

Sunday, July 17, 2:30pm

BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
ANDRIS NELSONS conducting

Fazil SAY *Anka kuşu (Phoenix)*, Concerto for piano 4 hands and orchestra, Opus 97 (2020)

(American premiere; co-commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Andris Nelsons, Music Director, through the generous support of the New Works Fund established by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency)

I.

II. Scherzo

III.

LUCAS and ARTHUR JUSSSEN, piano four-hands

BRAHMS *Ein deutsches Requiem (A German Requiem)*, Opus 45,
on words from Holy Scripture

Selig sind, die da Leid tragen (Blessed are they that mourn)

Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras (For all flesh is as grass)

Herr, lehre doch mich (Lord, make me to know)

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen (How amiable are thy tabernacles)

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit (Ye now have sorrow)

Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt (For here we have no continuing city)

Selig sind die Toten (Blessed are the dead)

YING FANG, soprano

SHENYANG, bass-baritone

THE TANGLEWOOD FESTIVAL CHORUS, JAMES BURTON, conductor

This program is supported as part of the Dutch Culture USA program by the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York.

This afternoon's Tanglewood Festival Chorus performance is supported by the Alan J. and Suzanne W. Dworsky Fund for Voice and Chorus.

Notes on the program

Fazil Say (b.1970)

Anka kuşu (Phoenix), Concerto for piano 4 hands and orchestra, Opus 97 (2020)

Composition and premiere: Fazil Say wrote the concerto for Lucas and Arthur Jussen in 2020-2021 on a commission from the Munich Philharmonic, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Mozarteum Orchester Salzburg, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Andris Nelsons, Music Director, with support from the New Works Fund established by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. Lucas and Arthur Jussen were the soloists in the premiere given by the Munich Philharmonic under John Storgårds' direction in Munich's Isarphilharmonie on January 14 (the composer's birthday), 2022. Today's performance is the American premiere; this is the first performance by the Boston Symphony Orchestra of music by Fazil Say.

Born in Ankara, Turkey, Fazil Say studied piano as a child with pianist and composer Mithat Fenmen, who encouraged him to improvise in addition to more formal exercises. An encounter as a teenager with the German composer Aribert Reimann led to studies with David Levine at the Musikhochschule Robert Schumann in

Düsseldorf, Germany, and in Berlin. He also worked with pianist Menahem Pressler. Say went on to win the Concert Artists International competition in New York City in 1994. His repertoire as a pianist encompasses music from the 18th century to the present, including his own compositions. His recordings include music of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Satie, Stravinsky, and Gershwin, as well as albums of his own works for piano. He collaborates frequently with orchestras and in chamber music combinations; partners include violinists Patricia Kopatchinskaja and Maxim Vengerov, the Minetti Quartet, cellist Nicolas Altstaedt, and mezzo-soprano Marianne Crebassa. This year he released his album *Portreler*, Op. 101, in collaboration with Turkish flutist Bülent Evcil.

As both pianist and composer, Say has been artist-in-residence with Kozerthaus Dortmund, Kozerthaus Berlin, hr-Sinfonieorchester Frankfurt, Rheingau Musik Festival, Bodenseefestival, and many others. Commissions for his compositions include those from the Salzburg Festival, Konzerthaus Wien, Dresden Philharmonic, the BBC, and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra.

Say lived in New York City for several years but is now based in Istanbul. Politically outspoken about human rights conditions in his native Turkey, Say was convicted in Istanbul of blasphemy against Islam in 2013 for quoting lines attributed to the poet Omar Khayyam via Twitter. His sentence was suspended contingent upon his committing no further offences for two years. In 2016 he was awarded the International Beethoven Prize for Human Rights, Peace, Freedom, Poverty Reduction, and Inclusion. He considers himself a liaison between Turkish and Western cultures, writing music with Turkish influences to perform in the West and bringing Western music to Turkey.

Fazıl Say's music combines sophisticated and elegant compositional techniques for piano with melodic and rhythmic elements from his Turkish heritage along with influences from jazz—a cheeky case in point being his early *Alla Turca Jazz*, which reconfigures Mozart's Rondo "alla Turca" from his A major piano sonata, K.331. In 2016 Say wrote *Night*, a by turns mysterious and brilliant, wide-ranging, imaginative 10-minute encore piece for piano four-hands for Lucas and Arthur Jussen. The brothers programmed the piece for a concert in Turkey, but officials prohibited its performance due to Say's problematic political stances. The Jussens instead performed it, unannounced, as an encore.

Rhythmically challenging, *Night* calls for playing inside the strings of the piano to extend the instrument's timbral range and adding an unexpected sonic element. This is in keeping with the composer's lifelong exploration of improvisation and of the music of his own Turkish heritage. These elements are revisited in his new three-movement four-hands concerto for the Jussen brothers, *Anka kuşu*. The title translates as "phoenix," the legendary bird that, consumed in flames, rises from its own ashes—a metaphor, if ever there were one, for Say's constant renewal of his music language via mutually revitalizing interactions of Turkish, Western classical, and jazz music.

CHRISTINE MÖLLER (translated from the program of the Munich Philharmonic premiere; used by permission)/ROBERT KIRZINGER

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Ein deutsches Requiem (A German Requiem), Opus 45, on words from Holy Scripture

Composition and premiere: Brahms completed all but what is now the fifth movement of *Ein deutsches Requiem* in August 1866. Johannes Herbeck conducted the first three movements on December 1, 1867, in Vienna. The first performance of the six then-existing movements was given on Good Friday of 1868 in the Bremen cathedral; Brahms conducted, with Julius Stockhausen as baritone soloist. Brahms added the fifth movement ("Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit," which calls for solo soprano) in May 1868, that movement first being sung on September 17 that year in Zurich. The soloist was Ida Suter-Weber, with Friedrich Hegar conducting the Tonhalle Orchestra. The first performance of the complete seven-movement work took place in Leipzig on February 18, 1869; Carl Reinecke conducted the Gewandhaus Orchestra and Chorus, with soloists Emilie Bellingrath-Wagner and Franz Krückl. The first BSO performances of *Ein deutsches Requiem* were led by Serge Koussevitzky in Boston in March 1926. Robert Shaw led the first Tanglewood performance on August 14, 1948. James Levine led the BSO in the most recent Tanglewood performance on July 25, 2009, featuring soloists Hei-Kyung Hong and Matthias Goerne and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus.

When Johannes Brahms produced his most ambitious and heartfelt works, he was apt to be the most flippant and dismissive in talking about them. In April 1865 he sent Clara Schumann a draft toward a new piece, observing, "It's probably the least offensive part of some kind of German Requiem. But since it may have vanished into thin air

before you come to Baden, at least have a look at the beautiful words it begins with.” The chorus he is impugning, “How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts,” of course did not vanish from *Ein deutsches Requiem*. In fact, it is one of the most limpidly beautiful and beloved works in the entire choral repertoire.

In later years Brahms said, “I don’t like to hear that I wrote the *Requiem* for my mother.” By the law of Brahmsian obliqueness, that is a tacit admission that the death of his beloved mother in 1865 was part of the inspiration. He just didn’t like people talking about it. In a letter of 1873 he is forthright about the other half of its inspiration; after the collapse of a performance proposed for a Robert Schumann memorial, he insists “how completely and inevitably such a work as the *Requiem* belonged to Schumann.”

So *Ein deutsches Requiem* had piercing personal associations for Brahms: the loss of his mother Christiane, and of Robert Schumann, his mentor and spiritual father. The inception of the work dates from the traumatic episode of May 1854: soon after proclaiming Brahms the coming genius of German music, Schumann plunged into the Rhine in an attempt at suicide. Within days, Brahms had sketched three movements of a two-piano sonata, which he later tried to turn into a symphony. The first movement of those unfinished works became the tumultuous first movement of the Piano Concerto in D minor. The original second movement, a kind of death march in triple time, eventually became the second movement of the *Requiem*: “For all flesh, it is as grass.” The premiere of what was intended as the complete work took place in Bremen Cathedral on Good Friday, 1868. Afterward, on the advice of his old Hamburg teacher Eduard Marxsen, Brahms added the soprano solo as fifth movement.

It is characteristic of Brahms to have created a memorial for two revered people as a sacred work (a conventional thing to do), to base the work on precedents in religious music (likewise conventional), yet to write a piece remarkably unlike any other. *Ein deutsches Requiem* is neither a Mass nor quite an oratorio. The title “*Ein deutsches Requiem*” gives us the first clue to the work’s singularity. This is “*a*” requiem, a personal memorial for the dead rather than “the” familiar Catholic one. Beyond that, the work is so spiritual and so Protestant in tone that few listeners notice a strange omission in the text: it never mentions the eponymous founder of the Christian religion. The composer wrote, “I confess that I would gladly omit even the word ‘German’ and instead use ‘Human.’” If Brahms was a North German Protestant by upbringing and temperament, he was also a skeptic and agnostic—in the terms of our day, a “secular humanist.”

Brahms wrote his *Requiem* not as an address to the dead but to comfort the living.

“*Selig*,” “blessed,” begins *Ein deutsches Requiem* [**“Blessed are they”**]. At the end of its journey the music comes to rest on the word “*selig*.” The first blessing is for the living, the last for those who are gone, who rest from their labors. These first words foreshadow the purpose of the *Requiem*, and its progression from darkness to light.

The second movement [**“For all flesh, it is as grass”**] is an evocation of death that ends in joy. It begins as a heavy and mournful dance of death as it had been when Brahms first sketched it in the days after Robert Schumann’s plunge into the Rhine. A contrasting peaceful section is overtaken by a funeral march, building to a kind of all-consuming anguish before the radiant answer.

In the third movement [**“Lord, make me to know”**] the word “I” first appears, the text a picture of despair that will be answered by certainty. Yet this movement ends again in joy and consolation.

Next an interlude in the form of an artless, sublime folk song on the image of the heavenly home, repeating over and over, **“How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts.”** In the fifth movement [**“Ye now have sorrow”**] the solo soprano’s central words evoke the assurance of hope and the memory of Christiane Brahms: “I will comfort you as one whom his mother comforts.”

The sixth movement brings dark colors and old/new harmonies to the hope of rebirth: **“Now we have here no dwelling place but seek the one to come.”** In this image of resurrection Brahms put in the last trumpet but left out the terror of last judgement. The movement ends with a grand fugue on Handelian verses. This movement is the climax of the *Requiem*, ending with Handelian kettledrums.

The music of the finale [**“Blessed are the dead”**] is full and rich but not showy, with the same lyrical sweetness, the same limpid austerity that the *Requiem* possesses from its beginning. “Blessed are they that mourn,” Brahms’s *Requiem* begins. It ends, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, said the Spirit, they rest from their labors.” With a radiant gentleness the music dies away on its opening word, “*selig*,” “blessed”—the dead blessed not in Paradise but in the hearts of the living.

JAN SWAFFORD

Jan Swafford is a prizewinning composer and writer whose most recent book, published in December 2020, is *Mozart: The Reign of Love*. His other acclaimed books include *Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph*, *Johannes Brahms: A Biography*, *The Vintage Guide to Classical Music*, and *Language of the Spirit: An Introduction to Classical Music*. He is an alumnus of the Tanglewood Music Center, where he studied composition.

Johannes Brahms

“Ein deutsches Requiem” (“A German Requiem”), Opus 45

(A note on the text and translation: Brahms, perhaps working from memory, sometimes departed in certain details from Martin Luther’s words; the text is given here as he set it. Occasionally the German and English translations of the Bible diverge, and in a few places where it is useful for the understanding of Brahms’s music, we depart from the Authorized Version in order to give a closer rendering of the text Brahms had before him.)

Selig sind, die da Leid tragen,
denn sie sollen getröstet werden.

Blessed are they that mourn:
for they shall be comforted.

Matthew 5:4

Die mit Tränen säen, werden mit
Freuden ernten. Sie gehen hin und
weinen und tragen edlen Samen und
kommen mit Freuden und bringen
ihre Garben.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.
They go forth and weep, bearing
precious seed, and shall doubtless come
again with rejoicing, bringing their
sheaves with them.

Psalms 126:5-6

Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras und
alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen wie des
Grases Blumen. Das Gras ist verdorret
und die Blume abgefallen.

For all flesh is as grass, and all
the glory of man as the flowers of
grass. The grass withereth, and the
flower thereof falleth away.

I Peter 1:24

So seid nun geduldig, lieben Brüder, bis
auf die Zukunft des Herrn. Siehe, ein
Ackermann wartet auf die köstliche
Frucht der Erde und ist geduldig darüber,
bis er empfahe den Morgenregen und
Abendregen.

Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto
the coming of the Lord. Behold, the
husbandman waiteth for the precious
fruit of the earth, and hath long
patience for it, until he receive the
early and latter rain.

James 5:7

Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras und
alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen wie des
Grases Blumen. Das Gras ist verdorret
und die Blume abgefallen.
Aber des Herrn Wort bleibt in
Ewigkeit.

For all flesh is as grass, and all
the glory of man as the flower of
grass. The grass withereth, and the
flower thereof falleth away.
But the word of the Lord endureth for
ever.

I Peter 1:24-25

Die Erlöseten des Herrn werden wieder
kommen und gen Zion kommen mit
Jauchzen; ewige Freude wird über ihrem
Haupten sein; Freude und Wonne werden
sie ergreifen, und Schmerz und Seufzen
wird weg müssen.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall
return, and come to Zion with songs
and everlasting joy upon their heads:
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall be made
to flee.

Isaiah 35:10

Herr, lehre doch mich, dass ein Ende mit mir haben muss, und mein Leben ein Ziel hat und ich davon muss.

Siehe, meine Tage sind einer Hand breit vor dir, und mein Leben ist wie nichts vor dir. Ach, wie gar nichts sind alle Menschen, die doch so sicher leben! Sie gehen daher wie ein Schemen und machen ihnen viel vergebliche Unruhe; sie sammeln, und wissen nicht, wer es kriegen wird.

Nun, Herr, wes soll ich mich trösten? Ich hoffe auf dich.

Der Gerechten Seelen sind in Gottes Hand, und keine Qual rühret sie an.

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, Herr Zebaoth!

Meine Seele verlangt und sehnet sich nach den Vorhöfen des Herrn; mein Leib und Seele freuen sich in dem lebendigen Gott.

Wohl denen, die in deinem Hause wohnen; die loben dich immerdar.

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit; aber ich will euch wieder sehen, und euer Herz soll sich freuen, und eure Freude soll niemand von euch nehmen.

Ich will euch trösten, wie einen seine Mutter tröstet.

Sehet mich an: ich habe eine kleine Zeit Mühe und Arbeit gehabt und habe grossen Trost funden.

Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt, sondern die zukünftige suchen wir.

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis: Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen, wir werden aber alle verwandelt werden; und dasselbige plötzlich, in einem Augenblick, zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune. Denn es wird die Posaune schallen, und die Toten werden auferstehen unver-

Lord, make me to know that there must be an end of me, that my life has a term, and that I must hence.

Behold, thou hast made my days as a handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily, every man at his best state is altogether vanity.

Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them.

And now, Lord, what is my hope? My hope is in thee.

Psalm 39:4-7

The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them.

Wisdom of Solomon 3:1

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will still be praising thee.

Psalm 84:1-2,4

Ye now have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

John 16:22

I will comfort you as one whom his mother comforteth.

Isaiah 66:13

Behold with your eyes: a little while I have had tribulation and labour, and have found great comfort.

Ecclesiasticus 51:35

For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

Hebrews 13:14

Behold I shew you a mystery:

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,

weislich, und wir werden verwandelt werden.
Dann wird erfüllet werden das Wort, dass geschrieben steht:
“Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg. Tod, wo ist dein Stachel? Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg?”

Herr, du bist würdig, zu nehmen Preis und Ehre und Kraft, denn du hast alle Dinge geschaffen, und durch deinen Willen haben sie das Wesen und sind geschaffen.

Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herrn sterben, von nun an. Ja, der Geist spricht, dass sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit; denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach.

and we shall be changed.

Then shall be brought to pass, the saying that is written:
Death is swallowed up in victory.
O death, where is thy sting?
O grave, where is thy victory?
I Corinthians 15:51-52, 54-55

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Revelation 4:11

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.
Revelation 14:13

Guest Artists

In the 2021-2022 season, soprano **Ying Fang** made her house debut at Opéra National de Paris as Susanna in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel, and returned to Lyric Opera of Chicago as Pamina in *The Magic Flute*. On the concert stage, she joined the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus under the direction of Yannick Nézet-Séguin for a special season-opening performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 2, *Resurrection*, a work she reprised later in the season with the National Symphony Orchestra led by Michael Tilson Thomas. In addition, she toured with Ensemble Pygmalion under the direction of Raphaël Pichon, performed at Opernhaus Zürich with Orchestra La Scintilla led by Riccardo Minasi, and returned to the Verbier Festival both as the soprano soloist in Mozart's Requiem led by Andras Schiff and as Oscar in Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera* led by Gianandrea Noseda. In the 2020-2021 season, Fang made her house debuts at both Dutch National Opera and Santa Fe Opera as Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*. In concert, she joined Dutch National Opera in a performance of Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle*. A native of Ningbo, China, Fang is the recipient of the Martin E. Segal Award, the Hildegard Behrens Foundation Award, the Rose Bampton Award of the Sullivan Foundation, the Opera Index Award, and first prize of the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition. In 2009, she became one of the youngest singers to win the prestigious China Golden Bell Award for Music. Ying Fang holds a master's degree and an artist diploma in opera study from the Juilliard School and a bachelor's degree from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. She is a former member of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.

Despite their young age, the Dutch pianists and brother **Lucas and Arthur Jussen** have been part of the international concert world for years, earning the praise of audiences and press alike. They have performed with such ensembles as the BSO, Philadelphia Orchestra, Concertgebouworkest, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and Academy of St Martin in the Fields, as well as the Montreal, Sydney, Singapore, and Shanghai symphony orchestras. They collaborate with such conductors as Stéphane Denève, Christoph Eschenbach, Valery Gergiev, Sir Neville Marriner, Andris Nelsons, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, and Jaap van Zweden. As artists-in-residence at the Konzerthaus Berlin in the 2021-22 season, the Jussen brothers performed with the Konzerthausorchester Berlin as well as in chamber music and recital. In January 2022 they brothers gave the world premiere of Fazil Say's *Anka ku, su (Phoenix)* for piano four-hands, written for them, with the Munich Philharmonic and John Storgårds; they give the American premiere in this concert. This season they also performed with WDR Sinfonieorchester, Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, and Academy of St Martin in the Fields, and Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, and in recital in Berlin, Munich, Amsterdam, Ghent, Basel, Budapest, Bologna, Turin, and Aix-en-Provence, as well as in festivals such as Klavierfestival Ruhr, Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Kissinger Sommer, Tivoli Stjernestunder Festival, and the Schubertiade. Lucas and Arthur Jussen received their first piano lessons in

their native town of Hilversum and were invited as children to perform for the Dutch queen Beatrix; first-place awards in competitions followed shortly. In 2005, the brothers studied in Portugal and Brazil for nearly a year at the invitation of Portuguese master pianist Maria João Pires. In the following years they took lessons from Pires and two renowned Dutch teachers. Lucas completed his studies with Menahem Pressler in the U.S. and Dmitri Bashkirov in Madrid. Arthur graduated from the Amsterdam Conservatory, where he studied with Jan Wijn. Recording exclusively for Deutsche Grammophon since 2010, their debut CD, featuring works by Beethoven, received platinum status and was awarded the Edison Klassiek audience award. Their recording of Mozart's piano concertos K.365 and K.242 with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and Sir Neville Marriner reached gold status. Their most recent recording, *Dutch Masters*, featuring works for two pianos by Pijper, Andriessen, Joey Roukens, and more, was released in July 2022. Lucas and Arthur Jussen made their BSO debut in the 2019-20 season's opening concerts with Andris Nelsons conducting. The Jussen brothers make their Tanglewood debut with this concert; they had been scheduled to perform at last year's festival but were unable to travel to the U.S. due to pandemic restrictions.

Chinese bass-baritone **Shenyang** achieved international attention after winning the 2007 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, leading to debuts with Metropolitan Opera, Glyndebourne Festival, Bavarian State Opera, Zürich Opera House, and Washington National Opera, among others. He commands an expansive repertoire for both opera and the concert stage, enjoying collaborations with today's pre-eminent conductors. Shenyang studied at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Juilliard School, Salzburg Young Artist Project, and the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Program and launched his operatic career in Rossini, Mozart, and Handel roles. Recent seasons have featured role debuts as Jochanaan in Strauss's *Salome*; Gunther in Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*; and Kurwenal in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Concert highlights include Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* (Tiresias), Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and Symphony No. 9, Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances and Death*, and Mahler's Symphony No. 8. He made debuts with both the Munich and London philharmonic orchestras in Tan Dun's *Buddha Passion*. Committed to promoting vocal music of his native heritage, Shenyang recorded Xiaogang Ye's *The Song of the Earth* for Deutsche Grammophon. He presented "East Meets West: Bridging Cultures through Music, an Evening with Tianjin Juilliard and Friends" at the 2021 Macau International Music Festival and sang a newly commissioned arrangement of Schubert's *Die Winterreise* with the Stradivari Quartet at Shanghai's Symphony Hall and with the Borusan Quartet at Istanbul's Is Sanat. A recipient of the Alice Tully Vocal Arts Award, Shenyang has been heard at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center and is featured on Delos's Schubert release *A Lost World*. Making his Tanglewood debut in this concert, Shenyang previously appeared with the BSO as soloist in Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah* under Raphael Frühbeck de Burgos at Boston's Symphony Hall and New York's Carnegie Hall in April 2010.

Tanglewood Festival Chorus

James Burton, BSO Choral Director and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

Originally formed under the joint sponsorship of Boston University and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the all-volunteer Tanglewood Festival Chorus was established in 1970 by its founding conductor, the late John Oliver. Mr. Oliver stepped down from his leadership position at the end of the 2015 Tanglewood season. In 2017, James Burton was named the new Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, also being appointed to the newly created position of BSO Choral Director. Though first established for performances at the BSO's summer home, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus was soon playing a major role in the BSO's subscription season as well as in BSO concerts at Carnegie Hall. The ensemble performs year-round with the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops and is considered one of the world's leading symphonic choruses.

The TFC also records frequently with the BSO and the Boston Pops. Its most recent BSO recording was Shostakovich's Symphony No. 2, *To October*, conducted by BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons as part of the orchestra's ongoing series of Shostakovich recordings for Deutsche Grammophon. The chorus has also recorded with conductors Seiji Ozawa, Bernard Haitink, James Levine, Leonard Bernstein, Colin Davis, Keith Lockhart, and John Williams. The TFC had the honor of singing at Senator Edward Kennedy's funeral and has performed with the Boston Pops for the Boston Red Sox and Boston Celtics. It can also be heard on several movie soundtracks, including *Saving Private Ryan*. The chorus's performance of Duruflé's Requiem in February 2020 was the last concert the group gave before the pandemic. Before 2022, chorus's most recent Tanglewood performances were in summer 2019.

During the pandemic, choral singing at the BSO was kept on hold, but chorus members remained socially and musically active. The TFC contributed a special remote choir performance accompanied by James Burton for the

2020 Holiday Pops. The chorus finally returned to public performance in October 2021, singing the National Anthem at Fenway Park prior to a Red Sox American League Championship Series game. The chorus returned to Symphony Hall singing in the 2021 Holiday Pops concerts and gave a special late-night a cappella Postlude Performance with James Burton, titled “Sing to the Moon,” in February 2022. The chorus was finally reunited with the BSO in performances of Britten’s *War Requiem* in March 2022 under Sir Antonio Pappano. Most recently the chorus performed for this year’s July 4th Spectacular on the Esplanade with the Boston Pops and Keith Lockhart.

The Tanglewood Festival Chorus is made up of volunteer singers who share their time and talents performing alongside the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops. The chorus welcomes new singers who are passionate about choral music, and the next round of auditions will take place on August 17, 2022, at Symphony Hall. Find out more on our website: <https://www.bso.org/about/jobs/tfc-auditions>.

James Burton

James Burton is the BSO Choral Director and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, holding the Alan J. and Suzanne W. Dworsky Chair, endowed in perpetuity. Since his appointment in 2017, Burton has conducted performances at Symphony Hall and Tanglewood with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Pops, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and the Boston Symphony Children’s Choir, which he founded in 2018. Born in London, Burton has conducted UK orchestras including the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Hallé, the Royal Northern Sinfonia, BBC Concert Orchestra, and Manchester Camerata. He has been a frequent guest of the Orquestra Sinfónica Nacional in Mexico City, and gives his debut with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra next season. James Burton has conducted professional choirs including the Gabrieli Consort, Choir of the Enlightenment, Wrocław Philharmonic Choir, and the BBC Singers. From 2002 to 2009 he was Choral Director at the Hallé Orchestra, where he was music director of the Hallé Choir and founding conductor of the Hallé Youth Choir, winning the Gramophone Choral Award in 2009. Burton has conducted performances at English National Opera, English Touring Opera, and Garsington Opera, and has served as assistant conductor at the Metropolitan Opera and Opéra Nacional de Paris.

James Burton is well known for his inspirational work with young musicians. In 2020 was appointed Director of Orchestral Activities and Master Lecturer at Boston University’s School of Music, where he leads the school’s orchestral performances and serves as principal studio teacher for the doctoral program in orchestral conducting. He founded a scholarship for young conductors at Oxford and has given master classes at the Royal Academy of Music and the Tanglewood Music Center. He was music director of the Schola Cantorum of Oxford from 2002 to 2017 and guest director of the National Youth Choir of Japan in 2017. James Burton’s composition portfolio includes works performed by leading choral groups including The Sixteen and the BBC Singers. The King’s Singers featured a work of his on a Christmas album. His 35-minute *The Lost Words* was commissioned by the BSO and performed at Tanglewood in 2019. His works are published by Edition Peters. James Burton studied at St John’s College at Cambridge University and holds a master’s degree in orchestral conducting from the Peabody Conservatory, where he studied with Frederik Prausnitz and Gustav Meier.