

Sunday, August 28, 2:30pm, Shed | BERT L. SMOKLER MEMORIAL CONCERT

BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS conducting

IVES

Psalm 90

JACQUELYN STUCKER, soprano soloist
BEN BLISS, tenor soloist
TANGLEWOOD FESTIVAL CHORUS, JAMES BURTON, conductor
JOHN FINNEY, organ

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Opus 125

Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso
 Molto vivace—Presto—Tempo I—Presto—Tempo I
 Adagio molto e cantabile—Andante moderato—Tempo I— Andante—Adagio
 Presto—Allegro ma non troppo—Vivace—Adagio cantabile—
 Allegro moderato—Allegro—Allegro assai—Presto—Allegro assai—
 Allegro assai vivace, alla Marcia—Andante maestoso—
 Adagio ma non troppo, ma divoto—Allegro energico, sempre ben marcato—
 Allegro ma non tanto—Prestissimo

JACQUELYN STUCKER, soprano
KELLEY O'CONNOR, mezzo-soprano
BEN BLISS, tenor
DASHON BURTON, bass-baritone
TANGLEWOOD FESTIVAL CHORUS, JAMES BURTON, conductor

There is no intermission in this concert.

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

The translation of the text from the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony will be supertitled.

Michael Tilson Thomas has appeared at Tanglewood as conductor, pianist, composer, and impresario since his debut here leading the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra as a Conducting Fellow in July 1968. He became the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Assistant Conductor in fall 1969, leading the BSO for the first time that October in Symphony Hall. He went on to serve as the BSO's Associate Conductor (1970-73), then, with Colin Davis, as Principal Guest Conductor through the 1975 Tanglewood season. He appeared here most recently in August 2018 to conduct Mahler's Symphony No. 1 and to participate in the Leonard Bernstein Centennial Concert.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Charles Ives (1874-1954)

Psalm 90

Composition and premiere: The gestation of Ives's *Psalm 90* was about thirty years; he began it around 1894, may have revised it in about 1902, and created its definitive version in 1924 (see below). *Psalm 90* was performed by the Tanglewood Festival Chorus in a Theatre-Concert Hall recital of July 1976, John Oliver conducting, and by Chorus Pro Musica in Boston Symphony Youth Concerts of March 1975 led by Harry Ellis Dickson in Symphony Hall. Today's performance by the Tanglewood Festival Chorus is the first in the Shed, and the first on a regular BSO concert.

Charles Ives's choral music is a microcosm of his creative life from the revolutionary to the practical. Beginning in his teens, including the startling *Psalm 67* with its stacked-up chords, he used a series of psalm settings to experiment with technical matters ranging from tone clusters to atonality. At the same time, an organ prodigy who worked in churches from age 14, he wrote a number of conventional pieces for services.

That Ives in his teens was already dealing with prophetic musical materials came from the influence of his remarkable father, George Ives, a town band director in Danbury, CT, who was fascinated by acoustics. Among other experiments George would march two bands past one another playing different pieces to see what it sounded like as they approached and passed. While rearing his son toward a mainstream musical career, George told Charlie that any harmony at all was acceptable if you knew what you were doing with it.

That unprecedented gift of freedom, operating on the sensibility of a born creator, kindled Ives's imagination and gave rise to a singular body of work. At the same time, his own experiments with the materials of music, rising from his father's but going far beyond, took him away from a mainstream career. Ives made his living in the insurance business while writing his music nights and weekends. His mature work encompasses little Victorian parlor songs and some of the wildest pandemonium ever put on the page, and everything in between.

In particular, *Psalm 90* for choir and organ is the distilled essence of Ives's musical and spiritual life. He recalled that it took shape over some thirty years, beginning with a draft his father tried out around 1894 with his church choir; there was another version he may have done with his choir in New York's Central Presbyterian—his last musical job—around 1900-2. Finally, around 1924, with illness starting to erode his creative energy, he reworked and expanded the piece to its final form. The material includes a haunting chord sequence he used in the First Symphony, started during his Yale years in the 1890s. In its course, expressing the words attentively, the work unfolds everything from simple harmony to tone clusters, a summary of the enormous harmonic vocabulary Ives commanded. For the remaining years of his life, he created little new music but edited, revised, and compiled older work with an eye toward his legacy.

It begins with a variegated series of organ chords that foreshadow the music and how it will paint the text. The chords are labelled The Eternities, Creation, God's Wrath against Sin, Prayer and Humility, and Rejoicing in Beauty and Work. From there the piece proceeds in a series of contrasting sections around the text's theme of the evanescence of human life placed against God's eternity. Over and over, echoing the chords of the beginning, tension resolves into peace and consolation, all of it over a steady C pedal in the organ, until the work resolves into a beautiful and heartfelt coda on "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it. Amen."

The ending suggests that Ives suspected this was going to be his valedictory work. His creative life was about to be smothered by illness. He told his wife it was the only thing of his that satisfied him.

JAN SWAFFORD

Jan Swafford is an award-winning composer and author whose books include biographies of Brahms, Beethoven, Mozart, and Charles Ives. He is alumnus of the Tanglewood Music Center, where he studied composition.

Psalm 90 (King James Bible version, as set by Ives)

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place from one generation to another.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, "Return, ye children of men."

For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.

In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

Who knoweth the pow'r of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it. Amen.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Opus 125

Composition and premiere: Beethoven wrote his Ninth Symphony at the request of the Philharmonic Society of London, composing the piece between 1822 and 1824. The premiere took place May 7, 1824, Kärntnerthor Theater, Vienna, with the deaf composer on stage beating time, but Michael Umlauf conducting; Henriette Sontag, Karoline Unger, Anton Haitzinger, and Joseph Seipelt were the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass soloists. Georg Henschel led the first BSO performance at the end of the orchestra's first season in March 1882; Serge Koussevitzky led first Tanglewood performance to inaugurate the Music Shed in August 1937. For the most recent Tanglewood performance, on August 25, 2019, the BSO led by Giancarlo Guerrero was joined by soprano Nicole Cabell, mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridges, tenor Nicolas Phan, bass Morris Robinson, and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, James Burton, conductor.

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in D minor is one of the most beloved and influential of symphonic works, and one of the most enigmatic. Partly it thrives in legends: the unprecedented introduction of voices into a symphony, singing Schiller's "Ode to Joy"; the Vienna premiere in 1824, when the deaf composer could not hear the frenzied ovations behind him; the mystical beginning, like matter coalescing out of the void, that would be echoed time and again by later composers—Brahms, Bruckner, Mahler. Above all there is the choral theme of the last movement, one of the most familiar tunes in the world.

On the face of it, that in his last years Beethoven would compose a paean to joy is almost unimaginable. As early as 1802, when he faced the certainty that he was going deaf, he cried in the "Heiligenstadt Testament": "For so long now the heartfelt echo of true joy has been a stranger to me!" Through the next twenty years before he took up the Ninth, he lived with painful and humiliating illness. The long struggle to become legal guardian of his nephew, and the horrendous muddle of their relationship, brought him to the edge of madness.

The idea of setting Schiller's Ode to music was actually not a conception of Beethoven's melancholy last decade. The poem, written in 1785 and embodying the revolutionary fervor of that era, is a kind of exalted drinking song, to be declaimed among comrades with glasses literally or figuratively raised. Schiller's utopian verses were the young Beethoven's music of revolt; it appears that in his early twenties he had already set them to music.

In old age we often return to our youth and its dreams. In 1822, when Vienna had become a police state with spies everywhere, Beethoven received a commission for a symphony from the Philharmonic Society of London. He had already been sketching ideas; now he decided to make Schiller's fire-drunk hymn to friendship, marriage, freedom, and universal brotherhood the finale of the symphony. Into the first three movements he carefully wove foreshadowings of the "Joy" theme, so in the finale it would be unveiled like a revelation.

The dramatic progress of the Ninth is usually described as "darkness to light." Scholar Maynard Solomon refines that idea into "an extended metaphor of a quest for Elysium." But it's a strange darkness and a surprising journey.

The first movement begins with whispering string tremolos, as if coalescing out of silence. Soon the music bursts into figures monumental and declamatory, and at the same time gnarled and searching. The gestures are decisive, even heroic, but the harmony is a restless flux that rarely settles into a proper D minor, or anything else. What kind of hero is rootless and uncertain? The recapitulation (the place where the opening theme returns) appears not in the original D minor but in a strange D major that erupts out of calm like a scream, sounding not triumphant but somehow frightening. As coda there's a funeral march over an ominous chromatic bass line. Beethoven had written funeral marches before, one the second movement of the *Eroica* Symphony. There we can imagine who died: the hero, or soldiers in battle. Who died in the first movement of the Ninth?

After that tragic coda comes the Dionysian whirlwind of the scherzo, one of Beethoven's most electrifying and crowd-pleasing movements, also one of his most complex. Largely it is manic counterpoint dancing through dazzling changes of key, punctuated by timpani blasts. In the middle comes an astonishing Trio: a little wisp of folksong like you'd whistle on a summer day, growing through mounting repetitions into something hypnotic and monumental. So the second movement is made of complexity counterpoised by almost childlike simplicity—a familiar pattern of Beethoven's late music.

Then comes one of those singing, time-stopping Adagios that also mark his last period. It is alternating variations on two long-breathed, major-key themes. The variations of the first theme are liquid, meandering, like trailing your hand in water beside a drifting boat. There are moments of yearning, little dance turns, everything unfolding in an atmosphere of uncanny beauty.

The choral finale is easy to outline, hard to explain. Scholars have never quite agreed on its formal model, though it clearly involves a series of variations on the "Joy" theme. But why does this celebration of joy open with a dissonant shriek that Richard Wagner called the "terror fanfare," shattering the tranquility of the slow movement? Then the basses enter in a quasi-recitative, as if from an oratorio but wordless. We begin to hear recollections of the previous movements, each rebuffed in turn by the basses: opening of the first movement...no, not that despair; second movement...no, too frivolous; third movement...nice, the basses sigh, but no, too sweet. (Beethoven originally sketched a singer declaiming words to that effect, but he decided to leave the ideas suggested rather than spelled out.) *This*, then: the ingenuous little Joy theme is played by the basses unaccompanied, sounding rather like somebody (say, the composer) quietly humming to himself. The theme picks up lovely flowing accompaniments, begins to vary. Then, out of nowhere, back to the terror fanfare. Now in response a real singer steps up to sing a real recitative: "Oh friends, not these sounds! Rather let's strike up something more agreeable and joyful."

Soon the chorus is crying "*Freude!*"—"Joy!"—and the piece is off, exalting joy as the god-engendered daughter of Elysium, under whose influence love could flourish, humanity unite in peace. The variations unfold with their startling contrasts. We hear towering choral proclamations of the theme. We hear a grunting, lurching military march heroic in context ("Joyfully, like a hero toward victory") but light unto satiric in tone, in a style the Viennese called "Turkish." That resolves inexplicably into an exalted double fugue. We hear a kind of Credo reminiscent of Gregorian chant ("Be embraced, you millions! Here's a kiss for all the world!"). In a spine-tingling interlude we are exhorted to fall on our knees and contemplate the Godhead ("Seek him beyond the stars"), followed by another double fugue. The coda is boundless jubilation, again hailing the daughter of Elysium.

So the finale's episodes are learned, childlike, ecclesiastical, sublime, Turkish. In his quest for universality, is Beethoven embracing the ridiculous alongside the sublime? Is he signifying that the world he's embracing includes the elevated and the popular, West and East? Does the unsettled opening movement imply a rejection of the heroic voice that dominated his middle years, making way for another path?

In a work so elusive and kaleidoscopic, a number of perspectives suggest themselves. One is seeing the Ninth in light of its sister work, the *Missa Solemnis*. At the end of Beethoven's Mass the chorus is declaiming "*Dona nobis pacem*," the concluding prayer for peace, when the music is interrupted by the drums and trumpets of war. Just before the choir sings its last entreaty, the drums are still rolling in the distance. The Mass ends, then, with an unanswered prayer.

Beethoven's answer to that prayer is the Ninth Symphony, where hope and peace are not demanded of the heavens. Once when a composer showed Beethoven a work on which he had written "Finished with the help of God," Beethoven wrote under it: "Man, help yourself!" In the Ninth he directs our gaze upward to the divine, but ultimately returns it to ourselves. Through Schiller's exalted drinking song, Beethoven proclaims that the gods have given us joy so we can find Elysium on earth, as brothers and sisters, husbands and wives.

In the end, though, the symphony presents us as many questions as answers, and its vision of utopia is proclaimed, not attained. What can be said with some certainty is that its position in the world is probably what Beethoven wanted it to be. In an unprecedented way for a composer, he stepped into history with a great ceremonial work that doesn't simply preach a sermon about freedom and brotherhood, but aspires to help bring them to pass. Partly because of its enigmas, so many ideologies have claimed the music for their own; over two centuries Communists, Christians, Nazis, and humanists have joined in the chorus. Leonard Bernstein conducted the Ninth at the celebration of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and what else would do the job? Now the Joy theme is the anthem of the European Union, a symbol of nations joining together. If you're looking for the universal, here it is.

One final perspective. The symphony emerges from a whispering mist to fateful proclamations. The finale's Joy theme, prefigured in bits and pieces from the beginning, is almost constructed before our ears, hummed through, then composed and recomposed and decomposed. Which is to say, the Ninth is also music about music, about its own emerging, about its composer composing. And for what? "Be embraced, you millions! This kiss for all the world!" run the telling lines in the finale, in which Beethoven erected a movement of monumental scope on a humble little tune that anybody can sing, and probably half the world knows.

The Ninth Symphony, forming and dissolving before our ears in its beauty and terror and simplicity and complexity, is itself Beethoven's embrace for the millions, from East to West, high to low, naive to sophisticated. When the bass soloist speaks the first words in the finale, an invitation to sing for joy, the words come from Beethoven, not Schiller. It's the composer talking to everybody, to history. There's something singularly moving about that moment when Beethoven greets us person to person, with glass raised, and hails us as friends.

JAN SWAFFORD

GUEST ARTISTS

Michael Tilson Thomas

Michael Tilson Thomas is co-founder and artistic director of the New World Symphony, music director laureate of the San Francisco Symphony, and conductor laureate of the London Symphony Orchestra. Born in Los Angeles, he is the third generation of his family to pursue an artistic career. His grandparents, Boris and Bessie Thomashefsky, were founding members of the Yiddish Theater in America; his father, Ted Thomas, was a producer at the Mercury Theater Company in New York before moving to Los Angeles where he worked in film and television; and his mother, Roberta Thomas, was the head of research for Columbia Pictures. He was named music director of the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra at age 19. He worked with Stravinsky, Boulez, Stockhausen, and Copland on premieres of their compositions at Los Angeles's Monday Evening Concerts. During this same period he was the pianist and conductor for Gregor Piatigorsky and Jascha Heifetz. In 1969, after winning the Koussevitzky Prize at Tanglewood, he was appointed assistant conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. That year he also made his New York debut with the BSO, gaining international recognition when he replaced music director William Steinberg in mid-concert. Subsequently named associate conductor and then principal guest conductor of the orchestra, he remained with the BSO until 1974. Tilson Thomas was music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic from 1971 to 1979, principal guest conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 1981 to 1985, and principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra from 1988 to 1995. His guest conducting engagements include frequent appearances with the major orchestras of Europe and the United States. Tilson Thomas is a two-time Carnegie Hall Perspectives artist, curating and conducting series at the hall from 2003 to 2005 and from 2018 to 2019. He has won twelve Grammy Awards, appeared on more than 120 recordings, produced a myriad of projects for BBC Television and others, and composed celebrated works. Tilson Thomas's tenure as music director of the San Francisco Symphony (1995-2020) was a period of significant growth and heightened international recognition for the orchestra. With the SFS he championed and cultivated relationships with today's leading composers and led the orchestra in numerous summer festivals and tours of Europe, the United States, and Asia. Michael Tilson Thomas is an Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was named *Musical America's* Musician of the Year and Conductor of the Year as well as *Gramophone* magazine's Artist of the Year and has been profiled on CBS's *60 Minutes*, ABC's *Nightline*, and PBS's *American Masters*. He was awarded the National Medal of Arts, inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and received Kennedy Center Honors in 2019. Michael Tilson Thomas's most recent performances with the BSO were in the 2018 Tanglewood season: on August 12, leading the orchestra in his own *Agnegram* and music

of Rachmaninoff and Mahler, and on August 25, conducting works by Bernstein and Copland as part of the special “Bernstein Centennial Celebration at Tanglewood” concert.

Jacquelyn Stucker

American soprano Jacquelyn Stucker makes her BSO and Tanglewood debuts in today’s concert. A hugely versatile artist, Stucker is a graduate of the New England Conservatory with a doctorate of musical arts and is an alumna of the Jette Parker Young Artist Program at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. In the 2021-22 season, Stucker returned to the Covent Garden as Karolka in Janáček’s *Jenufa* and made house debuts at the Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, as Poppea in Monteverdi’s *L’incoronazione di Poppea*, and at Palau de les Arts Reina Sofía, as Dalinda in Handel’s *Ariodante*. Engagements on the concert stage included Strauss’s Four Last Songs and Gretel in Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*, both with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra under Sir Donald Runnicles, Hanns Eisler’s *Deutsche Sinfonie* with NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester, and Eurydice in Gluck’s *Orfeo et Eurydice* with Washington Concert Opera. Other recent highlights include exciting house and role debuts as Armida in Handel’s *Rinaldo* at Glyndebourne and Tytania in Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* as well as Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, both at Deutsche Oper Berlin. She was also Azema in David Alden’s new production of Rossini’s *Semiramide* at Bavarian State Opera and Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. As a Jette Parker Young Artist, highlights at the Royal Opera House included Aphrodite in Henze’s *Phaedra*, Frasquita in Barrie Kosky’s production of Bizet’s *Carmen* (broadcast worldwide in March 2018 as part of the ROH Live Cinema Season), Alessandro in Handel’s *Berenice*, Susanna in Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro* with John Eliot Gardiner conducting, and Prilepa in Tchaikovsky’s *The Queen of Spades* under the baton of Antonio Pappano. Among her concert highlights, she has performed a solo recital of UK premieres of music by John Harbison, Federico Favali, and Mark Kilstofte. Stucker was a finalist in the London Handel Society Solo Competition, and in 2018 she was the second-place prize-winner of the inaugural Glyndebourne Opera Cup. She was also a finalist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council’s New England Region Auditions, a semifinalist in the 2016 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, and a national semifinalist in the 2017 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Kelley O’Connor

Possessing a voice of uncommon allure, Grammy Award-winning mezzo-soprano Kelley O’Connor is one of the most compelling performers of her generation. Highlights of her 2021-22 season included a return to the Concertgebouw for performances of Peter Lieberman’s *Neruda Songs* led by Stéphane Denève, the Mozart Requiem with Fabio Luisi conducting the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with Juraj Valc̃uha and the Minnesota Orchestra, Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde* with Asher Fisch and the Seattle Symphony, a program of Duruflé and Canteloube with Ken-David Masur and the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and Mendelssohn’s *Elijah* with Jun Märkl and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. With the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra she sang the role of Hansel in Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel* led by Donald Runnicles and in Mahler’s Third Symphony with Robert Spano. Sought after by many of today’s most heralded composers, Kelley O’Connor has given the world premieres of Joby Talbot’s *A Sheen of Dew on Flowers* with the Britten Sinfonia, Bryce Dessner’s *Voy a Dormir* with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s at Carnegie Hall, Osvaldo Golijov’s *Ainadamar* at Tanglewood, and John Adams’s *The Gospel According to the Other Mary*. She performed the latter work, written for her, under the batons of John Adams, Gustavo Dudamel, Grant Gershon, Gianandrea Noseda, Sir Simon Rattle, and David Robertson. She is an acclaimed interpreter of Peter Lieberman’s *Neruda Songs*, performing them with Christoph Eschenbach and the National Symphony Orchestra, with Bernard Haitink and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with Robert Spano and the Minnesota Orchestra, and with David Zinman and the Berliner Philharmoniker and the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, among many others. O’Connor’s discography includes Mahler’s Third Symphony with Jaap van Zweden and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Lieberman’s *Neruda Songs*, Golijov’s *Ainadamar*, Michael Kurth’s *Everything Lasts Forever* with Robert Spano and the Atlanta Symphony, Adams’s *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* with Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with Franz Welser-Möst and the Cleveland Orchestra. A Tanglewood Music Center Vocal Fellow in 2003, Kelley O’Connor performed with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players in October 2016 and made her BSO debut in the 2018 Tanglewood season as a soloist in Leonard Bernstein’s *Songfest*.

Ben Bliss

Tenor Ben Bliss, who makes his Boston Symphony Orchestra and Tanglewood debuts this afternoon, is quickly establishing himself as one of the most exciting performers on today's operatic stage, both in the U.S. and internationally. Bliss was a 2021 recipient of the Metropolitan Opera's prestigious Beverly Sills Award. His numerous other accolades include the 2016 Martin E. Segal award at the Lincoln Center, the Mozart and Plácido Domingo awards at the 2015 Francisco Viñas International Competition, first prize at the 2014 Gerda Lissner and Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation competitions, and the 2013 Operalia Don Plácido Domingo Sr. Zarzuela prize. He is co-founder of the classical arts production company Mise-en-Scène Studios. Recent highlights include Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) at Lyric Opera Chicago and Gran Teatre del Liceu Barcelona, and Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) at the Metropolitan Opera. Bliss's 2021-22 season highlights include a house debut at the San Francisco Opera as Ferrando, Pylade (*Iphigénie en Tauride*) at Opéra de Rouen, and a return to the Met as Tom Rakewell (*The Rake's Progress*). While in the Lindemann Program, Bliss made his Metropolitan Opera stage debut as Vogelgesang in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* under James Levine; he has since returned as Steuermann (*The Flying Dutchman*) under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Tamino (*The Magic Flute*) and Belmonte (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*). He made his European debut in the latter role with the Glyndebourne Festival Opera on tour in 2015. Other operatic highlights have included Tamino at the Los Angeles and Philadelphia operas, Ferrando at the Seattle and Canadian operas and Oper Frankfurt, Tom Rakewell for Boston Lyric Opera, and in Santa Fe, Flamand in Strauss's *Capriccio* and Robert Wilson in Peter Sellars's new production of *Doctor Atomic*. Concert highlights include his debuts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel and with the New York Philharmonic as Tony in Bernstein's *West Side Story* Concert Suite No. 1 with Alan Gilbert, Haydn's *Creation* and Cassio (*Otello*) at the Cincinnati May Festival under James Conlon, a house and role debut as Count de Rosillon (*The Merry Widow*) in concert at the Liceu Barcelona, and a U.S. recital tour, including a performance at Carnegie Hall, with pianist Lachlan Glen. Ben Bliss appeared alongside Isabel Leonard for Ferdinand and Miranda's love duet from Adès's *The Tempest* at the Metropolitan Opera's 50th Anniversary gala concert in 2017.

Dashon Burton

Bass-baritone Dashon Burton makes his Boston Symphony Orchestra and Tanglewood debuts this afternoon. He has established a vibrant career, appearing regularly throughout the U.S. and Europe in favorite pieces including Bach's *St. John* and *St. Matthew* Passions and the Mass in B Minor, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Brahms's *German Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Mozart's Requiem. He opened the 2021-22 season with the Handel and Haydn Society led by Marin Alsop and made several notable orchestral debuts, including with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Seattle symphony orchestras. He continued his relationship with San Francisco Performances as an artist-in-residence, appearing at venues and educational institutions throughout the Bay Area, and also made his Celebrity Series of Boston debut in recital. Recent operatic engagements have included Strauss's *Salome* at the Salzburg Festival led by Franz Welser-Möst, Peter Sellars's production of Claude Vivier's *Kopernikus*, Sarastro in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, and Jupiter in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* with Les Talens Lyriques. Burton won his second Grammy Award in 2021 for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album for his performance in Dame Ethyl Smyth's *The Prison* with the Experiential Orchestra (Chandos). He also received top prizes in the ARD International Music Competition, Oratorio Society of New York's Vocal Competition, and Bach Bethlehem Vocal Competition. He won his first Grammy as an original member of the groundbreaking vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth for their inaugural recording of all-new commissions, including Caroline Shaw's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Partita for 8 Voices*. Burton received a bachelor of music degree from Oberlin College and Conservatory and a master of music degree from Yale University's Institute of Sacred Music. Deeply passionate about education and bringing as much music as possible to the next generation, he is proud to be a member of the board of Chorus America, a service organization devoted to advocating for the power of collective song. He is also an active member of the Recording Academy. Burton is an assistant professor of voice at Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music.

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. Find out about upcoming auditioning 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.

Tanglewood Festival Chorus

(Ives *Psalm 90* and Beethoven Symphony No. 9, Sunday, August 28)

In the following list, * denotes membership of 40 years or more, # denotes membership of 35-39 years, and + denotes membership of 25-34 years.

Sopranos

Debra Benschneider • Michele Bergonzi # • Connie Brooks • Anna S. Choi + • Tori Lynn Cook • Beth Ayn Curtis • Sarah Evans • Mary A. V. Feldman * • Jillian Griffin • Cynde Hartman • Alyssa Hensel • Natalia Hubner • Christiana Jamroz • Polina Dimitrova Kehayova • Donna Kim + • Greta Koning • Laurie Stewart Otten • Laura Stanfield Prichard • Livia M. Racz + • Pamela Schweppe # • Dana Sheridan • Judy Stafford • Dana R. Sullivan • Sarah Robinson Seeber + • Nora Anne Watson • Kirstie Wheeler • Lauren Woo • Elizabeth Woodard • Susan Glazer Yospin

Altos

Virginia Bailey • Betsy Bobo • Lauren A. Boice • Janet L. Buecker + • Destiny Cooper • Abbe Dalton Clark + • Olivia de Geofroy • Melanie Donnelly • Amy Spound Friedman • Irene Gilbride * • Olivia Marie Goliger • Lianne Goodwin • Julie Hausmann • Susan L. Kendall • Annie Kim • Yoo-Kyung Kim • Sarah Labrie • Gale Tolman Livingston * • Ana Morel • Hana Omori • Roslyn Pedlar # • Max Rook • Debra Swartz + • Lelia Tenreyro-Viana • Marguerite Weidknecht # • Sarah Wesley • Karen Thomas Wilcox • Janet Wolfe

Tenors

Brad W. Amidon + • Stephen Chrzan • Andrew Crain + • Tom Dinger + • Carey D. Erdman + • Keith Erskine • Fernando Gaggini • Len Giambrone • Timothy O. Jarrett • Ben Kuhn • Lance Levine + • Jesse Liu • Mark Mulligan • Dwight E. Porter * • Guy F. Pugh • Peter Pulsifer • Miguel A. Rodriguez • Arend Sluis • Martin S. Thomson + • Hyun Yong Woo • Benjamin Woodard • Sam Wright • Eytan Wurman

Basses

Scott Barton • Michael Bunting • Matthew Buono • Eric Chan • Matthew Collins • Jeff Foley • Jay S. Gregory # • Gabriel Harrison • Jack Humphrey • David M. Kilroy • Paul A. Knaplund • Will Koffel • Bruce Kozuma + • Carl Kraenzel • Daniel Lichtenfeld • Martin F. Mahoney II • Ben Orenstein • Michael Prichard # • Steven Rogers • Peter Rothstein * • Kenneth D. Silber • Samuel Truesdell • Yen Kuei (Peter) Tu • Alex Weir • Peter J. Wender * • Lawson L.S. Wong • Gan Xiong

Julia Carey, Rehearsal Pianist

Brett Hodgdon, Rehearsal Pianist

Pamela Dellal, German Diction Coach

Jana Hieber, Manager of Choral Activities

Daniel Mahoney, Chorus Assistant

A Tribute to Ron Della Chiesa

Ron Della Chiesa retires this summer as the longtime voice of Boston Symphony Orchestra broadcasts for WGBH and WCRB.

Since October 4, 1991, whenever the BSO took the stage at Symphony Hall or here at Tanglewood, one man's voice has brought the beauty of those concerts into the homes of thousands of listeners in and around the Boston area. And that man is Ron Della Chiesa, one of radio's true legends. His mellifluous voice was as recognizable as any that has ever graced the radio airwaves.

Born in Quincy, MA, Ron was a radio fan from his earliest years, so it's no surprise that, when the chance to become a radio host presented itself, Ron was ready for the task. While still a student at the Boston University School of Communication, he landed his first professional radio job at WBOS, where he hosted a variety of music shows.

Following a stint in the army, Ron joined what was then classical music station WBCN, where he eventually became program director. But when WBCN changed formats in 1968, Ron moved over to WGBH, where he has played a variety of roles and hosted many shows for WGBH and for WCRB. One cannot even begin to count the number of great musicians Ron has interviewed and befriended.

While completely comfortable in the classical genre, including a special familiarity and fluency in the world of opera, Ron's other passion is the Great American Songbook. His knowledge of that amazing music and his friendships with many of its greatest purveyors makes Ron one of the true experts of the genre.

This Sunday's BSO broadcast of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas, marks Ron's final broadcast in the host's chair for the BSO. But his connection with the musicians of the BSO runs deep, and whenever people talk about the great voices who have brought the BSO's artistry into people's homes, the name they will mention first is Ron Della Chiesa.

ANTHONY RUDEL, General Manager of GBH Music

From Andris Nelsons and the BSO:

As the voice of the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Symphony Hall and Tanglewood for 31 years, Ron Della Chiesa demonstrated a deep love and knowledge of music with each and every broadcast, welcoming and inspiring listeners with his genuine passion for the BSO's extraordinary music making. While we will miss Ron's generous and gracious presence as host of our radio broadcasts, we wish him the very best of life and look forward to seeing him at many future BSO concerts, where he will always be considered an honorary member of the BSO Family.

ANDRIS NELSONS, Ray and Maria Stata Music Director, Boston Symphony Orchestra