music—which reflects a wide range of styles and levels of difficulty, all marked by virtuoso craftsmanship. His works show an amazing ability to combine Modernist, Classic, and Romantic idioms and are characterized by two main creative tendencies that Persichetti himself described respectively as "graceful" and "gritty."

Persichetti's *Winter Cantata* is one of the repertoire's most successful works for women's chorus, partly because of his atmospheric use of flute and marimba to suggest winter. His inspiration came from his daughter's gift in 1964 of a collection of haiku, *A Net of Fireflies*, by poets Kikaku, Bashô, Hô-Ô, Busô, Yaha, Rankô, Ryôkan, and Izembô in translations by Harold Stewart. (Persichetti drew from the collection again in 1970 for his song cycle *A Net of Fireflies.*) His other motivation was a commission from the Emma Willard School in Troy, New York, where the premiere took place under the direction of Russell Locke on April 9, 1965.

Each poem follows the haiku convention of including at least one *kigo* (season word or phrase), so Persichetti selected eleven poems with winter *kigo*— "chilly sky," "winter's first drizzle," "winter seclusion," and so on—adding an epilogue that ties them all together. Stewart's translations do not maintain the rigorous construction of three lines of five, seven, and five syllables each, concentrating instead on preserving the poems' imagery. Persichetti also

allows himself a certain freedom in that he repeats phrases for musical effect, though the settings remain succinct. He does not quote actual Japanese melodies, but his modal language suggests an Asian palette.

Persichetti treats the *Winter Cantata* as a cycle, not only through his unifying epilogue but by carrying various flute and marimba motives from song to song. At the same time, he plays with contrast, both between songs and within certain songs. *One Umbrella*, for example, with its playful repetitions of that phrase, comes to a contemplative end, and *The Winter Whetstone* contrasts violence and introspection. Among his choice musical images are the picturesque drizzles of the second song, the marimba's harsh representation of the axe in *The Woodcutter*, the nursery-rhyme-like oscillations in *The Branch Is Black*, and the jaunty mood in *Fallen Leaves*. The Epilogue shows Persichetti's remarkable compositional skills in his sequential combining of a phrase from each poem into a movement that coheres on its own as well as summing up the cycle.

Texts Winter Cantata

I.A Copper Pheasant

A copper pheasant wakes with shrill-edged cry: The silver crescent cuts the chilly sky.

-Kikaku

II. Winter's First Drizzle

Winter's first drizzle falls, The air is raw, That shivering monkey needs a cape of straw.

−Bashô

III. Winter Seclusion

Winter seclusion: on the window pane, The silver fern of frost has grown again. $-H\hat{o} - \hat{O}$

IV. The Woodcutter

Within the wintry grove, my axe-head fell And bit the bark how startling was its smell!

V. Gentlest Fall of Snow

Ah! the first, the gentlest fall of snow: Enough to make the jonquil leaves bend low.

−Bashô

VI. One Umbrella

One umbrella, as snowy dusk draws on, Has come; one umbrella has come, and passes by; and now is gone

 $-\Upsilon aha$

VII. Of Crimson Ice

The rime has frozen overnight to gems of crimson ice along the buckwheat sterns.

-Rankô

VIII. The Branch Is Black

The branch is black and bare again; a crow shook down its coverlet of powdered snow.

—Hô-Ô

IX. Fallen Leaves

The winter's fitful gusts, as they expire, Bring enough fallen leaves to build a fire.

-Ryôkon

X. So Deep

So deep, the heavy snow since yesterday, Its drifts remain Sweep, sweep as you may.

-Lzembô

XI. The Wind's Whetstone

Through jagged cedars rips the winter blast, honed cragged ledges as it passed.

−Bashô

XII. Epilogue

Vier Gesänge (Four Songs), Op. 17 Johannes Brahms

Always enamored of the sound of women's voices, Brahms founded the Hamburg Frauenchor (Women's Choir) in 1859. He composed a number of original works for them to sing—among them his *Marienlieder*, Psalm 13, and the first two of his *Three Sacred Choruses*—and arranged numerous folk songs for them as well. He began the present *Vier Gesänge* in early 1860, and the Frauenchor gave the first performance at a concert on January 15, 1861. After hearing that performance of the songs Clara Schumann wrote in her diary: "They are pearls. How can one help loving such a man?"

Brahms has often been labeled a Classicist, but these songs—the first and fourth of which will be performed tonight—are some of his most quintessentially Romantic offerings. To begin with, he chose poems that all have themes and images beloved by the Romantics—Nature, ancient times, unrequited love, and death. He furthered their atmospheric impression by adopting an unusual combination of instruments as accompaniment: harp—the storyteller's instrument and a symbol of wind and water—and horns (whose sound fascinated Brahms), which conjure up forest images.

The first song, *Es tönt ein voller Harfenklang* (The harp resounds), sets a text by Romantic poet Friedrich Ruperti, rife with images of unrequited love, longing, and death. Brahms creates a magical, mysterious atmosphere, in which the "droplets" of harp sound symbolize falling tears.

The *Lied von Shakespeare* takes its verses about unrequited love from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, Act II, Scene 4. Brahms, however, set the

text in the German translation by August Wilhelm von Schlegel, a poet at the forefront of German Romanticism. The third song, *Der Gärtner (The Gardener)*, with its bubbly harp accompaniment, sets a poem by another beloved Romantic poet, Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff.

Brahms closes with a lament whose text came from the spectacular literary hoax, Fingal, an epic poem from 1760 that James MacPherson claimed was based on fragments by Ossian, purportedly an ancient Scottish Gaelic narrator and author. By the time Brahms was writing, he was probably aware that the epic was a fake, but like preceding Romantics he was captivated by its imagery of a maiden mourning for her Scottish warrior. He sets the poem in the manner of a funeral march, perhaps influenced by Schubert's beloved song *Death and the Maiden* or perhaps the *Allegretto* of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. Brahms makes his through-composed ternary setting his own through archaic-sounding chantlike utterances, haunting horn calls and "growls," and water and wind-inspired harp sounds.

-Program notes ©Jane Vial Jaffe

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Es tönt ein voller Harfenklang

Es tönt ein voller Harfenklang, den Lieb und Sehnsucht schwellen. Er dringt zum Herzen tief und bang

und lässt das Auge quellen.

O rinnet, Tränen, nur herab, o schlage Herz mit Beben. Es sanken Lieb' und Glück ins Grab, verloren ist das Leben!

—F. Ruperti

The full sound of harps rings out

The full sound of harps rings out with love and longing swelling, it pierces the heart deeply and anxiously and leaves the eyes streaming.

O flow, my tears, only down, O pound, my heart, with quaking. Love and happiness fell into the grave, lost is my life.

Gesang aus Fingal

Wein' an den Felsen der brausenden Winde weine o Mädchen von Inistore! Beug' über die Wogen dein schönes Haupt, lieblicher du als der Geist der Berge wenn er um Mittag in einem Sonnenstrahl

über das Schweigen von Morven fährt.

Er ist gefallen, dein Jünglein liegt darnieder, bleich sank er unter Cuthullins Schwert. Nimmer wird Mut deinen Liebling mehr reizen, das Blut von Königen zu vergiessen.

Wein' an den Felsen der brausenden Winde, weine, o Mädchen, von Inistore. Trenar, der liebliche Trenar, starb. O Mädchen von Inistore! Seine grauen Hunde heulen daheim; sie sehen seinen Geist vorüberziehen. Trenar, der liebliche Trenar, starb. O

Sein Bogen hängt ungespannt in der Halle nichts regt sich auf der Heide der Rehe

Mädchen von Inistore.

Wein' an den Felsen der brausenden Winde, weine, o Mädchen von Inistore. Wein!

-James Macpherson

Song from Fingal

Weep on the rocks of the raging winds, weep, o maiden of Inistore!
Bend over the waters thy beautiful head; lovelier than the mountain spirit when it moves at noon in a sunbeam over the silence of Morven.

He is fallen, thy youth lies prostrate, pale he fell under Cuthullin's sword.

Never again will valor inspire him to shed the blood of kings.

Weep on the rocks of the raging winds, weep, o maiden of Inistore.
Trenar, the lovely Trenar, died. O maiden of Inistore!
His gray hounds growl at home; they see his passing ghost.

Trenar, the lovely Trenar, died. O maiden of Inistore.

His bow hangs unstrung in the hall, nothing moves on the heath where deer wandered.

Weep on the rocks of the raging winds, weep, o thou maiden of Inistore.

Weep!

WOMEN'S CHORUS

Kent Tritle, Conductor Ronnie Oliver, Jr., Associate Conductor Vanessa May-lok Lee, Collaborative Pianist Hannah Nacheman and Alejandro Zuleta, Graduate Assistants

The MSM Women's Chorus was established in 2014 to explore the repertoire written and arranged for women's voices. The membership is made up of first- and second-year undergraduates majoring in voice, piano, guitar, and composition.

Soprano I

Victoria Iparraguirre Angelica Kang Seul Woo Lee

Kunyu Lu

Arthi Nandakumar

Seolbin Oh

Katherine Pound Emilie Suarez Adja Thomas Soo Min Yoo Trisha Zhou

Soprano II

Elizabeth Anderson

Chira Bell Xiang Chen Abby Dutler Fan Feng Maia Gonzalez Rose Iannuzzi

Sophia Jin Sarah Lassiter Ji Yoon Lee

Anna Orekhova

Irene Shin

Anna Maria Vacca

Wenjia Wei Ziyi Yu

Huanyuan Zhang

Alto I

Rayna Campbell Yi Wei Chin Yue Jia

Liuxuanfang Li

Yijun Li Shuwen Liao Adrianna Svitak Xiaoru Wen Yali Wu Rini Zhang Jun Zheng

Alto II

Catarina Amaral Emily Frederick Zijing Guo Edmonda Lam Siyuan Liu Zhe Qiao Tian Qin Sila Senturk Ruini Wang

Liangdianzi Zhang Tianran Zhou Soloists

PAULUS

Elliot Roman and Alexandros

Darna, percussion

HOLST

Minyoung Kwon, harp

Seoul, South Korea

PERSICHETTI

Francesca Leo, flute

Pleasant Ridge, Michigan

Tamika Gorski (MM '17), marimba

New York, NY

BRAHMS

Liana Hoffman, horn Coral Springs, Florida

Shengmu Wang, horn Taoyuan, Taiwan

Frances Konomi, harp Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

ABOUT THE CONDUCTORS

Hannah Nacheman

Hannah Nacheman is a second-year Master's degree candidate at Manhattan School of Music, studying choral conducting with Kent Tritle and Dr. Ronnie Oliver. A lifelong choral singer, Hannah began her training in the acclaimed New Jersey Youth Chorus, where she had the opportunity to perform on many prestigious stages including the Alice Tully and David Geffen halls of Lincoln Center, the David H. Koch Theater, NJPAC, and Carnegie Hall. From there, her passion for music education was ignited—her undergraduate thesis research, studying the effects of classical music on human behavior, demonstrates that music enables people to overcome challenges in exceptionally creative ways.

Hannah serves as Assistant Conductor for the National Children's Chorus in the New York division. In addition to vocal performance, her musical training includes harp, piano, and violin, which she teaches in her private studio. Hannah has also worked for leading music institutions, including WQXR Classical Radio, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, and Symphony Space. She holds a dual degree from Bryn Mawr College in vocal performance and psychology, and has further studied music at the Palais Corbelli in Vienna and the Schola Cantorum in Paris.

Hannah currently sings with the Choral Society at Grace Church in New York, as well as the Chamber, Lab, and Symphonic Choirs at Manhattan School of Music. She is an active member of the American Choral Directors Association and the New York Choral Consortium.

Alejandro Zuleta

A New York based choral conductor, composer, pianist, organist, producer, and singer, Alejandro Zuleta is currently studying choral conducting at Manhattan School of Music with Dr. Ronnie Oliver and Mr. Kent Tritle. Born in Bogotá, Colombia, he carries on the Zuleta family legacy as one of a long line of celebrated Colombian Vallenato musicians and son of Emiro Zuleta, one of the most prolific, recorded, and celebrated Vallenato songwriters of his generation. His musical training started at the age of 5, both in the oral tradition of Vallenato music and in Western classical music through singing and choral practice.

Alejandro Zuleta's music has been broadcast and commissioned by CBS, the History Channel, Teatro SEA NYC, Caracol TV, and Señal Colombia

among others. His songs, performed by him and several other artists, have been at the top of the charts on Colombian radio stations. In December 2015, his music for Teatro SEA's show "Sueño" was performed by a chamber section of the Puerto Rico Philharmonic orchestra under Mr. Zuleta's baton at el Castillo del Morro in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Under his musical direction the 2013 Teatro SEA production of "Rafael Hernandez Romance" won Best Musical Theatre Production at the ACE awards. In 2015, "La Gloria: A Latin Cabaret" under Mr. Zuleta's musical direction won four ATI, six ACE, and two HOLA awards, making it the most awarded Latino musical of the season.

Mr. Zuleta serves as Director of Music at the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph in Brooklyn, where he plays the organ for Sunday services and conducts the cathedral's three choral ensembles. He holds an MM from NYU, where he studied jazz with Ralph Alessi, composition with Gil Goldstein, and film scoring with Mark Suozzo, and a BA in music composition from Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá, Colombia). He has also studied and performed with Andy Milne, Jean Michel Pilc, John Benitez, Peter Bernstein, Brad Shepik, Billy Drews, Blas Emilio Atheortua, and Julian Lombana.

Ronnie Oliver, Jr.

Ronnie Oliver, Jr., Associate Director of Choral Activities at Manhattan School of Music, is a conductor and educator whose commitment to the advancement of the choral art through performance, mentoring, and teaching has spanned over thirty years.

Dr. Oliver is Artistic Director and Conductor of EnsembleNYC and has served as choral director and teacher of conducting at Westminster Choir College (Princeton, New Jersey), Western Michigan University, Western Kentucky University, Greensboro College (North Carolina), and Texas Tech University.

As Executive Director of Manhattan Concert Productions, Dr. Oliver was responsible for the overall administration and management of festival concerts at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Orchestra Hall in Chicago, and the Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. His duties included collaborating with guest conductors, working directly with the production teams at the various venues, and escorting performing ensembles on tours of Europe and Great Britain, as well as fiscal management. Dr. Oliver served as Managing Director of Musica Sacra, a professional choral ensemble in New York City, for the 2009–10 season. He was also selected as

a Conducting Fellow for the 2012 Chorus America Master Class in Choral-Orchestral Conducting.

Dr. Oliver received his Bachelor of Music education degree from Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky and his Master of Music degree in choral conducting and doctorate in fine arts from Texas Tech University.

He has studied conducting with Robert Baar, Gerald Welker, and Kenneth Davis. In addition, Dr. Oliver has participated in master classes and clinics with Paul Salamunovich, Robert Page, Dennis Keene, and Robert Shaw. He was selected as a conducting fellow in the Oregon Bach Festival's Conducting Master Class with Helmuth Rilling. Dr. Oliver has appeared at Carnegie Hall, most recently conducting Fauré's Requiem with the Masterworks Festival Chorus and New York City Chamber Orchestra.

He is a member of the American Choral Directors Association, National Association for Music Education, the National Collegiate Choral Organization, New York Choral Consortium (Board Member), the College Music Society, Pi Kappa Lambda, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia.

Kent Tritle

Kent Tritle, Director of Choral Activities at Manhattan School of Music, is one of America's leading choral conductors. Called "the brightest star in New York's choral music world" by the *New York Times*, he is Director of Cathedral Music and Organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Music Director of Musica Sacra, and Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York. He is also the organist of the New York Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestra and a member of the MSM organ faculty.

Kent Tritle's 2018–19 season is marked by the expansion of the Oratorio Society's Carnegie Hall season to four concerts, including *Kullervo*, the rarely performed symphonic poem by Sibelius. Among recent notable performances were Verdi's Requiem, Mahler's "Symphony of a Thousand," and Britten's *War Requiem* performed by the Oratorio Society and the MSM Symphony and Symphonic Chorus at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Among other collaborations with major players in the New York music scene, he directed the MSM Symphonic Chorus for performances of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the New York Philharmonic led by Alan Gilbert.

He has prepared choruses for conductors Alan Gilbert, Philippe Entremont, Christoph von Dohnányi, Leonard Slatkin, Michael Tilson Thomas, Robert Spano, Gerard Schwarz, Vladimir Spivakov, Nicholas McGegan, Leon Botstein, and Dennis Russell Davies. Among the soloists with whom he has

collaborated are singers Renée Fleming, Jessye Norman, Hei-Kyung Hong, Marilyn Horne, Susanne Mentzer, Susan Graham, and Sherrill Milnes; cellist Yo-Yo Ma; and pianist André Previn.

As Director of Choral Activities at MSM, Kent Tritle established the school's first doctoral program in choral conducting. He is also renowned as a master clinician. He holds graduate and undergraduate degrees from the Juilliard School in organ performance and choral conducting and has been a Juilliard School faculty member since 1996.

THE CENTENNIAL PROJECT

Manhattan School of Music's Centennial Project is an ambitious program of improvements to the School's architecturally distinguished campus. The centerpiece of the Project is the renovation of Neidorff-Karpati Hall, MSM's principal performance space, which has been transformed into a state-of-the-art venue to showcase our talented students. Built in 1931 and designed by Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, the architects of the Empire State Building, the hall has been called "one of the Art Deco treats in the city" by the *New York Times*. The Project also includes a dramatic and welcoming new campus entrance on Claremont Avenue, new practice rooms, and an expansion of the main entryway and lobby.

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