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PERFORMANCE
SEASON



ORCHESTRAL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

OPUS130

David Chan, Conductor and
Head of the Orchestral Performance Program

JT Kane, Dean of Instrumental Studies and Orchestral Performance

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2024 | 7:30 PM
NEIDORFF-KARPATI HALL

This year's performance season has been inspired by a unifying theme: ***Humanity in Harmony: Rituals, Resistance, and Resilience***. We hope during this election year, the biggest in human history with over half the world's population having the opportunity to vote in 72 countries, that this theme reflects the power of the arts to unite us even in moments of discord and differences. The collective experience of collaboration – creating together – reminds us that even in our differences we can find common ground, stand up to tyranny and oppression, and elevate our work as artists to fulfill the hope and promise of a better tomorrow.

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PROGRAM

UNSUKE CHIN
(b. 1961)

subito con forza

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770–1827)

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

Allegro con brio

Andante con moto

Scherzo: Allegro

Allegro – Presto

Intermission

BÉLA BARTÓK
(1881–1945)

Concerto for Orchestra, Sz. 116, BB 123

Introduzione. Andante non troppo – Allegro vivace

Presentando le coppie. Allegro scherzando

Elegia. Andante non troppo

Intermezzo interrotto. Allegretto

Finale. Presto

OPUS130

David Chan, Conductor

VIOLIN 1

Isabella Egawa,

concertmaster
Seoul, South Korea

Eugenia Cho

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Coco Sun

New York, New York

Andy Caveda

Miami, Florida

Po Hsuan Chiang

New Taipei City, Taiwan

Carlos Martinez

Arroyo
Cabra, Spain

Benjamin Hudak

San Francisco, California

Yuyu Ikeda

New York, New York

Cedar-Rose Newman

Thirroul, Australia

Selin Algoz

New York, New York

Cheng-Cian Li

Hsinchu City, Taiwan

Valeria Choi

Vaughan, Canada

Mengzhe Zhao

Lanzhou, China

Xuan Yao

Changsha, China

VIOLIN 2

Hajung Cho, principal

Seoul, South Korea

Tristan Siegel

Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania

Christophe Koenig

East Aurora, New York

Risa Hokamura

Kodaira, Japan

Josiah Lenferna

De La Motte

San Francisco, California

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Skyler Blair

Shaker Heights, Ohio

Yeonsoo Jung

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Naru Watanabe

Ube, Japan

Thierry Neves

Goiânia, Brazil

Caitlin Marshall

Cheltenham, United Kingdom

Cameron Zandieh

Syosset, New York

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New York, New York

Jack Rittendale

New York, New York

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Pasadena, California

Italia Raimond Jones

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principal
Duncanville, Texas

Lauren Seery

Bethpage, New York

Jielin Lei

Xiamen, China

Antonio Suarez

Yonkers, New York

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California***BRASS AND WIND PRINCIPALS**

* CHIN

BEETHOVEN

† BARTÓK

Matthew So†*North York, Canada***HORN****Keegan McCardell†***Ellicott City, Maryland***Ashton Sady†***Summerville, South Carolina***Taylor Krause****Calgary, Canada***Daniel Jansen***Snowmass Village, Colorado***Vera Romero***Austin, Texas***TRUMPET****Sam Atlas†***Westport, Connecticut***Nathan McKinstry****State College, Pennsylvania***Chase Domke†***Dallas, Texas***TROMBONE****Sarah Rathbun****Wellington, New Zealand***Jacob Ogbu†***Frisco, Texas***BASS TROMBONE****Timothy Grabow***Walnut Creek, California***TUBA****Fumiya Miyata***Tsurumi, Japan***TIMPANI****Zoe Beyler***Portland, Oregon***PERCUSSION****Sekou Van Heusden***Amsterdam, Netherlands***Austin Cantrell***Charlotte, North Carolina***HARP****Linya Qiao***Beijing, China***Isabel Cardenes***Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania***KEYBOARD****SeHyun Kim***Hanan, South Korea**subito con forza*

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

Concerto for Orchestra, Sz. 116, BB 123

PROGRAM NOTES

subito con forza

Unsuik Chin

Following studies in Korea, Unsuik Chin moved to Germany in 1985 on a government scholarship to study with György Ligeti and later settled in Berlin to work in the electronic studio of the Technische Universität. Winner of the 2004 Grawemeyer Award for her Violin Concerto and the 2005 Arnold Schoenberg prize, she has added a plethora of prizes to her collection, most recently the 2024 Ernst von Siemens International Music Prize. Chin composes both electronic and acoustic music in a modern, lyrical, original idiom that engages the listener with its orchestral colors and rhythmic imagery.

Chin's works have been commissioned and performed across the globe by major orchestras ranging from the Berlin and New York Philharmonics to the BBC, Tokyo, and São Paulo Symphonies. Most recently her *Alaraph* "*Ritus des Herzschlags*" was premiered by the Sinfonieorchester Basel in 2023 with further performances in 2024 by co-commissioners the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, and San Francisco Symphony. Renowned contemporary ensembles such as the Kronos Quartet, Ensemble Intercontemporain, London Sinfonietta, and Ensemble Modern have also championed her works.

Chin recently traced the history of opera symphonically in *Operascope*, a consortium commission premiered in 2023 by the Bayerisches Staatsorchester and Kent Nagano after the same forces premiered her first opera almost two decades earlier. Now Nagano is scheduled to conduct the premiere of her new opera, *Die dunkle Seite des Mondes* (*Dark Side of the Moon*) in 2025 with the Hamburg State Opera.

Chin founded the Seoul Philharmonic's contemporary music series and served as its composer-in-residence between 2006 and 2017. For nine seasons ending in 2020, she was also artistic director of the Music of Today series for the Philharmonia Orchestra in London. In 2022 she became artistic director of the Tongyeong International Festival in South Korea as well as for the Weiwuying International Music Festival in Taiwan.

Commissioned in celebration of the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth, Chin's brief, arresting *subito con forza* has been performed more than 40 times worldwide since its premiere on September 24, 2020, by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra led by Klaus Mäkelä. In an interview with Thea

Derks, Chin said the piece was inspired by Beethoven’s conversation books, especially the line “*Dur und Moll. Ich bin ein Gewinner.*” (Major and minor. I am a winner.) She further explained that the piece “contains some hidden references to his music [but] what particularly appeals to me are the enormous contrasts: from volcanic eruptions to extreme serenity.”

Chin begins with the most fleeting of identifiable snippets, the portentous sustained-C opening of the *Coriolan Overture*, which she immediately shatters as if breaking glass, followed by a supremely quite murmur—a Beethovenian contrast that she makes wholly her own. She injects other minuscule “whiffs”—from the *Emperor* Piano Concerto and Fifth Symphony, for instance—just long enough to ping the brain before taking off in another direction, much like Beethoven’s conversation books. The most supreme contrast comes at the end when the unleashed forces quiet, then coalesce into a somber C minor chord.

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

Ludwig van Beethoven

The immense popularity of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony has dulled our senses to the boldness and originality of the work, which initially caused a certain resistance. The great Goethe could not appreciate it, remarking that “it is merely astonishing and grandiose.” Even in 1843, 35 years after its premiere, a critic wrote of the celebrated transition from the scherzo to the finale: “There is a strange melody, which, combined with an even stranger harmony of a double pedal point in the bass on G and C, produces a sort of odious meowing, and discords to shatter the least sensitive ear.” (See Example 1.) Equally astonishing were the “oboe cadenza” in the first movement, the addition of piccolo, contrabassoon, and three trombones to the finale, and the return of the scherzo in the finale.

Ex. 1: Transition to Finale

“I am afraid”

m. 339

violin I

sempre **pp** violin II (doubled by viola in octaves)

timpani

bassi

Many features have contributed to the eventual superstar status of “the Fifth.” The opening motive, which Beethoven reportedly explained to his friend and biographer Anton Schindler as “Thus Fate knocks at the door!” has provided

dramatic associations to generations of listeners. In World War II, for example, it was used as a symbol of resistance to fascism. Though Beethoven left no programmatic explanations linking his Symphony to political events of the early nineteenth century, the work is a product of his heroic style—his patriotic and anti-Napoleonic sentiments had reached their height at this time. The patriotism expressed in his music resonated within people of many different historical periods and nations, even the very forces Beethoven saw as the oppressor. A veteran of Napoleon’s army hearing the work in 1828 is said to have exclaimed at the beginning of the finale: “*Mais c’est l’Empereur!*” (But it’s the Emperor!) (See Example 2.)

Ex. 2: “*Mais c’est l’Empereur*”

Allegro



The Fifth has also aroused certain unnamed terrors in its listeners, an aspect already sensed by Goethe and Romantic writer E.T.A. Hoffmann. Robert Schumann reported that a child whose hand he was holding during a performance of the Fifth whispered “*J’ai peur*” (I’m afraid) at the chilling transition from the scherzo to the finale. (Refer back to Example 1.) Hector Berlioz commented on the “stunning” effect of this transition saying it would be impossible to surpass it in what follows. Yet the allaying of the terrors by the triumph of the C major finale has gained the Symphony almost as many admirers as the opening motive.

Like many of Beethoven’s works, the Fifth had a long gestation period: sketches from early 1804 appear amid those for the Fourth Piano Concerto and the first act of *Leonore* (later titled *Fidelio*); more sketches appeared later in 1804, and by 1806 advanced sketches for all the movements took shape near those for the Violin Concerto and Cello Sonata in A major. Beethoven then interrupted work on the Fifth for another symphony, the Fourth, commissioned by Count Oppersdorf. The Fifth occupied the composer in 1807, and he finally completed it in the spring of 1808. Count Oppersdorf apparently expected a dedication, but Beethoven dedicated the Fifth to two other patrons, Prince Lobkowitz and Count Razumovsky.

The Fifth Symphony was first performed on that historic, more-than-four-hour concert at the Theater-an-der-Wien on December 22, 1808—an all-Beethoven program consisting mainly of newly composed works: the Fifth and Sixth symphonies conducted by the composer, the Fourth Piano Concerto in which Beethoven performed the solo part, the aria “Ah! perfido” (1795–96), three numbers from his Mass in C major, op. 86, his own improvisations, and the

quickly composed Choral Fantasy, op. 80. By all accounts the preparations for this concert had been extremely problematic, Beethoven himself contributing a large share of the difficulties; the concert consequently produced mixed results.

The Fifth Symphony has been performed countless times since then, and its influence cannot be underestimated. But no matter how many times we may have heard the work, it continues to surprise and delight. The first movement is remarkable for its concentrated rhythmic development, based on the opening rhythm, short-short-short-long: ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪. This rhythm appears in more than half of the movement's measures, with captivating, ingenious transformations. Beethoven unified the entire Symphony with further developments of the same rhythm. We hear it in the second theme of the slow movement and in the fortissimo horn call that answers the haunted opening of the scherzo. It recurs in the further development of the "call," including its insistence in the famous transition to the last movement, and reappears in the finale's development section and the ensuing recall of the scherzo.

The slow movement provides a certain relaxation from the heroic style, but even here the dotted rhythms can sound martial and the ending of the first phrase receives a heroic stress. Even more striking is the valiant blaze of C major into which Beethoven has modulated during the course of the second theme. (See Example 3.) The double variation form—two alternating sections, each varied, plus coda—is remarkable for its move from literal variation to a free, more improvisatory style of variation.

Ex. 3: Modulation to "heroic" C major in slow movement

The musical score for Example 3 shows a transition from a minor key to C major. The first section is marked *pp* and the second section is marked *ff* and *tutti*. The score is for violin I, violin II & viola, and clarinets. The first section is marked (m. 26) and the second section is marked *ff* and *tutti*. The score shows a transition from a minor key to C major.

The scherzo contains the aforementioned stealthy and heroic elements in its first section, followed by an energetic trio in fugato (imitative) style and a shadowy, abbreviated return to the scherzo section. After the suspense of the transition, the finale bursts forth triumphantly. Beethoven had originally intended for the trio and scherzo to be repeated as in the Fourth Symphony (scherzo-trio-scherzo-trio-scherzo) rather than to follow the conventional scherzo-trio-scherzo layout, but scholars have concluded that the latter represents his "final version," perhaps justified in the larger scheme by the formal integration with the last movement.

The addition of piccolo, contrabassoon, and trombones—for the first time in symphonic history—contributes to the triumphal character of the finale. The use of sonata form here shows Beethoven’s continued concern for giving his last movement equal weight with his first. The unexpected return of the scherzo in this movement gives Beethoven another chance to show transcendence over adversity, symbolized by the recapitulation grandly banishing the stealthy strains. Further it gave him a good reason—that of balance—to include a prolonged affirmation of the major home key in the coda. Symphonic thought had entered a new era.

Concerto for Orchestra, Sz. 116, BB 123

Béla Bartók

The stimulation provided by the commission from the Koussevitzky Foundation for the Concerto for Orchestra may well have prolonged Bartók’s life. Ill, weak, and with no means of financial support in sight, Bartók received a visit in his hospital room in 1943 from conductor Serge Koussevitzky, acting on a suggestion by Joseph Szigeti and Fritz Reiner. Koussevitzky offered him a \$1,000 commission—\$500 to begin with, the remainder on completion of the score. Worried that Bartók would refuse anything resembling charity, and, unwilling to consider that Bartók might be too ill to complete it, Koussevitzky told him he couldn’t refuse as the board of trustees had made an irrevocable decision.

Recuperating from the treatment for blood and lung disorders, Bartók spent the summer at Saranac Lake, New York, where he completed the work. Koussevitzky conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the première on December 1, 1944. The composer, whose doctor permitted him to attend rehearsals and the performance, was thrilled by the great success of the work and by Koussevitzky’s enthusiasm for it. Bartók quoted the conductor as saying that the Concerto is “the best orchestral piece of the last 25 years’ (including the works of his idol Shostakovich!).” The turnabout in his fortunes that the work occasioned sadly came too late. He grew weaker and died less than a year after its first performance.

Bartók’s Concerto for Orchestra was not the first, but his work launched a creative outburst. More than 20 noted composers have since added substantial contributions—Witold Lutosławski, Thea Musgrave, Elliott Carter, Roger Sessions, Michael Tippett, Karel Husa, Gunther Schuller (with three), Shulamit Ran, and many others—but it is Bartók’s work that orchestras continually strive to perform and record as a symbol of achievement.

Bartók shows off not only individual instruments but an entire realm of innovative combinations, as well as the power of the whole orchestra. The work's tunefulness and combined force make it readily accessible to audiences, while its masterful construction has given analysts a field day—at least two entire monographs are devoted to this one work. Bartók's own description for the premiere began: "The general mood of the work represents, apart from the jesting second movement, a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death song of the third to the life assertion of the last one." He later told Hungarian colleagues that he wrote the Concerto as a personal expression "of homesickness and hope for his country, and of peace and brotherhood for the world."

Bartók's program note continued with a matter-of-fact recital of some of the work's details, but naturally couldn't gush about some of its great wonders. One of these is the masterful overall symmetry of the five-movement structure: two outer movements, which carry most of the structural weight, surround the lighter-textured, more relaxed movements two and four, which in turn encircle the central slow movement.

"The first and fifth movements," he wrote, "are written in a more or less regular sonata form. The development of the first fugato contains sections for brass; the exposition in the finale is somewhat extended, and its development consists of a fugue built on the last theme of the exposition." We should add that the first movement's opening features intervals of a fourth, which he favored throughout his life, followed by sections beginning in half-steps, fanning out to clusters, and retracting again. Other marvels of the first movement include the three-measure groupings near the beginning of the movement, which return in the coda in a new metrical pattern that makes them seem extended; the folklike rhythms in tiny patterns that suggest the folk tunes he so diligently collected in the field; and the wonderful sonority of the harp clusters.

The composer continued, "Less traditional forms are found in the second and third movements. The main part of the second movement consists of a chain of independent short sections; I used here wind instruments, which are consecutively introduced in five pairs. . . . A kind of trio—a short chorale for brass instruments and side drum—follows, after which the five sections are repeated in a more elaborate instrumentation." Bartók ingeniously treats his pairs of instruments in parallel motion, each pair maintaining a different set interval against a constantly shifting backdrop. This lighthearted "Game of Pairs" originally bore the title "Presenting the Couples," referring to a Hungarian dance tradition.

“The structure of the third movement is also chain-like,” wrote Bartók; “three themes appear successively. These constitute the core of the movement, which is enframed by a hazy texture of rudimentary motives. Most of the thematic material of the movement derives from the introduction of the first movement.” This nostalgic elegy—said to be the composer’s lament over the loss of Transylvania—contains a wonderful example of his celebrated “night music”—atmospheric flutterings, whisperings, and rustlings—in its middle section.

Bartók’s brief structural outline of the fourth movement, *Intermezzo interrotto*, is helpful—“A-B-A-Interruption-B-A”—but it cannot transmit the loveliness of his nostalgic treatment of his second theme. Based on a popular song containing the line “You are lovely, you are beautiful, Hungary” from a 1926 operetta by Zsigmond Vincze, the melody unfolds in what could be called Bartók’s own take on the harmonic circle of fifths.

The interruption that ensues is an intentionally raucous theme that Shostakovich had used in the first movement of his Seventh Symphony, which Bartók heard while working on the Concerto and decided to burlesque here. Péter Bartók later wrote that, listening to the radio broadcast of the Shostakovich, they had thought the theme sounded like a Viennese cabaret song (some commentators have noted Danilo’s song about the girls at Maxim’s from *The Merry Widow* by another Hungarian, Franz Lehár). Peter insisted that his father was burlesquing the cabaret song and not specifically Shostakovich, but the matter is still under debate. In either case, Bartók used the raucous music, he reportedly told his friend György Sándor, as the violent interruption by “rough, booted men” of an artist’s serenade to his beloved country.

Of the finale—a wonderful tour-de-force for the orchestra—Bartók briefly describes the virtuosity of the perpetual motion-like passage of the principal theme and the fugue of the development section. Also striking are the string repeated-note interruptions at the end of the fugue, the “wind” effects of the strings playing *sul ponticello* (on the bridge), and the great brass chorale—based on the fugue theme in longer note values. After the premiere Bartók provided a slightly longer ending for the Concerto, which adds an upsurge of triumph.

—Program notes ©Jane Vial Jaffe

ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR

David Chan

Known as one of the most accomplished violinists of his generation, David Chan, Head of Manhattan School of Music's Orchestral Performance Program, is also quickly making a name for himself as an elegant conductor of unusual interpretive depth. *New York Classical Review* wrote of a March 2019 performance of Mozart's Symphony No. 40 that "It sounded like a kinder, gentler Toscanini was running the show." Currently in his 25th season as concertmaster of New York's Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, he has also recently served as Music Director of the APEX Ensemble, with which he earned high praise for innovative and adventurous programming, and as Music Director of Camerata Notturna, one of New York City's foremost chamber orchestras. As Artistic Partner of Mainly Mozart's Festival of Orchestras, he has conducted the organization's famed All-Star Orchestra, as well as an entire festival combining musicians of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the San Francisco Symphony, and another series bringing together members of the MET Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra.

Increasingly in demand on the podium, Chan has had engagements in recent seasons with Belgium's l'Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège, the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, and l'Orchestre Dijon Bourgogne in France; the Grant Park and Classical Tahoe summer festivals; the Juilliard Orchestra in New York City; the Apollo Orchestra in Washington, D.C.; and at Musique et Vin au Clos Vougeot, where the festival orchestra comprises musicians from the Metropolitan Opera, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic, and all of the top orchestras in Paris. As a soloist, he has appeared under the baton of such conductors as James Levine and Fabio Luisi, with orchestras including the MET Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Diego Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, and Moscow State Symphony. He is also a dedicated chamber musician who performs regularly in the New York area and at all the leading summer festivals.

In addition to his concert appearances, Chan is active as an entrepreneur and creative director. In 2008, combining his interest in wine with his passion for music, he cofounded the Musique et Vin au Clos Vougeot festival in the Burgundy region of France. During his 13 seasons as artistic director of the festival, which pairs wine tastings with music, he oversaw its growth from a small, intimate gathering to a destination event attracting many of the biggest names in classical

music, including Yo-Yo Ma, Joyce DiDonato, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Matthew Polenzani, Emmanuel Pahud, Menahem Pressler, Cho-Liang Lin, Gary Hoffman, Marlis Petersen, and Ildar Abdrazakov.

A native of San Diego, Chan began his musical education at the age of four. After winning prizes at the Tchaikovsky and Indianapolis international violin competitions, he made his New York debut in 1995 at Avery Fisher Hall, and his Carnegie Hall debut in 2003, performing the Brahms Double Concerto with the MET Orchestra. A student of Dorothy DeLay, Hyo Kang, and Michael Tseitlin, he received his Bachelor's degree from Harvard University and his Master's degree from the Juilliard School. Appointed Head of MSM's Orchestral Performance Program in 2022, he is also on the faculty of Juilliard. He lives in the New York City area with his wife, violinist Catherine Ro, and their children.

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David Chan, Head of the Orchestral Performance Program

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VIOLA

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Qiang Tu, Cello, New York Philharmonic

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Sherry Sylar, Associate Principal Oboe, New York Philharmonic

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Kim Laskowski, former Associate Principal Bassoon, New York Philharmonic

William Short, Principal Bassoon, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra

HORN

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Richard Deane, Associate Principal Horn, New York Philharmonic

Javier Gándara, Horn, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra

David Jolley, former Horn, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra

Allen Spanjer, Horn, New York Philharmonic

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David Krauss, Principal Trumpet, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra

Thomas V. Smith, Fourth and Utility Trumpet, New York Philharmonic

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George Curran, Bass Trombone, New York Philharmonic

Colin Williams, Associate Principal Trombone, New York Philharmonic

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Susan Jolles, Harp, New York Chamber Symphony,
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The Centennial Project was an ambitious program of improvements to the School's architecturally distinguished campus coinciding with MSM's 100th anniversary. The centerpiece of the Project was the renovation of Neidorff-Karpati Hall, which has been transformed into a state-of-the-art venue to showcase our talented students. The Project also included 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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ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its 1,025 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from 54 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege Division is a professionally oriented Saturday music program dedicated to the musical and personal growth of talented young musicians ages 5 to 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

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