

2023–2024 | 124th Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Friday, March 15, at 2:00

Saturday, March 16, at 8:00

Sunday, March 17, at 2:00

Fabio Luisi Conductor

Emanuel Ax Piano

Audrey Luna Soprano

Sunnyboy Dladla Tenor

Sean Michael Plumb Baritone

Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia

Dominick DiOrio Artistic Director

Philadelphia Boys Choir

Jeffrey R. Smith Artistic Director

Philadelphia Girls Choir

Nathan Wadley Artistic Director

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 25 in C major, K. 503

I. Allegro maestoso

II. Andante

III. Allegretto

Intermission

Orff *Carmina burana*

Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi:

1. O Fortuna (chorus)

2. Fortune plango vulnera (chorus)

I. Primo vere:

3. Veris leta facies (small chorus)

4. Omnia Sol temperat (baritone)

5. Ecce gratum (chorus)

Uf dem Anger:

6. Tanz (orchestra)

7. Floret silva (chorus)

8. Chramer, gip die varwe mir (soprano and chorus)

9. (a.) Reie (orchestra)

(b.) Swaz hie gat umbe (chorus)

(c.) Chume, chum geselle min (small chorus)

(d.) Swaz hie gat umbe (chorus)

10. Were diu werlt alle min (chorus)

(Program continued)

II. In Taberna:

11. Estuans interius (baritone)
12. Olim lacus colueram (tenor and male chorus)
13. Ego sum abbas (baritone and male chorus)
14. In taberna quando sumus (male chorus)

III. Cour d'amours:

15. Amor volat undique (soprano and children's chorus)
16. Dies, nox et omnia (baritone)
17. Stetit puella (soprano)
18. Circa mea pectora (baritone and chorus)
19. Si puer com puellula (male chorus)
20. Veni, veni, venias (double chorus)
21. In trutina (soprano)
22. Tempus est iocundum (soprano, baritone, chorus, children's chorus)
23. Dulcissime (soprano)

Blanziflor et Helena:

24. Ave formosissima (chorus)

Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi:

25. O Fortuna (chorus)

This program runs approximately 2 hours, 5 minutes.

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM and are repeated on Monday evenings at 7 PM on WRTI HD 2. Visit www.wrti.org to listen live or for more details.



The Philadelphia Orchestra

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive and inclusive future for classical music, and furthering the place of the arts in an open and democratic society. In June 2021 the Orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united to form The Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center, Inc., reimagining the power of the arts to bring joy, create community, and effect change.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 12th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. His connection to the ensemble's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics, and he is embraced by the musicians of the Orchestra, audiences, and the community.

Your Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, in Verizon Hall and around the community, in classrooms and hospitals, and over the airwaves and online. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members of all ages through programs such as PlayINs; side-by-sides; PopUP concerts; Our City, Your Orchestra Live; School

Concerts; sensory-friendly concerts; open rehearsals; the School Partnership Program and School Ensemble Program; All City Orchestra Fellowships; and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad. The Orchestra's free online video series, Our City, Your Orchestra (OCYO), uncovers and amplifies the voices, stories, and causes championed by unique Philadelphia organizations and businesses. Joining OCYO in connecting with the community is HearTOGETHER, a free monthly podcast featuring artists and activists who discuss music, social justice, and the lived experiences that inform the drive to create a more equitable and inclusive future for the arts.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador and one of our nation's greatest exports. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Mann Center, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich touring history, having first performed outside Philadelphia in its earliest days. In 1973 it was the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China, launching a five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 13 celebrated releases on the Deutsche Grammophon label, including the GRAMMY® Award-winning *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM. For more information, please visit www.philorch.org.

Conductor



GRAMMY Award-winner **Fabio Luisi** launched his tenure as the Louise W. and Edmund J. Kahn music director of the Dallas Symphony at the start of the 2020–21 season and in January 2021 the orchestra announced an extension of his position through 2028–29. A maestro of major international standing, the Italian conductor is in his seventh season as principal conductor of the Danish National Symphony, and in September 2022 he assumed the role of principal

conductor of the NHK Symphony in Tokyo. He previously served for six seasons as principal conductor of the Metropolitan Opera and nine seasons as general music director of the Zurich Opera. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2011.

Mr. Luisi's current season with the Dallas Symphony features monumental works including Mahler's Fifth Symphony, Brahms's *A German Requiem*, and Liszt's *A Faust Symphony*. He also leads three world premieres: Jessie Montgomery's *Snapshots*; Xi Wang's *Year 2020*, featuring trumpeter Tine Thing Helseth and violinist Karen Gomyo; and Anna Clyne's Piano Concerto, featuring Jeremy Denk. The season concludes with the first two operas in Wagner's *Ring Cycle*: *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*. The ensemble and Mr. Luisi will continue the complete cycle in the 2024–25 season, marking the first time in recent history an American orchestra has mounted the full *Ring*. In October 2023 Mr. Luisi and the Dallas Symphony released the second of their recording projects, Brahms's Third and Fourth symphonies. Available through the orchestra's in-house label, DSO Live, this album joins the fall 2022 release of Brahms's First and Second symphonies to complete the cycle. This season they record two projects for future release: Franz Schmidt's *The Book with Seven Seals* and Saint-Saëns's Symphony No. 3 ("Organ").

Mr. Luisi received a GRAMMY Award for his conducting of the last two operas of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* when Deutsche Grammophon's DVD release, recorded live at the Metropolitan Opera, was named Best Opera Recording of 2012. In February 2015 the Philharmonia Zurich launched its Philharmonia Records label with three Luisi recordings: Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, a double album surveying Wagner's preludes and interludes, and a DVD of Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Born in Genoa in 1959, Mr. Luisi began piano studies at the age of four and received his diploma from the Conservatorio Niccolò Paganini in 1978. He later studied conducting with Milan Horvat at the University for Music and Performing Arts in Graz. In 2014 he was awarded the Grifo d'Oro, the highest honor given by the city of Genoa, for his contributions to the city's cultural legacy. Off the podium he is an accomplished composer and a passionate maker of perfumes.

Soloists

Nigel Parry



Born to Polish parents in what is today Lviv, Ukraine, pianist **Emanuel Ax** moved to Winnipeg, Canada, with his family when he was a young boy. He made his New York debut in the Young Concert Artists Series and in 1974 won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. He won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists in 1975, the same year he made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut. Four years later he was awarded the Avery Fisher Prize. In addition to

these current performances, highlights of his 2023–24 season include the world premiere of Anders Hillborg's Piano Concerto No. 2, commissioned for him by the San Francisco Symphony and Esa-Pekka Salonen with subsequent performances in Stockholm and New York; a continuation of the "Beethoven for 3" touring and recording project with violinist Leonidas Kavakos and cellist Yo-Yo Ma; recitals in the United States, culminating at Carnegie Hall in April; and an extensive European tour with concerts in Holland, Italy, Germany, France, and the Czech Republic. He has been a Sony Classical exclusive recording artist since 1987 and is the winner of multiple GRAMMY Awards. For more information, please visit www.EmanuelAx.com.

Foy Fox



GRAMMY Award-winning soprano **Audrey Luna** makes her Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these performances. Other current and future engagements include her debut at the Teatro alla Scala as Ariel in Thomas Adès's *The Tempest*; her debut at the Teatro Real Madrid as Madame Mao in Adams's *Nixon in China*; Orff's *Catulli carmina* and *Carmina burana* with the Dallas Symphony; Hans Abrahamsen's *Let me tell you* with the Barcelona Symphony; and the Queen

of the Night in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* with Vancouver Opera. She recently set the record for singing the highest written note on the Metropolitan Opera stage, the A above high C, as Leticia in Adès's *The Exterminating Angel*, which she also performed in the world premiere at the Salzburg Festival and at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Previous Met appearances include Queen of the Night in Julie Taymor's production of *The Magic Flute* and Naiad in Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Her performance as Ariel, released on DVD on Deutsche Grammophon, was awarded a French Diapason d'Or and the 2013 GRAMMY Award for "Best Opera Recording."

Soloists



Tenor **Sunnyboy Dladla** makes his Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these performances. Other highlights of the current season include his house debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu Barcelona as Don Ramiro in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, Orff's *Carmina burana* with the London Symphony under the baton of Gianandrea Noseda, Mozart's Requiem in Salzburg, and a return to the role of Count Almaviva in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* at the Hanover State Opera.

The unique sound of his Rossinian voice combined with an outstanding stage presence have allowed him to combine an active opera career with frequent concert performances. In the 2022–23 season he returned to the Edinburgh Festival for *Carmina burana* under the baton of Donald Runnicles and appeared in a production of Benjamin's *Lessons in Love and Violence* at the Zurich Opera House. He debuted at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro as Oraspe in *Aureliano in Palmira*. Born in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, he graduated with distinctions from the University of Cape Town and earned his master's degree at the Zurich University of the Arts.

Dario Acosta



Since the 2016–17 season, baritone **Sean Michael Plumb** has been an ensemble member of the Bavarian State Opera, where he has developed an extensive repertoire. He also makes guest appearances at international houses in New York, Houston, Paris, and Lyon. Recent and upcoming performance highlights include his debut in the title role of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* at the Bavarian State Opera and Schaunard in Puccini's *La bohème* at the Metropolitan Opera. He made his Met

debut as Harlequin in Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*, a role he reprised in February with the Bavarian State Opera at the Hong Kong Arts Festival. On the concert stage he has sung Orff's *Carmina burana* with Fabio Luisi and the Dallas Symphony. He was honored in a ceremony at the White House by President Obama as a United States Presidential Scholar in the Arts and has won several awards, including the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Grand Prize. He studied at the Curtis Institute of Music with teachers Mikael Eliassen and William Stone. Mr. Plumb makes his Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these performances.

Chorus

Torelle Productions



Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia has a rich and storied history as one of the nation's premier choral ensembles and a vital part of Philadelphia's cultural landscape. The chorus has enjoyed a close relationship with The Philadelphia Orchestra, beginning with a performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in 1904 and the 1908 Philadelphia premiere of Brahms's *A German Requiem*. Since 1990 the chorus has commissioned more than 75 works. The ensemble was nominated for a 1985

GRAMMY Award for its recording of Persichetti's *Winter Cantata*. Its commission *Anthraxite Fields* by Julia Wolfe won the 2015 Pulitzer Prize. Now performing its 150th season, Mendelssohn Chorus is led by Artistic Director and Conductor Dominick DiOrio. The Mendelssohn Chorus is grateful to Betsy Burleigh (music director emerita of the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh and chair of the Choral Conducting department at Indiana University) for providing a marked *Carmina burana* choral score and for leading a clinic in anticipation of these performances. For more information, please visit mcchorus.org.

Sopranos

Maryl Apadula
Barbara Berry
Rachel Castro-Diephouse
Lily Carmichael[†]
Lauren Cohen^{†*}
Lauren Darkes
Amanda Davis[†]
Bailey Dean^{††}
Kelsey DeJesus
Roberta Fischer
Caroline Fitch
Teri Gemberling-Johnson
Lauren Gilmore
Miriam Goldberg
Lilah Gosman[†]
Elizabeth Hohwieler
Anna Juliar
Emily Grace Kane
Lynn Kirby
Kelsey Lewis^{**}
Carolyn Linarello
Rachael Lipsont^{**}
Fay Manicke
Ilene Miller
Leila Naitove
Andrea Nestman
Kethrellan Peterson^{**}
Lynn Petroski
Kate Philips-Kaiser[†]
Roberta Rote
Sophia Santiago^{††}
Marie Tavianini
Laura Temoyan
Jessica Vega
Kathryn Wadsworth
Deanda Wilson
Lisa Wooldridge

Altos

Ariel Alvarado^{††}
Rachele Armstrong[†]
Elizabeth Beavers^{^^†}
Shahara Benson[†]
Julia Bokunewicz^{**}
Jenna Camacho
Chris Chaapel
Erin Donovan
Robin Eaton[†]
Eloise Flood
Shannon Foley
Rebecca Fülöp
Anne Gold
Katherine Haas
Jennifer Hay
Mari Kawakatsu[†]
Sharon Kempin
Maya Kociba
Allison Levine
Susan Lin
Priscilla Lo
Madeleine Mackin^{††}
Heather Mitchell^{^^††}
Florence Moyer
Margaret Oravetz
Jennifer Rafferty^{**}
Shannon Rafferty
Rebecca Rendsburg
Sharon Rhinesmith^{††}
Jennifer Sheffield
Maria Sisto
Jane Uptegrove
Aiko Whiting
Heather Wismer

Tenors

Michael Cabán
Christopher Carriero
Kyle Conner[†]
Mark Davidson
Dominick DiOrio^{^^^†††}
Rich Galassini[†]
Campbell Holder
Frank Kanther
David Kaye
Jim Light
John Luttenberger
Ian Martin[†]
Daniel Ojserkis[†]
John Padden
Nicholas Petroski[†]
Mark Pinzur
Michael Robert-Smith^{**}
Eric Rodriguez-Lopez[†]
Roy Schmidt
Jeffrey Schwartz
D'quan Tyson^{**†}
Steve Ullman
Zach Zaitlin[†]

Basses

Evan Birnholz[†]
Will Budreau
Michael Carson[†]
Tyler Cudia[†]
Lucas DeJesus^{^^††}
Brendan Fullam
Steven Glasser
David Huang
Jon Kochavi
John Kohlhas[†]
George Leone
Martin Levitas
Jacob Lynn-Palevsky[†]
Sean Martin
Michael Moore

Erik Potteiger^{**}
Jeffrey Pufahl
Cleveland Rea
Matthew Reese[†]
Daniel Rosen[†]
Daniel Simpson
Thomas Sutton
Richard Tolma
Alexander Varghese[†]

Ting Ting Wong, Senior
Artist-in-Residence
and Collaborative Pianist

*Section Leader
**Lead Section Leader
^Conducting Apprentice
^^Senior Conducting
Apprentice
^^^Associate Conductor
and Director of
Operations
^^^Artistic Director and
Conductor
†Coro Piccolo

Choir



Renowned for its musicianship, intelligence, and interpretive abilities, the Emmy-winning and GRAMMY-nominated **Philadelphia Boys Choir & Chorale** (PBCC) has cultivated a devoted worldwide following for its highly acclaimed concerts and performances. Established in 1968 and under the baton of Jeffrey R. Smith since 2004, the Choir is known as "America's Ambassadors of Song," proudly representing both the City of Philadelphia and the United States on its

many concert tours across the globe. PBCC's achievements include recordings with internationally renowned orchestras and soloists such as Luciano Pavarotti, television appearances, and praise from critics and audiences worldwide. PBCC has collaborated with many ensembles including The Philadelphia Orchestra (with which it debuted in 1973), the Philly POPS, the Philadelphia Ballet, Opera Philadelphia, the Curtis Institute, the Academy of Vocal Arts, Mendelssohn Chorus, Pig Iron Theater, Vox Ama Deus, and the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia. National television appearances have included *Good Morning America*, *Saturday Night Live*, and *The Today Show*. PBCC is also a regular performer at Philadelphia Phillies and Philadelphia Eagles games.

Samir Abbas
Elliet Brown
Thursten HW Brown
Carmelo Carino
Eric Frasch
Abraham Richard Genkin
Henry Thomas Galish
Mark Houck, Jr.

Jayden Eli Hubbard
Cavan Hurley
Isaac Mendenhall
Ethan Monberg
Liam A. Newkirk
Harry Robert Pfeiffer
Griffin Reilly
Charlie Rodgers

Daniel S. Rosta
Conrad Jeffery George
Schweiger
Jonah Serotta
Viggo Waldman
Joshua E. Washington
Josiah S. West
Benjamin Yong

Choir



A highly selective music education program for girls ages six and older, the **Philadelphia Girls Choir**, which is making its Philadelphia Orchestra debut, is designed to instill confidence and responsibility through musical achievement. The Choir takes a holistic approach to choral music that relates musicianship and performance to the broader human experience. Cultural diversity and personal development are essential elements of training. Founded in 2012 and

in its 11th season under the artistic direction of Nathan Wadley, the Choir began with 18 singers and has grown to include nearly 200 youth divided into four ensembles—Motif, Etude, Cantata, and Concerto. Beginning with the basics of music theory and performance, singers progress over the years to learn more about vocal technique through challenging repertoire. All programs include public performances at locations such as the National Constitution Center, the Academy of Music, the Kimmel Center, and, most recently, the Met Philadelphia for the mayoral inauguration of Cherelle Parker. The Choir has traveled extensively throughout Europe, and recently completed its first competitive performance in Wernigerode, Germany, at the International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival.

Miriam Carino
Flame Duffy
Bianca Embick
Gwen Frank
Anokhi Shome Gale
Abigail Gorman
Jha'lia Graham
Trinity Hobough
Noelle Hofmann

Caroline Hyun
Kieryn Koh
Aubrey Lane
Cheyann Lynch
Lila Martin
Maeve Meyer
Avantika Nasta
Ridhima Parnati
Sophia Sharp

Neha Suddapalli
Jillian Tetreault
Trang "Couri" Vo
Evelyn Weber
Fiona Yan
Nina Yavru-Sakuk
Emma Zheng

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1786

Mozart

Piano
Concerto
No. 25

Music

Dittersdorf
*Doktor und
Apotheker*

Literature

Bourgoyne
The Heiress

Art

Goya
The Seasons

History

Frederick the
Great dies

1935

Orff

*Carmina
burana*

Music

Shostakovich
Symphony
No. 4

Literature

Auden
On this Island

Art

Epstein
Ecce Homo

History

Spanish Civil
War begins

Mozart, not yet even a teenager, produced his earliest piano concertos in his native Salzburg to display his remarkable gifts as a performer. They were not entirely original works but, rather, arrangements of pieces by more established composers, including C.P.E. Bach. At age 17 Mozart wrote his first original piano concerto. His most intense engagement with the genre came in the mid-1780s, after he moved to Vienna and began giving subscription concerts to support his growing family. He wrote a dozen within the space of two years of which the C-major one we hear today is the last and one of the most elaborate.

Carl Orff's rousing *Carmina burana* is among a handful of 20th-century compositions that is firmly established in the concert repertory as well as enthusiastically embraced by popular culture. This grand choral extravaganza, based on medieval Latin poems, encompasses a wide range of themes, from the bawdy to the elevated, beginning with the famous opening invocation: "O Fortune! Like the moon ever-changing."

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's Symphony Hall, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 4 PM.

ThePhiladelphiaOrchestra

The Music

Piano Concerto No. 25

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

Born in Salzburg, January 27, 1756

Died in Vienna, December 5, 1791



The recognition of Mozart as the universal genius of music has gone virtually unchallenged for more than two centuries. No other musician during this time, no matter how great, can claim to have excelled in the composition of so many kinds of music. That Mozart was a peerless performer as well only adds to the miracle of his achievement and to our wonder at it. Indeed, Mozart wrote nearly everything—keyboard, vocal, sacred, and chamber music, symphonies, and

opera. And it is that last area—dramatic music—that has proved the stumbling block for even the mightiest. Beethoven labored over *Fidelio* for years and wrote three versions altogether. Brahms never produced an opera, while Haydn, Schubert, and other masters wrote many, but their works failed in performance. On the other hand, Rossini, Wagner, Verdi, and so many of the eminent opera composers are remembered today almost exclusively for their dramatic efforts.

Learning from Himself Mozart did it all masterfully and, as is often remarked, he continually crossed boundaries among musical genres. These interconnections mutually benefited his wide variety of compositions, such as the concertos and operas. Many a concerto finale sounds as if it comes from the world of comic opera. Some darker moments in the concertos share the dramatic tension associated with *Don Giovanni*. At the same time one of Mozart's operatic innovations comes from the elaborate structures derived from instrumental forms. In all these works, be they symphony, concerto, opera, or Mass, Mozart lavished his unusual skills as an orchestrator, such as the unprecedented prominence he gave to the woodwind instruments. Mozart took full advantage of his universal genius. He continually learned from his own music.

Mozart's piano concertos best allowed the composer to display the scope of his musical gifts. He usually performed as the keyboard soloist when the works were premiered, which gave him the chance to shine both as composer and pianist. Concertos became his star vehicles as he sought fame in Vienna during the 1780s. He presented them at concerts for which he personally took financial responsibility in the hopes of supporting his growing family. For some years he did quite well in these ventures and brought the keyboard concerto to a new level of

artistic and public prominence.

The Concerto we hear today was the last of a dozen Mozart composed in Vienna in the mid-1780s. He would go on to write two final ones during his last five years (K. 537 and K. 595), but they have not quite enjoyed the same degree of success. Written at the end of 1786, the year of *The Marriage of Figaro*, and completed within days of his “Prague” Symphony, the Piano Concerto No. 25 is one of the composer’s most elaborate. Mozart entered the work into his catalogue of pieces on December 4 and he may have performed it at one of his concerts the following day, although it is more likely that he waited until a Lenten concert on March 7, 1787. As was often his practice, in this Concerto Mozart improvised the first-movement cadenza in performance and never bothered to write it down. (At these concerts, Mr. Ax plays a cadenza by the pianist Robert Casadesus.) Other pianists took on this Concerto during Mozart’s lifetime, and eventually it became a favorite of Beethoven’s, who used it as a model in some respects for his own First and Fourth piano concertos.

A Closer Look The simple key of C major calls forth an unusual grandeur to begin the first movement (**Allegro maestoso**). Rather than the operatic lyricism found in so many of his concertos, Mozart opens in a more symphonic vein (indeed the simultaneous composition of the “Prague” Symphony is evident at times). Instead of singable tunes, Mozart offers a march-like theme, distinguished by its use of trumpets and timpani, which leads to a poignant restatement in the minor mode.

The **Andante** is in sonata form and offers a more intimate lyrical interlude amid the public outer movements. Mozart returns to the ceremonial character of the first movement for the **Allegretto** finale. For the theme of this rondo Mozart once again reminds us of the connections between his instrumental and dramatic music—he uses a melody quite similar to the gavotte from the opera *Idomeneo*, written nearly six years earlier.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Mozart composed the Piano Concerto No. 25 in 1786.

Van Cliburn was the soloist at The Philadelphia Orchestra’s first performance of the Concerto, on a Pension Fund Concert in 1967, with Eugene Ormandy on the podium. Since then it has been performed by such pianists as Rudolf Firkušný, Alicia de Larrocha, Radu Lupu, Malcolm Frager, Iuan Moravec, Murray Perahia, and Imogen Cooper. The work was most recently performed on subscription concerts in February 2017, with Garrick Ohlsson and Herbert Blomstedt conducting.

The Concerto is scored for solo piano, flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

The work runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.

The Music

Carmina burana

Carl Orff

Born in Munich, July 10, 1895

Died there, March 29, 1982



During the mid-1930s, Carl Orff's position in German culture was, like so many other artists and musicians, decidedly precarious. In 1933 he had been singled out by the culture *Kampfbund* as a Bolshevik because of the foreign influence (especially that of Stravinsky) in his music. Under the Third Reich, Orff spent much of his time pursuing "safe" musical activities that appeased the Party without necessarily supporting it. And after the war he lied about his associations in order to avoid

a career-ending classification by the Allies. If, however, he felt guilt that his career had survived, if not exactly thrived, under Nazi rule, it was primarily guilt by association.

A Profane Cantata When Orff's "profane cantata" *Carmina burana* was premiered in 1937, some officials within the Nazi Party were very critical of the work and its vivid eroticism. But, although not a member of the Nazi Party himself, Orff had high-ranking connections within the government, including some who spoke glowingly of the new cantata as typifying a "radiant, strength-filled life-joy." And it was a popular success with German audiences right away.

Still, Orff was never really able to escape the fascist associations of *Carmina burana*. It remained his one popular composition, and the only significant musical work to emerge from Nazi Germany that is still in the performing repertory. From its fully staged Frankfurt premiere in 1937 until the 1950s, *Carmina burana* was performed only in the formerly Axis countries of Germany, Austria, and Italy. Its United States premiere was delayed precisely because it had been widely regarded as the fascist product of Hitler's Germany. But once it was heard in the United States, it was an instantaneous success, and *Carmina burana*—or at least its opening chorus—has become one of the most popular pieces of choral/orchestral music of all time.

The title refers to a collection of medieval poems uncovered in 1803 at the Benedictine monastery in the Bavarian village of Benediktbeuern, Germany; *Carmina burana* is Latin for "Songs of Beuern." The poems, mostly in Latin with some medieval German and French/Provençal texts included, were written by 11th- and 12th-century monks and students. But instead of producing

devotional poems, these monks—"Goliards" who had largely abandoned their holy responsibilities—penned irreverent, satirical, bawdy verses in praise of women and alcohol, and humorous satires of the papacy and the Church. Orff selected two dozen poems from the 1847 published edition of *Carmina burana* and organized them into a loose libretto on themes of love, lust, and springtime, framed by the ubiquitous "O Fortuna" chorus.

A Closer Look The visceral immediacy of Orff's musical language in *Carmina burana* is laid out in this powerful opening chorus, which combines pulsating rhythmic ostinatos with chanted choral melodies that parallel the text's medieval roots. The emphasis on percussion and the vivid orchestration throughout the cantata reflect Orff's focus on percussion instruments in his *Schulwerke* (school works) and his esteem for Stravinsky's ballet *Les Noces*.

After the opening chorus, the piece lingers briefly on the painful wounds inflicted by Fate before subtly shifting to the emerging joys of Spring. The April sun begins to warm and soften the cold heartlessness of Fortune, and a baritone solo ("Omnia Sol temperat") turns to thoughts of love, which the chorus enthusiastically affirms ("Ecce gratum").

In "Uf dem Anger" (On the Green), the lyrics and instrumental interludes paint images of pastoral joy. As the chorus sings of the hope that love will bloom with a fecundity to rival the freshly renewed forest, the overt flirting in these verses suggests that it is not so much "worthy love" but earthly pleasure being sought. Royal brass fanfares ("Were diu werlt alle min") then announce that no worldly wealth could surpass the pleasure of sleeping with the Queen of England.

With a twist of Fate's wheel, that elevated aspiration comes crashing down as the scene shifts to the tavern, and the painful laments ("Estuans interius") of a lowlife vagrant who has given himself over entirely to vice. A roasting swan—turning on a spit in symbolic imitation of the turning of Fortune's wheel—similarly laments its miserable fate in mostly falsetto tenor solos ("Olim lacus colueram"). But this roast bird will soon become a gluttonous feast for the tavern's other patrons. They collectively sing a tribute to the endless rounds of drinking and gambling ("In taberna quando sumus") in a chorus that parodies the "oom-pah" accompaniment of a traditional Bavarian drinking song.

Another sudden shift moves the action to the perfumed "Court of Love" where a chorus of cupids ("Amor volat undique") encourage the amorous coupling. But the baritone continues to lament his fate ("Dies, nox et omnia"), resorting, as did the roast swan, to a falsetto voice to express the anguish of his pain. The appearance of a young maiden at first exacerbates his misery, but then develops into a real opportunity to fulfill his desires ("Veni, veni, venias"). In a gentle, pastoral serenade by the soprano soloist ("In trutina"), the maiden decides, too, to give in to pleasure. The joyful chorus that follows ("Tempus est iocundum") confirms that, as hoped, love has indeed flowered into rapturous bliss, complete with an ecstatic high-D

from the soprano. But the hymn to Venus that follows ("Ave formosissima") is callously interrupted by a verbatim reprise of "O Fortuna," a pitiless reminder that when one feels at the pinnacle of joy, Fate decrees that the only way is down.

—Luke Howard

Carmina burana was composed from 1935 to 1936.

Thor Johnson conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of *Carmina burana*, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in May 1955; the piece was then presented on a regular subscription program in April 1960, under *Eugene Ormandy's* baton. Most recently on subscription, *Cristian Măcelaru* conducted it in December 2016.

The Orchestra recorded the work for CBS in 1960 with *Ormandy*, soprano *Janice Harsanyi*, tenor *Rudolf Petrak*, baritone *Harve Presnell*, and the Rutgers University Choir.

The score calls for three flutes (II and III doubling piccolo), three oboes (III doubling English horn), three clarinets (II doubling bass clarinet, III doubling E-flat clarinet), two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (antique cymbals, bass drum, castanets, chimes, cymbals, glockenspiel, ratchet, sleigh bells, snare drum, suspended cymbal, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle), celesta, two pianos, strings, soprano, tenor, bass, mixed chorus, and children's chorus.

Running time is approximately one hour.

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