

Season 2017-2018

Thursday, December 21,
at 7:00
Friday, December 22,
at 7:00

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Cristian Măcelaru Conductor
Ekaterina Siurina Soprano
Jamie Barton Mezzo-soprano
Nicholas Phan Tenor
Mark Stone Baritone
Philadelphia Symphonic Choir
Joe Miller Director

Handel *Messiah*

Part I

Overture

Tenor Accompagnato: "Comfort ye my people"

Tenor Air: "Ev'ry valley shall be exalted"

Chorus: "And the glory of the Lord"

Bass Accompagnato: "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts"

Alto Air: "But who may abide the day of His coming?"

Chorus: "And He shall purify"

Alto Recitative: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive"

Alto Air and Chorus: "O thou that tellest good tidings to
Zion"

Bass Accompagnato: "For behold, darkness shall cover
the earth"

Bass Air: "The people that walked in darkness"

Chorus: "For unto us a Child is born"

Pastoral Symphony

Soprano Recitative: "There were shepherds abiding in the
field"

Soprano Accompagnato: "And lo, the angel of the Lord
came upon them"

Soprano Recitative: "And the angel said unto them"

Soprano Accompagnato: "And suddenly there was with
the angel"

Chorus: "Glory to God in the highest"

Soprano Air: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion"

Alto Recitative: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd"

Alto and Soprano Duet: "He shall feed His flock"

Chorus: "His yoke is easy"

Intermission

Part II

Chorus: "Behold the Lamb of God"

Alto Air: "He was despised"

Chorus: "Surely He hath borne our griefs"

Chorus: "And with His stripes we are healed"

Chorus: "All we like sheep have gone astray"

Tenor Accompagnato: "All they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn"

Chorus: "He trusted in God"

Tenor Accompagnato: "Thy rebuke hath broken His heart"

Tenor Arioso: "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow"

Tenor Accompagnato: "He was cut off out of the land of the living"

Tenor Air: "But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell"

Chorus: "Lift up your heads, o ye gates"

Tenor Recitative: "Unto which of the angels said He at any time"

Chorus: "Let all the angels of God worship Him"

Alto Air: "Thou art gone up on high"

Chorus: "The Lord gave the word"

Soprano Air: "How beautiful are the feet of Him"

Bass Air: "Why do the nations so furiously rage together?"

Chorus: "Let us break their bonds asunder"

Tenor Recitative: "He that dwelleth in heaven"

Tenor Air: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron"

Chorus: "Hallelujah"

Part III

Soprano Air: "I know that my Redeemer liveth"

Chorus: "Since by man came death"

Bass Accompagnato: "Behold, I tell you a mystery"

Bass Air: "The trumpet shall sound"

David Bilger, trumpet

Alto Recitative: "Then shall be brought to pass"

Alto and Tenor Duet: "O death, where is thy sting?"

Chorus: "But thanks be to God"

Soprano Air: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Chorus: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"

*Peter Richard Conte, organ; Davyd Booth, harpsichord;
Priscilla Lee, cello; John Hood, bass*

This program runs approximately 2 hours, 30 minutes.

These concerts are part of the Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ Experience, supported through a generous grant from the **Wyncote Foundation**.

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM. Visit www.wrti.org to listen live or for more details.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Jeffrey Griffin



The Philadelphia Orchestra is one of the preeminent orchestras in the world, renowned for its distinctive sound, desired for its keen ability to capture the hearts and imaginations of audiences, and admired for a legacy of imagination and innovation on and off the concert stage. The Orchestra is inspiring the future and transforming its rich tradition of achievement, sustaining the highest level of artistic quality, but also challenging—and exceeding—that level, by creating powerful musical experiences for audiences at home and around the world.

Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin's connection to the Orchestra's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics since his inaugural season in 2012. Under his leadership the Orchestra returned to recording, with two celebrated CDs on the prestigious Deutsche Grammophon label, continuing its history of recording success. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of listeners on the radio with weekly Sunday afternoon broadcasts on WRTI-FM.

Philadelphia is home and the Orchestra continues to discover new and inventive ways to nurture its relationship with its loyal patrons at its home in the Kimmel Center, and also with those who enjoy the Orchestra's area performances at the Mann Center, Penn's Landing, and other cultural, civic, and learning venues. The Orchestra maintains a strong commitment to collaborations with cultural and community organizations on a regional and national level, all of which create greater access and engagement with classical music as an art form.

The Philadelphia Orchestra serves as a catalyst for cultural activity across Philadelphia's many communities, building an offstage presence as strong as its onstage one. With Nézet-Séguin, a dedicated body of musicians, and one of the nation's richest arts ecosystems, the Orchestra has launched its **HEAR** initiative, a portfolio of integrated initiatives that promotes **Health**, champions music **Education**, eliminates barriers to **Accessing** the orchestra, and maximizes

impact through **Research**. The Orchestra's award-winning Collaborative Learning programs engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members through programs such as Play!Ns, side-by-sides, PopUP concerts, free Neighborhood Concerts, School Concerts, and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, presentations, and recordings, The Philadelphia Orchestra is a global ambassador for Philadelphia and for the US. Having been the first American orchestra to perform in China, in 1973 at the request of President Nixon, the ensemble today boasts a new partnership with Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts and the Shanghai Oriental Art Centre, and in 2017 will be the first-ever Western orchestra to appear in Mongolia. The Orchestra annually performs at Carnegie Hall while also enjoying summer residencies in Saratoga Springs, NY, and Vail, CO. For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit www.philorch.org.

Music Director

Chris Lee



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** is now confirmed to lead The Philadelphia Orchestra through the 2025-26 season, an extraordinary and significant long-term commitment. Additionally, he becomes the third music director of the Metropolitan Opera beginning with the 2021-22 season, and from 2017-18 is music director designate. Yannick, who holds the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair, is an inspired leader of The Philadelphia Orchestra. His intensely collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called him “phenomenal,” adding that under his baton, “the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better.”

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling talents of his generation. He is in his 10th and final season as music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic, and he has been artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal’s Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. In summer 2017 he became an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He was also principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic from 2008 to 2014. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world’s most revered ensembles and has conducted critically acclaimed performances at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick and Deutsche Grammophon (DG) enjoy a long-term collaboration. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with two CDs on that label. He continues fruitful recording relationships with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records; the London Philharmonic for the LPO label; and the Orchestre Métropolitain for ATMA Classique. In Yannick’s inaugural season The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to the radio airwaves, with weekly Sunday afternoon broadcasts on WRTI-FM.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal’s Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick’s honors are a appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada; *Musical America’s* 2016 Artist of the Year; Canada’s National Arts Centre Award; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec in Montreal, the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, NJ.

To read Yannick’s full bio, please visit philorch.org/conductor.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

New Year's Eve with The Philadelphia Orchestra

Join the Fabulous Philadelphians and say farewell to 2017 in the city's best New Year's Eve celebration! There is no better way to ring in the New Year. The concert ends early enough to make it home—or to your next party—by midnight!



New Year's Eve

Sunday, December 31 7:30 PM

Stéphane Denève Conductor

Cirque de la Symphonie:

Alina Sergeeva and **Vladimir Tsarkov**

Juliette Kang Violin

Alexandra Nowakowski Soprano

Program includes:

J. Strauss, Jr. "On the Beautiful
Blue Danube" Waltz

Loewe "I Could Have Danced All Night,"
from *My Fair Lady*

Bernstein "Mambo," from
West Side Story

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Conductor

Adriane White



Newly appointed music director and conductor of the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, **Cristian Măcelaru** has established himself as one of the fast-rising stars of the conducting world. He launched his inaugural season at Cabrillo in the summer of 2017 with programs of new works and fresh re-orchestrations, including seven world premieres, 11 composers-in-residence, and two special tributes—one to commemorate Lou Harrison's centenary and another honoring John Adams's 70th birthday. He recently completed his tenure with The Philadelphia Orchestra as conductor-in-residence, a title he held for three seasons until August 2017. Prior to that he was the Orchestra's associate conductor for two seasons and assistant conductor for one season. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra subscription debut in April 2013 and continues a close relationship with the ensemble, leading annual subscription programs and other special concerts.

Mr. Măcelaru regularly conducts other top orchestras in North America, including the Chicago, National, St. Louis, Detroit, and Toronto symphonies, and the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics. Highlights of the 2017-18 season include opening the National Symphony's season in Washington D.C. and returning to The Philadelphia Orchestra for two subscription programs in addition to these current performances of Handel's *Messiah*. He also guest conducts the symphony orchestras of Dallas, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Atlanta, Seattle, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, San Diego, and Vancouver. Internationally he leads the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin; the Swedish Radio and Danish National symphonies; and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. In summer 2017 he made his debut with the Cleveland Orchestra at the Blossom Festival, returned to the Grand Teton and Interlochen festivals, and led The Philadelphia Orchestra in two programs at the Mann Center.

An accomplished violinist from an early age, Mr. Măcelaru was the youngest concertmaster in the history of the Miami Symphony; he made his Carnegie Hall debut with that orchestra at the age of 19. Today he resides in Philadelphia with his wife, Cheryl, and children, Benjamin and Maria.

Soloist



David Eider

Russian soprano **Ekaterina Siurina** is making her Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these performances. Future engagements include Adina in Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* and Nanetta in Verdi's *Falstaff* at the Bavarian State Opera, her role debut as Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Vienna State Opera, and a return to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Mimì in Puccini's *La bohème*. Her concert appearances this season include Rossini's *Stabat Mater* with the Orchestre National d'Île-de-France conducted by Enrique Mazzola.

Ms. Siurina performs at many of the top opera houses across the world, including Berlin's Staatsoper unter den Linden, the Paris Opera, and the Metropolitan Opera. Her prominent roles to date include Gilda in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Ilia in Mozart's *Idomeneo*, Anne Trulove in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, Leila in Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*, Amina in Bellini's *La sonnambula*, and Juliet in Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. Ms. Siurina's recordings include her debut solo recital disc, *Amore e Morte* on the Opus Arte label, featuring songs by Verdi, Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini, accompanied by Iain Burnside, and *Rachmaninoff Songs*, available on Delphian Records.

Ms. Siurina was born in Ekaterinburg and completed her studies at the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts in Moscow. A winner at the Rimsky-Korsakov International Competition of Young Opera Singers in St. Petersburg, she made her professional debut in 1999 while still a student, as Gilda in *Rigoletto* singing opposite renowned baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky. Her Italian debut was as Susanna in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at La Scala. She made her Metropolitan Opera debut in October 2006, singing the role of Gilda opposite baritone Juan Pons. She was invited back to the Met in 2007 as Susanna, performing with baritone Bryn Terfel. On the concert stage, Ms. Siurina has performed in Orff's *Carmina burana* with London's Royal Philharmonic and the Danish Radio Symphony, and Mozart's Mass in C minor with the Orchestre de Paris. She has worked with many of today's preeminent conductors, including Roger Norrington and Daniel Harding.

Soloist



Fay Fox

Since winning top prizes at the 2013 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, American mezzo-soprano **Jamie Barton** has established herself as a major dramatic talent on both sides of the Atlantic. In 2015 she received the Richard Tucker Award, subsequently performing in a star-studded televised gala at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall. She is also the recipient of the Metropolitan Opera's 2017 Beverly Sills Artist Award.

Ms. Barton has made a succession of critically acclaimed debuts in principal houses throughout the U.S., including Adalgisa in Bellini's *Norma* at the Metropolitan and San Francisco operas and Fricka in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* at Houston Grand Opera. This season she debuts at Teatro Real Madrid as Léonor in concert performances of Donizetti's *La favorite* under Daniel Oren's baton. Return performances include Eboli in Verdi's *Don Carlo* at Washington National Opera under Philippe Auguin; Fricka, Waltraute, and the Second Norn in Wagner's *Ring Cycle* at San Francisco Opera under Donald Runnicles; and Adalgisa at Houston Grand Opera and the Met under Patrick Summers and Joseph Colaneri, respectively.

On the concert stage Ms. Barton, who is making her Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these current performances, has collaborated with a number of major conductors including Marin Alsop for Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in her BBC Proms debut, Andrew Davis for Verdi's *Requiem* with the Melbourne Symphony, Franz Welser-Möst for Britten's *Spring Symphony* with the Cleveland Orchestra, Osmo Vänskä for Mahler's *Symphony No. 3* with the Iceland Symphony, and, most recently, Alan Gilbert for Fricka in *Das Rheingold* with the New York Philharmonic. This season she reunites with Ms. Alsop for her debut appearance with the London Symphony in Bernstein's *Symphony No. 1* ("Jeremiah"), and she performs Mahler's *Rückert Lieder* with the Oulu Symphony in Finland. In recital she has appeared at both the Aspen and Tanglewood festivals, and at Carnegie Hall in an all-star event celebrating Marilyn Horne's 80th birthday and for a new work by Jake Heggie. She appears in Zankel Hall this season with pianist Kathleen Kelly. In Europe Ms. Barton has recently given her debut recitals at Wigmore Hall in London and the Frankfurt Opera House.

Soloist



Face Collective

American tenor **Nicholas Phan** made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2011. In addition to these current performances, highlights of the 2017-18 season include his debuts with the Minnesota Orchestra for Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and the São Paulo Symphony for Britten's *War Requiem* with Marin Alsop, and returns to the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the Philharmonia Baroque. He also returns to the Chicago Symphony for Schubert's Mass No. 6 with Riccardo Muti and the Toronto Symphony for performances as the title role in Bernstein's *Candide*. He serves as artistic director of two festivals: the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago's sixth annual Collaborative Works Festival and the Laguna Beach Music Festival, where he is the first singer to be guest artistic director.

Mr. Phan has appeared with many of the leading orchestras in North America and Europe, including the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics; the Cleveland Orchestra; the San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, and BBC symphonies; and the English Chamber Orchestra. He has toured extensively throughout the major concert halls of Europe with Il Complesso Barocco and appeared at the Oregon Bach, Edinburgh, Ravinia, Rheingau, Tanglewood, and Marlboro music festivals, and at the BBC Proms. On the opera stage he has appeared with the Los Angeles, Houston Grand, Seattle, Glyndebourne, and Frankfurt operas, and at the Glimmerglass Festival.

Mr. Phan's most recent solo album, *Gods and Monsters*, was released on Avie Records in January. Previous solo albums include *A Painted Tale*, *Winter Words*, and *Still Falls the Rain*, which was named one of the best classical recordings of 2012 by the *New York Times* and also features Philadelphia Orchestra Principal Horn Jennifer Montone. His growing discography includes a Grammy-nominated recording of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* with Pierre Boulez and the Chicago Symphony, Scarlatti's *La gloria di primavera* with the Philharmonia Baroque, Bach's St. John Passion (in which he sings the Evangelist as well as the tenor arias) with Apollo's Fire, and the world premiere recordings of two orchestral song cycles: *The Old Burying Ground* by Evan Chambers and Elliott Carter's *A Sunbeam's Architecture*.

Soloist

Hayley Madden



British baritone **Mark Stone** studied mathematics at King's College, Cambridge, and singing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. In 1998 he was awarded the Decca Prize at the Kathleen Ferrier Awards. Recent operatic engagements include the title role in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Hamburg State Opera, and New Zealand Opera; Mountjoy in Britten's *Gloriana* and Valmont in Francesconi's *Quartett* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Robert Storch in Richard Strauss's *Intermezzo* at Garsington Opera; Ned Keene in Britten's *Peter Grimes* with the London Philharmonic and Vladimir Jurowski and at the Beijing Festival; Faninal in Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* with the City of Birmingham Symphony and Andris Nelsons; and the Count in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Welsh National Opera and in Hamburg.

Mr. Stone's many roles at the English National Opera have included Don Giovanni, Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Marcello in Puccini's *La bohème*, Figaro in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Enrico in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Silvio in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, Chou En-lai in Adams's *Nixon in China*, and Prince Yamadori in Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. In the U.S. he has appeared regularly at Opera Philadelphia, where his roles include Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff*, Germont in Verdi's *La traviata*, the title role in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, and, most recently, Papageno in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. He has also sung Guglielmo in Santa Fe.

Mr. Stone's recent concert performances include Adès's *Totentanz* with the New York Philharmonic and the composer conducting, Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* with both the Rotterdam Philharmonic and James Gaffigan and the BBC Scottish Symphony and Andrew Manze, Handel's *Messiah* with the Kammerorchester Basel and Paul Goodwin, Stravinsky's *Requiem canticles* with the São Paulo Symphony, and Brahms's Requiem with the Orchestre Dijon Bourgogne and Gergely Madaras. In recital he has sung at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Wigmore Hall in London, and the Oxford Lieder and Buxton festivals. Mr. Stone is making his Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these current performances.

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

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Handel
and Britten

January 11-13

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Juliette Kang Violin

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The Handel and Britten concerts are part of the Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ Experience, supported through a generous grant from the Wyncote Foundation. LiveNote® is funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the national Endowment for the Arts, and the William Penn Foundation. The January 12 concert is sponsored by 

Photo: Jessica Griffin

Chorus



Pete Checchia

The **Philadelphia Symphonic Choir** made its debut in December 2016, performing in three programs with The Philadelphia Orchestra in its inaugural season, and returns this season for multiple appearances with the Orchestra. Consisting of talented vocalists auditioned from throughout the greater Philadelphia region, the ensemble was created to marry gifted and unique voices of Philadelphia with the legendary Philadelphia Sound.

The Philadelphia Symphonic Choir is prepared and directed by Joe Miller, director of choral activities at Westminster Choir College of Rider University and artistic director for choral activities for the Spoleto Festival USA. He earned a master's degree and a doctorate in choral conducting from the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati and holds a bachelor's degree in music education and voice from the University of Tennessee.

The Music

Messiah



George Frideric Handel
Born in Halle, Germany,
February 23, 1685
Died in London, April 14,
1759

To enter the National Portrait Gallery in London is to take a stroll through the annals of British history, art, drama, and music. Upon reaching the galleries devoted to 18th-century worthies, visitors are often drawn to the large portrait of George Frideric Handel (left) by the great British artist Thomas Hudson (1701-79). Hudson painted Handel dressed in elaborate finery with a copy of his famous oratorio *Messiah*. Viewers who are familiar with other paintings of the composer will notice a marked difference between those portrayals and this one, however. Earlier portraits invariably emphasize the expressiveness of his eyes, but in Hudson's grand portrait Handel's eyes are staring, blank, and inert. Beneath the grandeur of this painting lies a poignant tragedy. Upon closer inspection, it dawns gradually upon the viewer that Hudson has painted a subject the lavishness of whose attire cannot distract from his blindness. Commissioned by Handel's librettist Charles Jennens (1700-73), this "court portrait" was painted after 1753, by which time Handel's eyesight had been extinguished completely after he had endured a fruitless series of unsuccessful operations.

Drawing upon a remarkable reserve of inner courage, Handel continued to play the organ in public despite his blindness, most notably at the annual benefit performances of *Messiah* that took place in the chapel of the Foundling Hospital, a London orphanage. These concerts, which had begun in 1750, decisively altered the way in which *Messiah* was received by the public, the press, and, especially, the Anglican clergy. During this period, oratorios were advertised as "entertainments," and their presentation was usually restricted to theaters. Indeed, the performances of *Messiah* at the Foundling Hospital's chapel were considered exceptions to the rule, exempt from criticism only because of their charitable purpose.

Initial Controversy Indeed, the first London appearance of *Messiah* in 1743 was highly controversial. An article appeared in the *Universal Spectator* that sharply queried the propriety of taking Christ's life as the subject for a musical "entertainment." At that time, Jennens, the wealthy High Church Anglican clergyman who had compiled the text of *Messiah*, reported "a clamour about Town, said to

arise from the B[isho]ps, against performing it." To avoid further protests, *Messiah* was advertised simply as "A New Sacred Oratorio." Jennens was well aware that he risked charges of blasphemy by creating an oratorio text based on the life and ministry of the Christian Savior. He sought to deflect such pious opprobrium by intermingling passages drawn from 14 books of the King James Version of the Bible with selections from the Book of Common Prayer, the principal service book of the Church of England. Through his selections, Jennens cunningly unfolded the narrative in a manner at once oblique and reverent. Despite his caution and Handel's sublime music, *Messiah* ran for only three performances, a chilly reception that one contemporary writer attributed to "Scruples, some Persons had entertained, against carrying on such a Performance in a Play House."

No such finicky scruples had been evident the year before, however, when *Messiah* was premiered to enormous success in Dublin on April 13. Indeed, a member of the audience in the "New Musick-Hall in Fishamble-street" on that occasion was Edward Synge, the Anglican Bishop of Elphin, who wrote approvingly that the listeners "Seemed indeed thoroughly engag'd from one end to the other. . . . Many, I hope were instructed by it and Proper Sentiments inspir'd in a Stronger manner in their Minds." Handel himself may have echoed Synge's comments in his reported reply to Lord Kinnoull, who had complimented him on *Messiah* as a "noble entertainment": "My lord," replied the composer, "I should be sorry if I only entertained them, I wish to make them better."

A Closer Look Following Jennens's text, Handel divided his oratorio into three parts. After a dignified Overture, Part I presents prophecies of the coming of the Messiah and the birth and ministry of Jesus Christ. Part II deals with His passion, death, resurrection, and ascension, concluding with a jubilant chorus, the stirring "Hallelujah." Part III looks forward to the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. As Christopher Hogwood observes, "Most important of all is the clarity and confidence with which Jennens displays the divine scheme, a coherent progress from Prophecy, through Nativity, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension to the promise of Redemption (Part III is based largely on the Anglican Burial Service)." Although now a regular feature of the Christmas season, *Messiah* encompasses all of the festivals of the Christian liturgical year. (Both Jennens and Handel associated *Messiah* with Holy Week and Eastertide.)

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director



Janine Jansen



Stéphane Denève



Daniil Trifonov



Michael Tilson Thomas



Yannick Nézet-Séguin



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Handel composed *Messiah* in 1741.

Eugene Ormandy conducted the first official Philadelphia Orchestra performances of Messiah, in October and November of 1958; the soloists were Leontyne Price, Martha Lipton, Davis Cunningham, William Warfield, and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. The series opened on Halloween (!) and was so popular the first year that an extra performance was added. (Actually the Orchestra had performed Messiah much earlier, as far back as 1902, with the now-defunct Choral Society of Philadelphia, but not on its own concert series.) Since 1961, the Orchestra has performed Messiah every year.

The Philadelphians recorded Messiah in 1958 for CBS with the above forces, except Eileen Farrell replaced Ms. Price. This recording earned the Orchestra one of its three gold records. The Orchestra also recorded excerpts from the work twice: the Pastoral Symphony was recorded in 1929 for RCA with Leopold Stokowski, and "For unto us a Child is born" and the "Hallelujah" Chorus were recorded in 1964 for CBS with Ormandy and the Temple University Concert Choir.

The instrumentation in this performance calls for two oboes, bassoon, two trumpets, timpani, harpsichord, organ, strings, mixed chorus, and four vocal soloists.

These performances of Messiah run approximately two hours and 30 minutes.

To express the sacred text fully, Handel drew upon a wide range of European musical styles for *Messiah*. The severe dotted rhythms of the opening measures proclaim an overture in the French style. The gentle swaying of the *siciliana*, a dance that originated among Sicilian shepherds, permeates both the radiant Pastoral Symphony and "He shall feed his flock." In Part II the tenor soloist becomes a narrator in a manner reminiscent of the Evangelists—also sung by tenors—that play a crucial role in the Lutheran Passions, most famously in Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion.

Given its iconic status, it is not surprising that legends have accrued around *Messiah*, such as the unsubstantiated tale of an inspired King George II leaping to his feet at the beginning of the "Hallelujah" Chorus. Equally dubious is the story that Handel once exclaimed, "I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God Himself," words which, in Hogwood's trenchant phrase, "ring so false." What is miraculous, however, is the speed with which Handel composed *Messiah*—24 days in August and September of 1741. As was his practice, Handel drew upon his own works, as well as "borrowing" themes from such contemporaries as Georg Philipp Telemann, Giovanni Porta, and Arcangelo Corelli, to enable him to complete his task on time. In the case of *Messiah*, however, Handel surely made such "borrowings" in the service of a larger purpose: "I wish to make them better."

—Byron Adams

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and are supported in part by the Hirschberg-Goodfriend Fund established by Juliet J. Goodfriend.

Lost and Found: Please call 215.670.2321.

Late Seating: Late seating breaks usually occur after the first piece on the program or at intermission in order to minimize disturbances to other audience members who have already begun listening to the music. If you arrive after the concert begins, you will be seated only when appropriate breaks in the program allow.

Accessible Seating: Accessible seating is available for every performance. Please call Patron Services at 215.893.1999 or visit philorch.org for more information.

Assistive Listening: With the deposit of a current ID, hearing enhancement devices are available at no cost from the House Management Office in Commonwealth Plaza. Hearing devices are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Large-Print Programs: Large-print programs for every subscription concert are available in the House Management Office in Commonwealth Plaza. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Fire Notice: The exit indicated by a red light nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run. Walk to that exit.

No Smoking: All public space in the Kimmel Center is smoke-free.

Cameras and Recorders: The taking of photographs or the recording of Philadelphia Orchestra concerts is strictly prohibited. By attending this Philadelphia Orchestra concert you consent to be photographed, filmed, and/or otherwise recorded. Your entry constitutes

your consent to such and to any use, in any and all media throughout the universe in perpetuity, of your appearance, voice, and name for any purpose whatsoever in connection with The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Phones and Paging Devices: All electronic devices—including cellular telephones, pagers, and wristwatch alarms—should be turned off while in the concert hall. The exception would be our LiveNote™ performances. Please visit philorch.org/livenote for more information.

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