



**THE
CLEVELAND
ORCHESTRA**

FRANZ WELSER-MÖST, MUSIC DIRECTOR

JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON
**MANDEL
OPERA &
HUMANITIES** FESTIVAL

A FESTIVAL OF CONCERTS, CONVERSATIONS & IDEAS
MAY 15-24, 2026

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COVER IMAGE DETAIL FROM AGAPE - BOUNDLESS LOVE (2023) BY HALIM FLOWERS

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA

FRANZ WELSER-MÖST, MUSIC DIRECTOR

JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL OPERA & HUMANITIES FESTIVAL

A FESTIVAL OF CONCERTS, CONVERSATIONS & IDEAS

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Scan the QR code for more festival information & details.

The Cleveland Orchestra is grateful to the Ohio Arts Council and to the residents of Cuyahoga County through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture for their ongoing generous support.

The Cleveland Orchestra is proud of its long-term partnership with Kent State University, made possible in part through generous funding from the State of Ohio.

The Cleveland Orchestra is also proud to have its home, Severance Music Center, located on the campus of Case Western Reserve University, with whom it has a long history of collaboration and partnership.





PHOTO BY ROGER MASTROIANNI

FROM THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA
PRESIDENT & CEO

BEYOND BRAVERY



WELCOME TO THE 2026 Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival. We are pleased to once again host this annual celebration of music, art, and conversations both at Severance Music Center and with partners throughout Cleveland.

This fourth edition of the festival explores the timely theme of *Courage*. Though a simple idea on the surface, courage is much more than mere bravery. It is not the absence of fear, but the power to act in the face of that fear. It takes courage to speak out, but also to listen and self-reflect. Centered around performances of **Beethoven's** only opera, *Fidelio*, led by Music Director **Franz Welser-Möst**, we hope that this year's festival will create a space for meaningful dialogue, inspiration, and reflection.

For the first time, we are also pleased to welcome a guest curator to the festival. Acclaimed composer, jazz trumpeter, and social activist **Terence Blanchard** has designed several of this year's performances and discussions, which, together with the **Halim Flowers's** art exhibition, examine how courage unites people and drives change through moments of resolve, both mundane and earth-shattering. The result is a compelling 10 days of artistic and intellectual exploration.

As always, I would like to express my deepest thanks and appreciation to several collaborators, without whom this festival would not be possible: the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation, the local partners for this year's festival, and our Cleveland Orchestra donor family, whose support and unwavering generosity are second to none. I would also like to extend special thanks to **Franz Welser-Möst, Terence Blanchard, Christophe Abi-Nassif, and The Cleveland Orchestra musicians and staff**, whose tireless vision, talents, and efforts are essential to bringing what we do to life.

Thank you for joining us for this year's festival, which has truly become one of my favorite parts of the Orchestra's season. I hope you take in all the sights and sounds we have to offer, and that you come away feeling uplifted and inspired.

André Gremillet
President & CEO

THE RICHARD K. SMUCKER CHAIR
The Cleveland Orchestra

The theme of *Reconciliation* formed the basis of the 2025 Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival, anchored by Cleveland Orchestra Music Director **Franz Welser-Möst** leading performances of **Janáček's** intensely moving opera, *Jenůfa*.



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

An African American laborer listens in on a group of white men making music in William Sidney Mount's 1847 painting *The Power of Music*, a bold visual statement about racial divisions in antebellum America.

FROM THE JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON
MANDEL FOUNDATION

THE COURAGE TO STAND FIRM

WELCOME TO THE FOURTH ANNUAL Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival. Each year, this week-long celebration invites us to enjoy extraordinary artistic experiences that provide a lens for deeper reflection on the world we share. We are grateful for the institutional partnership that makes this possible and are humbled by the ways Cleveland audiences continue to embrace these conversations.

This year's festival theme, *Courage*, asks us to consider what it means to stand firm in our values—both as individuals and as a society. In the context of worldwide events and the era of misinformation, humans risk becoming isolated by media algorithms that reward outrage and reinforce social division. Music, art, and theater offer a bridge of connection beyond language, introducing us to surprisingly familiar characters whose flaws and challenges mirror our own. It is an act of moral courage to examine our beliefs and seek out opposing views. Moreover, curiosity and self-reflection are vital to the work of building a more just and compassionate world.

Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*, with its story of love, justice, and resistance to tyranny, offers a timeless reminder that freedom requires not just bold action but also moral clarity and hope. As the United States marks the 250th anniversary of its response to tyranny, we are reminded that our democratic experiment, however imperfect, continues to evolve.

We are grateful to the artists and performers who challenge us to expand our worldview, and we are proud to support a festival that brings world-class opera to Cleveland. This annual gathering strengthens the Mandel Foundation's long-standing commitment to the enriching cultural life of our city and highlights the power of partnership among artists, institutions, and the community.

Our thanks to **André Gremillet**, **Franz Welser Möst**, **Terence Blanchard**, the **musicians and staff of The Cleveland Orchestra**, and the many collaborators whose vision brings this festival to life. May these performances and conversations inspire renewed understanding, compassion, and courageous civic engagement.

Dr. Jehuda Reinharz
President & CEO
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation

Stephen H. Hoffman
Chairman
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation



PHOTO COURTESY OF TERENCE BLANCHARD

by Terence Blanchard
Festival Curator

COLLABORATION, COURAGE, CONNECTION

Terence Blanchard has curated a festival that explores courage through various lenses, creating bridges across art forms

IT HAS BEEN AN HONOR TO SERVE AS CURATOR of the 2026 Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival and to work so closely with The Cleveland Orchestra.

This collaboration speaks to a culminating moment in my life. I'm a jazz musician, but for a long time, I've dealt with visual arts, film, and vocal genres, including opera—so I understand those worlds. Bringing these things together to create a festival experience that celebrates the humanities and social justice is a powerful thing.

Whenever I enter new artistic spaces, I strive to be a turnkey and not a token. Just because I am a prominent African American voice in the room, doesn't mean the work is done—it only proves that there are so many diverse voices that need to be heard. When art forms have been so insular for so long, we are all missing out on important opportunities.

We have to learn how to celebrate our differences rather than use them as weapons. There are so many forces that pull us away from each other. But I truly believe that none of us are mistakes; we're all unique for a reason. No matter how different our beliefs and our backgrounds are, we can find that common area that helps us grow and appreciate each other instead of being afraid of one another.

This is where I see our theme of *Courage* coming in. Fear is the biggest culprit in tearing us apart. But music can give us courage to do all the things that we are afraid of doing. Amid all the negativity and division in the news, a single piece

Festival Curator **Terence Blanchard** is a skilled jazz trumpeter and acclaimed composer, with genre-defying work in opera, film, and beyond. Each of these realms will feature into the festival's opening concert on May 15 (see page 19).



of music can form a bridge. For some of us, it will bring back beautiful memories. For others, it is an exciting new experience that makes us curious about where it came from. That is powerful, because if you are truly curious, you won't allow people with talking points to cloud your judgment. You will go out and do the research and approach unfamiliar spaces with understanding.

Curating the festival has reminded me of my work in film. After I see an amazing scene, there's often a moment when I start to panic about what to do musically. But if you relax, the scene tells you what it is that you need to do. The circumstances invite your creativity. You could also compare it to being a band leader. You have to work to find that thing that connects to the audience and helps all of us reach a higher consciousness. The leader gives each musician room to express themselves and incorporates those ideas to form a stronger whole. It's a perfect metaphor for how we should be as a society.

above: Grammy-winning artist Tarriona "Tank" Ball takes the stage on May 17 for an inspirational afternoon of music and poetry (see page 47).

right: Bryan Stevenson speaks at The Summit on Race in America at the LBJ Presidential Library in April 2019. Stevenson serves as the festival's keynote speaker on May 18 (see page 49).

PHOTO BY JASON KOERNER/GETTY IMAGES

PHOTO BY JAY GODWIN/LEI LIBRARY/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Fear is the biggest culprit in tearing us apart. But music can give us courage to do all the things that we are afraid of doing.

The speakers, thinkers, musicians, and artists of this year's festival embody this pursuit of curiosity and human connection. The local voices of *United in Song!* (see page 23), personal stories heard in *The Moth Mainstage* (see page 53), and powerful poetry of **Tank Ball** (see page 47) showcase how individual and collective voices can change the world. Meanwhile, keynote speaker **Bryan Stevenson** (see page 49), exhibition artist **Halim Flowers** (see page 15), and the operatic centerpiece—**Beethoven's Fidelio** (see page 31)—all offer perspectives on wrongful incarceration and the beauty of breaking down barriers. (For a complete listing of festival events and performances, see pages 10–11.)

Thanks to all these individuals and groups, this year's festival is a masterclass in the courage to speak your mind, the courage to listen and truly hear, the courage to allow all of us to have a voice and come together as a community should. Through music and art, I invite you to reflect on who we are as human beings, who we need to be moving forward, and how we need to remind ourselves of our own humanity. 🎵



CALENDAR



APRIL 9 – MAY 24

Halim Flowers: It Takes Courage to Love All Unconditionally

Bogomolny-Kozerefski Grand Foyer at Severance Music Center

Celebrated artist **Halim Flowers** unveils a new body of work created in Cleveland expressly for this year's festival, which draws its energy and vision from the central theme of *Courage*.

SEE PAGE 15



THURSDAY, MAY 14

**6 PM
Community Conversation:
Exploring Wrongful Convictions
Through the Arts**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch of the Cleveland Public Library

A panel of local experts discuss the intersection of courage, the arts, and wrongful convictions.

SEE PAGE 16



FRIDAY, MAY 15

**11:30 AM
Opera Now: Tradition,
Innovation, and the Road Ahead**

The City Club of Cleveland

Festival Curator **Terence Blanchard** and singers **Adrienne Danrich** and **David Butt Philip** (above) discuss how opera continues to transform while retaining its emotional and artistic core.

SEE PAGE 17



FRIDAY, MAY 15

**7 PM
The World(s) of Terence
Blanchard**

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

This genre-bending concert highlights Festival Curator

Terence Blanchard's work across opera, film, and jazz.

SEE PAGE 19



MAY 16, 17, 23 & 24

**2 PM
Docent Tours: The Art of Courage**

Cleveland Museum of Art

Join a docent-guided tour at the Cleveland Museum of Art that highlights artworks centered on the festival theme of *Courage*.

SEE PAGE 21



SATURDAY, MAY 16

**1 PM
United in Song!
A Community Choral Celebration**

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

An afternoon of joyous vocal performances at Severance Music Center representing the rich diversity of the Greater Cleveland choral community.

SEE PAGE 23

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: IMAGES COURTESY OF HALIM FLOWERS; JOE HENDRICKSON/ISTOCKPHOTO; ERIC CHAN/ALAMY; THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART; TERENCE BLANCHARD



SATURDAY, MAY 16 | 7 PM

**THURSDAY, MAY 21 | 7 PM
SUNDAY, MAY 24 | 3 PM**

Beethoven's Fidelio

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center
Music Director **Franz Welser-Möst** leads The Cleveland Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus, and an all-star cast of soloists through **Beethoven's** only opera.

SEE PAGE 31



SUNDAY, MAY 17

**4 PM
Courage and Poetry:
An Afternoon with Tank Ball**

Reinberger Chamber Hall at Severance Music Center

Grammy-winning artist **Tarriona "Tank" Ball** shares her spellbinding blend of spoken word and poetry in a performance that digs deep into the meaning of courage.

SEE PAGE 47



MONDAY, MAY 18

**7 PM
Bryan Stevenson on Courage**

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

Acclaimed civil rights leader, bestselling author, and founder of the Equal Justice Initiative **Bryan Stevenson** reflects on courage: how we confront injustice, stay proximate to suffering, and choose to hope in the face of overwhelming odds.

SEE PAGE 49



TUESDAY, MAY 19

**7 PM
The Moth Mainstage:
Live from Severance**

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

Five extraordinary storytellers share true stories inspired by the festival theme of *Courage*—tales of risk and resilience, of stepping into the unknown, and of finding courage amid fear.

SEE PAGE 53



FRIDAY, MAY 22

**7:30 PM
Hero's Song**

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

Music Director **Franz Welser-Möst** conducts The Cleveland Orchestra in a wide-ranging program, featuring a brand-new double concerto for violinist **Leila Josefowicz** (above) and TCO's Principal Harp **Trina Struble**.

SEE PAGE 55



SATURDAY, MAY 23

**4 PM
Children's Choruses
Spring Concert**

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Choruses present an uplifting musical celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States.

SEE PAGE 61

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: IMAGES COURTESY OF ROGER MASTROIANNI; STEFAN CRÄMER/ALAMY; JAMES DUNCAN DAVIDSON/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; EXTRAORDINAIRE PHOTOS; TOM ZIMBEROFF; ROGER MASTROIANNI



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Program Spotlight: POETRY OUT LOUD

Ohio Poetry Out Loud State Champion Zeke Moses of Bexley High School (Franklin County) reciting a poem at the 2025 state finals. He represented Ohio at the national finals in Washington, D.C. Image credit: Terry Gilliam



The Cleveland Orchestra's 2026 Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival is supported by a historic grant from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation.

The Cleveland Orchestra's production of *Fidelio* is generously sponsored by Jan R. Lewis.

This production is generously supported by the Franz Welser-Möst Legacy Fund.

The Cleveland Orchestra thanks the following donors and members of the Opera Club for their support of the 2026 Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival:

- | | |
|--|--|
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| Mel Berger & Jane Haylor | In honor of Emma Skoff Lincoln |
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The Cleveland Orchestra and the Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival are proud to partner with the following organizations:

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| Cleveland Museum of Art
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APRIL 9 – MAY 24

OPEN DURING SEVERANCE MUSIC CENTER EVENTS

Bogomolny-Kozerefski Grand Foyer at Severance Music Center

Join us for Community Open Houses:

SUNDAY, MAY 10 | 1:30–3 PM

SATURDAY, MAY 16 | 11 AM–1 PM

HALIM FLOWERS

IT TAKES COURAGE TO LOVE ALL UNCONDITIONALLY



THIS FESTIVAL CELEBRATES COURAGE, reflecting the personal journey I've been on for quite some time. Many choices I made in my childhood led to consequences that were not a result of my being a "bad kid," but rather due to my inability to overcome negative peer influences and community pressures.

I believe in love, especially in a world that often encourages us to hide our authentic selves. It takes immense strength and courage to embrace who we truly are and to love ourselves. This body of work represents an extension of my identity and self-worth. I had to learn to love myself, even when society labeled me as a menace and treated me accordingly.

The colors in the pieces I created for this exhibition emerged organically; they chose me. I usually don't work with earth tones or neutrals, but this time, the mediums—my tools of mass construction—were paintbrushes, oil sticks, canvas, and fashion. The colors arrived uniquely and unexpectedly. —Halim Flowers

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Halim Flowers is an artist, poet, and activist whose work is shaped by resilience and transformation. At 16, he was sentenced as an adult to two life terms for a crime he did not commit. While incarcerated, he developed a deep love for language, beginning with freestyle rap before evolving into poetry as a way to process the traumas of surviving prison and growing up during Washington, DC's crack epidemic.

After serving more than 20 years, Flowers was released in 2019 following criminal justice reform in DC. Soon after, he expanded his creative practice into visual art, drawing inspiration from Jean-Michel Basquiat and translating his experiences onto canvas through vibrant, layered works.

Flowers has received fellowships from Halcyon Arts Lab and Echoing Green, was featured in the Museum of Modern Art's *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, and is a 2025–26 Obama Foundation USA Leader. His work is exhibited internationally.

Halim Flowers created all-original pieces of artwork for this special exhibition. His 2025 painting *Severance Hall* is a striking and joyfully abstract reimagining of The Cleveland Orchestra's iconic home.



XHIBITION

Presented in partnership with District Gallery and Xhibition.

The Halim Flowers exhibition is generously sponsored by JoAnn & Robert Glick.



COMMUNITY CONVERSATION EXPLORING WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS THROUGH THE ARTS

THIS TWO-PART EVENING opens with a preview of the 2026 Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival and its theme of *Courage*. Following this, a panel of local experts explore the intersection of courage, the arts, and wrongful convictions, with a specific focus on our Cleveland community.

MODERATOR

Jeremy Johnson, *President & CEO of Assembly for the Arts*

PANELISTS

Ayesha Bell Hardaway, *professor of law & director of Case Western Reserve University's Social Justice Institute*

Karen Prasser, *executive director of Arts for Justice Cleveland*

Raymond Towler, *musician and artist*



Presented in partnership with the Cleveland Public Library and Assembly for the Arts.

In 1975, Clevelanders **Ricky Jackson** (left) and **Kwame Ajamu** (right) were both wrongfully sentenced to death in a murder-robbery case. Ajamu was released on parole in 2003, but Jackson was not released until 2014, the year both were finally exonerated.

PHOTO BY NATHAN CONGLETON/INBCU PHOTO BANK/INBCUNIVERSAL VIA GETTY IMAGES

PHOTO BY EMILIO MARANO/EP/PA-EE/SHUTTERSTOCK



OPERA NOW TRADITION, INNOVATION, AND THE ROAD AHEAD

WHAT DOES OPERA MEAN TODAY—and what might it become? Festival Curator **Terence Blanchard** and singers **Adrienne Danrich** and **David Butt Philip** join The City Club of Cleveland for a wide-ranging conversation on tradition, innovation, and the future of the art form. From new creative voices to evolving audience expectations, this forum considers how opera continues to transform while retaining its emotional and artistic core.

MODERATOR

André Gremillet, *President & CEO of The Cleveland Orchestra, The Richard K. Smucker Chair*

PANELISTS

Terence Blanchard, *Festival Curator*

Adrienne Danrich, *soprano*

David Butt Philip, *tenor*

Tenor **David Butt Philip** performs an aria from Puccini's *Turandot* at the Madrid-Barajas Airport in 2018. As opera adapts, there will be more opportunities to engage with the art form outside the opera house.



THE CITY CLUB OF CLEVELAND

Presented in partnership with The City Club of Cleveland.

This forum is presented in partnership with The Cleveland Orchestra's Opera Club, a group of donors who support opera and vocal programming at The Cleveland Orchestra and receive special benefits and experiences.

THE WORLD(S) OF TERENCE BLANCHARD

MY EXPERIENCE IN THE FILM WORLD helped me tremendously [in the operatic world] because I wasn't so concerned about writing for orchestra. I had that under my belt, and creating sonic colors for certain situations was fine. The problem was writing for voice. And the most problematic part is different from singer to singer. They can all be sopranos, but they're different sopranos. [They can] all be baritones and all be different. So that part ... took some time to learn. But when you learn that for a specific singer ... it turns everything around. Knowing the abilities of the singers to be able to do those things, that's when the storytelling process really becomes a big deal.

—Terence Blanchard (interviewed on the NEA Art Works Podcast, February 2025)

THE PROGRAM

Terence Blanchard, *trumpet*

The E-Collective

Charles Altura, *guitar*

Tom Oren, *piano*

Alex Smith, *bass*

Mark Whitfield Jr., *drums*

Turtle Island Quartet

David Balakrishnan, *violin*

Gabriel Terracciano, *violin*

Mads Tolling, *viola*

Naseem Alatrash, *cello*

Andrew F. Scott, *projections*

Matthew Unkenholz,
projectionist

Throughout his career, Terence Blanchard has collaborated with director Spike Lee on over 20 projects, including the jazz-inflected score for the biopic *Malcolm X* (1992), which received acclaim alongside Denzel Washington's portrayal of the title character.

Terence Blanchard (b. 1962)

*Suite from Fire Shut Up
in My Bones*

- I. Tears of anger and shame
- II. Don't be in such a rush
- III. Leave it in the road
- IV. Golden button
- V. Peculiar grace
- VI. Peculiar grace (Instrumental)
- VII. There was a storm
- VIII. A piece for Billie
- IX. In the car
- X. Peculiar grace (Reprise)

Adrienne Danrich, *soprano*

Will Liverman, *baritone*

Terence Blanchard

Malcolm X Jazz Suite

- I. The Opening (Parts 1 & 2)
- II. Melody for Laura
- III. Theme for Elijah
- IV. Cops and Robbers
- V. Going to Mecca
- VI. Betty's Theme
- VII. Fruit of Islam
- VIII. Malcolm's Theme



Presented in partnership
with Tri-C JazzFest.



PHOTO BY KEVIN LIBAL



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26-0152

MAY 16, 17, 23 & 24

SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS | 2 PM

Cleveland Museum of Art



**DOCENT TOURS
THE ART OF COURAGE**

IN CONJUNCTION WITH The Cleveland Orchestra's 2026 Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival, join an hour-long, docent-led tour at the Cleveland Museum of Art that reflects on the theme of *Courage*. Inspired by **Beethoven's** opera *Fidelio*, this tour invites visitors to consider how artists across time and cultures have grappled with and portrayed bravery, conviction, and courage.



Tours are FREE, but tickets are required.

Reserve by scanning the QR code or visiting
clevelandart.org/events/art-courage-tours

Guided tours will showcase a dizzying array of artistic approaches and courageous subjects that span centuries and cultures, including **Joan of Arc (left)**, **George Washington (center)**, and the Hindu goddess **Durga (right)**.

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART



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with the **Cleveland Museum
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MAY 16

SATURDAY | 1 PM

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

UNITED IN SONG!

A COMMUNITY CHORAL CELEBRATION

JOIN US FOR AN AFTERNOON of joyous vocal performances at Severance Music Center representing the rich diversity of the Greater Cleveland choral community. The event is hosted by nationally acclaimed baritone and retired Akron Public School District teacher **Brian Keith Johnson**.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Cleveland Chamber Choir

Gregory Ristow, *artistic director*

The Cleveland Chamber Choir provides audiences with exceptional performances of diverse repertoire, emphasizing the works of composers historically excluded from the concert hall. Since its founding in 2015, the choir has won acclaim for its inclusive programming, partnerships with community charities, pedagogical outreach, and free concerts that ensure everyone can hear world-class professional choral singing. Under the leadership of artistic director **Gregory Ristow**, all the ensemble's members are professional singers who currently reside in Northeast Ohio. clevelandchamberchoir.org

Hudson Community Choruses Adult Chorus

Jon C. Peterson, *artistic director*

Founded in 1988, the Hudson Community Choruses enrich the cultural life of Hudson and the surrounding region

Amanda Cobes-Miller sings with Windsong, Cleveland's Feminist Chorus, as part of *United in Song!* in 2025. This year's festival marks the fourth year of this annual community favorite.

through exceptional choral performance and music education. Under the leadership of **Jon C. Peterson**, the organization comprises three ensembles spanning more than 150 singers from second grade through adult and representing 20 communities. Supported by a dedicated board and committed volunteers, the Hudson Community Choruses continue to cultivate a thriving, inclusive community of singers united by a shared passion for choral music.

hudsonsings.org

Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Chamber Chorus

Dr. William Henry Caldwell, *music director*

Steven Weems, *conductor*

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Chorus is a volunteer community chorus assembled each year since 1989. Bringing together singers from across Northeast Ohio, the Chorus lifts its collective voices in affirmation of **Dr. King's** vision of justice, peace, and harmony. In addition to its performance during The Cleveland Orchestra's annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Celebration Concert, the ensemble has sung at Tri-C's Creative Arts Academy and at Cleveland Cavaliers and Guardians games.

clevelandorchestra.com/mlkchorus

The Singing Angels

Jim Koenig, *music director*

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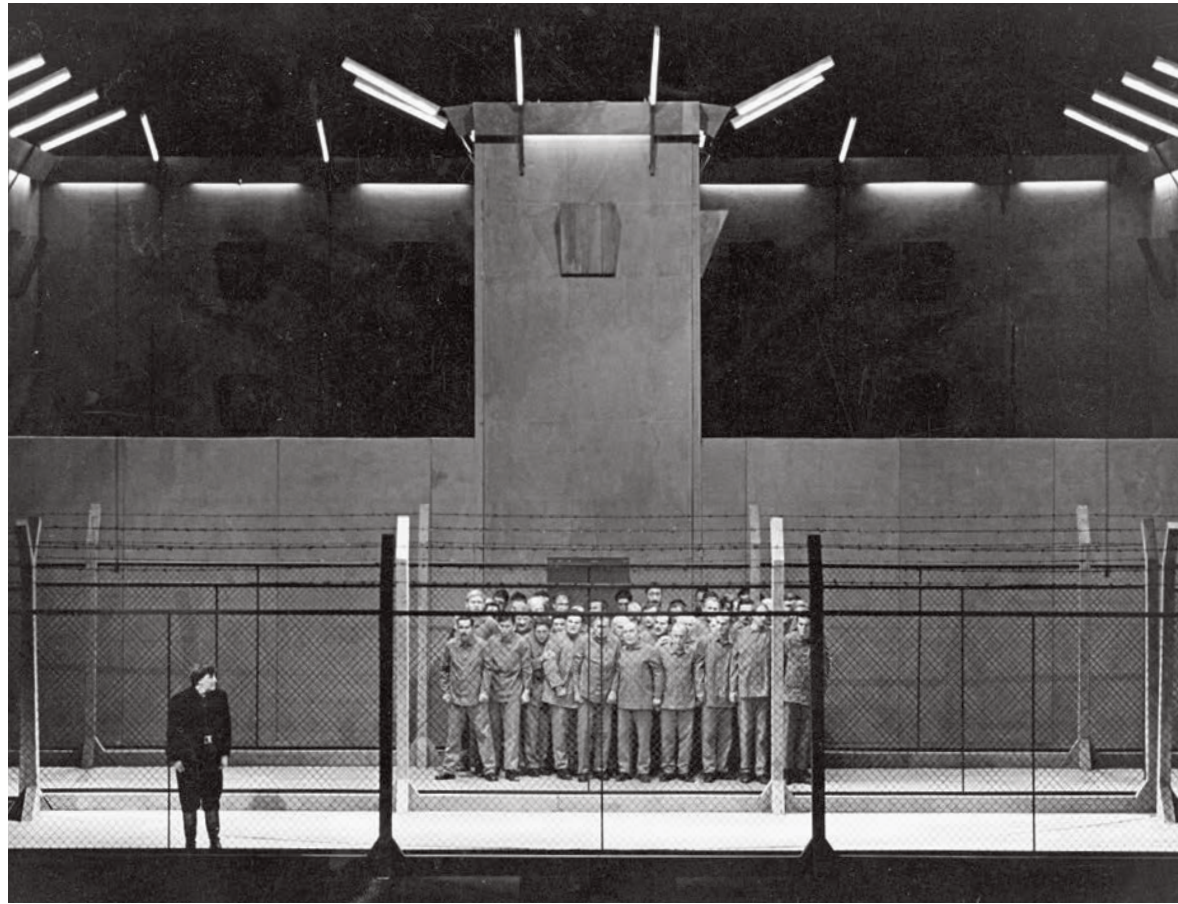
by Franz Welser-Möst

Music Director, The Cleveland Orchestra

Fidelio is about the value of human life and how freedom, both individual and collective, is only possible through love

FIDELIO IS NOT ONLY AN OPERA; it's a philosophical statement about courage, liberty, love, and the triumph of the human spirit. Every stage director I've met wrestles with the same question when putting on *Fidelio*: How do you make it relevant to the time we live in? Here, we present it in concert to bring attention to the extraordinary ways that Ludwig van Beethoven's music is philosophy set to sound.

Any staging of *Fidelio* joins a long history of political performances. At a time when Europe was fighting one war after another, Beethoven—an extremely well-educated and politically engaged man—wrote this opera about a political prisoner ultimately freed by his wife's courage. It is a very humanistic statement about the value of human life and the idea that freedom, both individual and collective, is only possible through love. ▶▶▶



It is no accident that, in 1955, the first opera staged after the reopening of the bombed-out Vienna State Opera was *Fidelio* (previous page). After 10 years of being divided into four occupation zones, Austria was finally free to be its own country, and *Fidelio* captured that moment.

There was another famous production in 1989 by **Christine Mielitz** in Dresden (above), then the headquarters of the Secret Service of communist East Germany. The production premiered on October 7, almost exactly a month before the Berlin Wall fell. With dozens of secret agents in the audience, she staged it so that, as an audience member, you felt like you were inside the prison. It took tremendous courage of Mielitz to stage it that way, and from the Dresden Semperoper to present it.

Civic courage is not the strength of our time. People on both sides of the political spectrum tend to go with the flow without considering the consequences. But in the character of Leonore, Beethoven shows us that moving against the grain takes courage. She is the character who brings the light into a dark place. Before the opera starts, Leonore has the courage to dress up as a man and get a job in the prison. Don Pizarro harbors so much evil and maintains such a strong regime, but it is a woman who is willing to say, “No, that’s not what we stand for.”

Fidelio is a political opera that has been produced at critical junctures in history. It marked the reopening of the Vienna State Opera in 1955 (previous page) after the building had been bombed in World War II. Years later, a striking 1989 production in Dresden (above) featured barbed wire and a surveillance tower—mirroring the realities of East Germany outside the opera house walls.

right: The opera’s enduring message of freedom and justice also found its way into Beethoven’s perennial Ninth Symphony, which **Franz Welser-Möst** and The Cleveland Orchestra presented in October.

PREVIOUS PAGE: PHOTO BY ERNST HAUSKNOTZ/WIEN MUSEUM ONLINE SAMMLUNG | ABOVE: PHOTO BY ERWIN DÖRING/HISTORICAL ARCHIVE OF THE SAXON STATE THEATERS DRESDEN

PHOTO BY JULIAN DUBE

In fact, Beethoven’s original title for the opera was *Leonore, oder Der Triumph der ehelichen Liebe* (Leonore, or The Triumph of Marital Love). He was always a proponent of sweeping philosophical messages. Before his First Symphony, he wrote the ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus* in 1801. Though it was a failure, it was his first earnest attempt to create music with a larger message. Even then, he already had plans to set **Friedrich Schiller’s** “An die Freude” (Ode to Joy), which he eventually did more than 20 years later in the Ninth Symphony.

Beethoven urges each of us to stand up for the people we love and the values we believe in.

But like *Prometheus*, *Fidelio* was not a huge success, because Beethoven’s ideals were bigger than the libretto could accommodate. There’s a saying in opera: “Only a second-rate libretto gives the chance to a first-rate opera.” There is some truth to that, but in the case of *Fidelio*, the text is not even second-rate. And that’s why staging it is so often a failure.

But the music is just extraordinary. It’s really Beethoven at his best. That is why I have decided to present this work unstaged, allowing the music itself to be the vessel for Beethoven’s powerful message. I’ve conducted over 70 different operas in

my life, but every time I pick an opera for Cleveland, it’s because I specifically want to hear *this* Orchestra play it. Alongside the orchestra, of course, you also need strong soloists. Even at his best, Beethoven was never kind to singers. We have assembled a cast with great technique, especially **Sara Jakubiak** (Leonore) and **David Butt Philip** (Florestan), who can navigate the vocal challenges that Beethoven created. Don Pizarro is also an impossible role, but **Tomasz Konieczny** has a voice of such power that the hall may need another renovation!



Without a director influencing our interpretation, each of us is free to connect the opera with our own stories of love and courage, big and small. For me, it is a reminder of my father’s participation, at age 17, in an underground student movement against Hitler. For you, it will be something different. The scale does not need to be grand. Beethoven urges each of us to stand up for the people we love and the values we believe in. ♪



IMAGE COURTESY OF HALIM FLOWERS | *IN MEMORIAM

The design of Halim Flowers's painting *Fidelio* (1805) finds resonance in the dark, maze-like dungeon where Florestan is being held captive in the opera. This, along with several other pieces by Flowers, can be viewed in the Bogomolny-Kozerefski Grand Foyer (see page 15).

MAY 16, 21 & 24

SATURDAY, MAY 16 | 7 PM
THURSDAY, MAY 21 | 7 PM
SUNDAY, MAY 24 | 3 PM

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

This performance is approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes long, including one 20-minute intermission

FIDELIO, OP. 72

AN OPERA IN TWO ACTS

Ludwig van Beethoven
COMPOSER

Joseph Sonnleithner
LIBRETTIST

With further revisions by
Stephan von Breuning & Georg Friedrich Trietschke

Based on *Léonore, ou L'amour conjugal* (Leonore, or Marital Love) by **Jean-Nicolas Bouilly**

The Cleveland Orchestra

Franz Welser-Möst
CONDUCTOR

CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Tony F. Sias, *narrator*

Owen McCausland, *Jaquino*

Ashley Emerson, *Marzelline*

Raymond Aceto, *Rocco*

Sara Jakubiak, *Leonore*

Tomasz Konieczny, *Don Pizarro*

Ronnie Dailey & Adam Kilo (u/s),
First Prisoner

Francisco Prado & Ronnie Dailey (u/s),
Second Prisoner

David Butt Philip, *Florestan*

Dashon Burton, *Don Fernando*

The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus

u/s = understudy

Miloš Repický
REPETITEUR

Lisa Wong
DIRECTOR OF CHORUSES

Lucy Guillemette
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Sonya Friedman
ENGLISH SUPERTITLES

Jacqueline Kaminski
SUPERTITLE OPERATOR

SuperTitle System courtesy of DIGITEXT, Chatham, VA

Narration text by **Franz Welser-Möst**, translated by **Rebecca Epstein-Boley**

Beethoven's Fidelio is performed by arrangement with European American Music Distributors Company, US and Canadian agent for Bärenreiter Music Corp., publisher and copyright owner.

The Cleveland Orchestra's production of *Fidelio* is generously sponsored by **Jan R. Lewis**.

This production is generously supported by the **Franz Welser-Möst Legacy Fund**.

Sara Jakubiak's performance is generously sponsored by **Ms. Cathy Lincoln**.

Ashley Emerson's performance is generously sponsored by **Jane Haylor and Mel Berger**.

Owen McCausland's performance is generously sponsored by **James and Marguerite Rigby**.

Miloš Repický, repetiteur, is generously sponsored by **Dr. Michael Frank and Patricia A.* Snyder**.

The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus's performance in Beethoven's *Fidelio* is generously sponsored by **Michael Hudson** in memory of **Susan Benningfield Hudson**, a former vocal coach and accompanist for the TCO Chorus under the direction of **Robert Page**.

Thursday evening's concert is dedicated to **Mr. and Mrs. Dennis W. LaBarre** in recognition of their generous support of music.

SYNOPSIS FIDELIO

ACT I: A prison for political dissidents outside Seville, Spain | 75 MINUTES

INTERMISSION | 20 MINUTES

ACT II: The prison dungeons | 45 MINUTES

ACT I

In the gatehouse of a formidable prison, **Jaquino**, the gatekeeper, tries in vain to win back the affections of the warden's daughter, **Marzelline**. She eschews his advances; her heart now belongs to the errand boy, **Fidelio**. As Marzelline sings of her devotion, Fidelio returns, laden with packages for her father, **Rocco**. The grateful warden welcomes Fidelio back and reassures him that his extra efforts in pursuit of Marzelline have not gone unnoticed.

Unbeknownst to all, Fidelio is not a lovesick young man, but a woman—**Leonore**—in disguise, desperate to ingratiate herself with Rocco so that she can find her husband, **Florestan**. Leonore believes her husband is locked in the prison's secret cellar, incarcerated two years prior for attempting to expose the crimes of the prison governor, **Don Pizarro**.

Rocco promises a wedding for Marzelline and Fidelio and dreams of the wealth this union will bring his family. As Fidelio, Leonore plays the eager son-in-law and offers to lighten Rocco's load by taking on his most harrowing duties. Rocco, however, refuses to discuss the horrific conditions of his most secret prisoner.

Martial music announces the arrival of Don Pizarro and his coterie. Pizarro is shaken to learn that the king's minister, **Don Fernando**, is en route to inspect the prison. He knows that Florestan,

a good friend of the minister, has not died as the minister believes, because Pizarro himself has been brutally torturing the prisoner for years.

Pizarro resolves to kill Florestan before the visit and enlists Rocco to help weaken the prisoner and dig his grave. Listening in, Leonore is both encouraged to hear that her husband lives and horrified by his impending murder.

On a whim, she asks Rocco to let the prisoners out into the fresh air. He grudgingly agrees, and Marzelline convinces Rocco to distract Pizarro in the meantime. Granted access to the grounds for the first time, the prisoners revel in this fleeting taste of freedom.

In the meantime, Rocco has secured Pizarro's blessing of Fidelio and Marzelline's marriage and, with it, a lucrative promotion for Fidelio. With newfound trust in his future son-in-law, Rocco informs Fidelio of Pizarro's plan to kill and dispose of Florestan.

Pizarro blusters in, having caught wind that the prisoners are in the yard. Rocco makes the necessary excuses, distracting the governor with a reminder of Florestan's imminent demise. Rocco and Jaquino usher the prisoners back into the dark fortress as Leonore prepares to accompany Rocco down to Florestan's cell.

ACT II

Deep in the dark recesses of the prison, Florestan sits alone in his cell, despairing in his fate. A celestial vision of his wife briefly lifts his spirits before he falls asleep.

Rocco and Leonore—still disguised as Fidelio—quietly descend into the dungeon, guided by the dim light of a lantern. Through the dark, Rocco sees Florestan sleeping on the floor of his cell. As the pair begin digging the grave, Leonore casts worried glances at the sleeping figure, unsure whether it is her husband.

As the two continue digging, Florestan wakes. He begins to speak with Rocco, when Leonore is struck by the sudden realization—it *is* her husband! She composes herself as the men continue their conversation.

Florestan is enraged to hear he is being held captive by Pizarro and begs Rocco to send for Leonore, unaware that she is mere feet away. Rocco rebuffs Florestan's pleas but agrees to share the last drops of his wine.

Having finished digging, Rocco leaves to alert the governor that everything is ready. Florestan begins to panic as Leonore comforts him. She desperately wants to reveal herself but holds back—the time is not yet right.

Pizarro arrives, gleefully flaunting a dagger, and commands Rocco to dismiss Fidelio and loosen the prisoner's chains. Meanwhile, the disguised Leonore has slipped into the background,

observing the scene from the shadows. As Rocco fumbles with Florestan's chains, Pizarro mutters to himself that he will also have to dispose of Rocco and Fidelio—there can be no witnesses.

Suddenly, Fidelio leaps from the darkness and reveals her true identity—Leonore, Florestan's wife. Her dramatic revelation is met with stunned silence. Composing himself, Pizarro raises his dagger to kill Leonore, but she swiftly pulls out a gun and points it at the governor. She is prepared to shoot.

A trumpet call interrupts the commotion, signaling the arrival of the minister, Don Fernando. Freedom is imminent! Jaquino and several soldiers enter to inform the group that the minister is waiting at the gate. Rocco calls upon several soldiers to escort Pizarro up the stairway. The reunited couple is finally alone, and they affirm their profound, abiding love for one another.

Before long, Rocco rushes back in with good news: Don Fernando has ordered the immediate review of all prison sentences and promised to hold Pizarro responsible for his crimes. Overjoyed, Florestan and Leonore embrace as the prisoners begin to sing of their long-awaited freedom. Justice has won the day.

— Kevin McBrien and Ellen Sauer Tanyeri



by Mark Ferraguto

“A MARTYR’S CROWN”

BEETHOVEN’S STRUGGLES & TRIUMPHS ON THE OPERATIC STAGE

Fidelio is one of Beethoven’s crowning achievements, but it had a difficult gestation from its premiere to the version we know today

JEAN-NICOLAS BOUILLY’S 1798 COMIC OPERA *Léonore, ou L’amour conjugal* (Leonore, or Marital Love) was conceived—like several other contemporary “rescue” dramas—in reaction to the Reign of Terror that gripped France in 1793–94. According to Bouilly’s 1836 memoirs, the story’s eponymous heroine was based on a real-life acquaintance, one who disguised herself as a male guard to free her husband from a Jacobin prison. Premiering in Paris with music by **Pierre Gaveaux**, Bouilly’s play went on to inspire three further operas over the next six years: **Ferdinando Paer’s** *Leonora, ossia L’amore coniugale* (Dresden, October 1804), **Simon Mayr’s** *L’amor coniugale* (Padua, July 1805), and **Ludwig van Beethoven’s** *Fidelio, oder die eheliche Liebe* (Vienna, November 1805)—the latter so named by the theater management to avoid confusion with Paer’s *Leonora*.

Beethoven came to Bouilly’s libretto in a roundabout way. His operatic journey began in early 1803 with an offer from **Emanuel Schikaneder**, librettist of **Mozart’s** *The Magic Flute* and founder of the Theater an der Wien. Schikaneder proposed that Beethoven write an opera for his company in exchange for an apartment in the theater complex and the use of his theater for concerts. This was an attractive deal: it allowed Beethoven to collaborate with a star in the theatrical firmament, provided a pathway into the lucrative world of opera, and enabled him to produce concerts for his own benefit.

Beethoven resided in the theater complex from April 1803 to May 1804. Not until November 1803 did he tackle Schikaneder’s libretto for *Vestas Feuer* (Vesta’s Fire), a ponderous affair about the Vestal virgins in Ancient Rome. Soon after composing the first scene, he soured on the project, writing to **Johann Friedrich Rochlitz** in January 1804: “I allowed myself to be deceived, because I was hoping that, given [Schikaneder’s] well-known ability to create stage effects, he would produce something more intelligent than usual. How wrong I was!” Beethoven further explained

Though he composed several vocal-and-orchestral works during his productive career, *Fidelio* was Beethoven’s only completed opera. This famous 1820 portrait by **Joseph Karl Stieler** shows the composer with the manuscript to his *Missa solemnis*.

IMAGE COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

that he had cut ties with the impresario and was already at work on another opera, one based on an adaptation of an “old French libretto.”

Leonore was adapted for the Viennese stage by **Joseph Sonnleithner**, a lawyer, former court official, and artistic director of the Theater an der Wien in 1804. Sonnleithner translated Bouilly’s libretto into German and rendered it suitable for Viennese consumption, ensuring that the opera would uphold, in musicologist **Michael Tusa**’s words, “principles of monarchical rule, hierar-

chical class structure, and the honor of the Habsburg dynasty.” One significant revision involved minimizing the state’s role in Florestan’s persecution. Rather than the state minister (Don Fernando) taking responsibility for the former’s unjust imprisonment, the blame is placed squarely on the prison’s governor (Don Pizarro), who acts according to a personal—rather than official—vendetta.

It is difficult to know precisely when certain changes were implemented, but the opera was still controversial enough to elicit a ban from the Viennese authorities two weeks before the premiere. In a desperate memorandum to State Councilor **Philipp von Stahl**, Sonnleithner stressed that the action was set in 16th-century Spain and therefore had no relation to current events, and that Pizarro was acting merely on a private impulse. In addition, the story was not only “moral in the highest degree” but also a favorite of **Empress Maria Theresa**, on whose name day (October 15) the premiere was scheduled to take place. These arguments—along with further tweaks to the libretto—persuaded the censors. The premiere proceeded a month later, on November 20, 1805.

The timing, unfortunately, could not have been worse. A week earlier, **Napoleon** had invaded the Austrian capital, parading his army through the streets and taking up residence in Schönbrunn Palace. **Emperor Francis II** fled the city, along with the rest of the imperial family and most of the nobility. While the five theaters remained open by governmental decree, Beethoven’s aristocratic supporters were gone, and the parterre was filled with foreigners who had little appreciation for German opera. More distressingly for Beethoven, critics found the work cumbersome and dramatically ineffective, citing among other concerns the “very extensive” third act, the overture with its “very long Adagio,” and the “endlessly repeated text.” The opera was a failure, withdrawn after just three performances.

Beethoven spent the winter revising his opera with the help of his friend **Stephan von Breuning**. The main changes entailed condensing the work from three



The image of Beethoven as eccentric genius has persisted as a popular trope in art, literature, and film over the centuries. **Otto Robert Nowak**’s 1908 painting *The Solitary Master* shows Beethoven on a walk in the Vienna countryside as some locals look on inquisitively.

IMAGE COURTESY OF WIEN MUSEUM ONLINE SAMMLUNG

Mark Ferraguto is a professor of musicology at The Pennsylvania State University. The author of Beethoven 1806, he has published widely on the music, culture, and politics of 18th- and early 19th-century Europe.

acts into two and tightening the action. Beethoven also composed a new overture, known as *Leonore* No. 3. (*Leonore* No. 1, confusingly, was composed in 1807 for an aborted performance in Prague; *Leonore* No. 2 refers to the original 1805 overture). The second run of performances, in spring 1806, received a somewhat warmer response, but the financial returns were disappointing. Beethoven, inexperienced with the business of opera, believed the theater management had swindled him; the work was pulled after just two performances. In a June 1806 letter, Breuning confided to his sister and her husband that “probably nothing has caused Beethoven so much grief as this work, whose value will be fully appreciated only in the future.”

Fidelio lay dormant for eight years until 1814, when the success of Beethoven’s battle symphony *Wellington’s Victory* encouraged the directors of the court-run Kärntnertortheater to suggest reviving the opera. Beethoven now turned to the playwright **Georg Friedrich Treitschke** for assistance, and the two honed the work into what would become its definitive version.

Preserving Breuning’s two-act structure, Treitschke and Beethoven reversed the opening aria and duet, cut two numbers involving the warden Rocco’s daughter (Marzelline), expanded both act-ending ensembles, and moved the final scene from the subterranean dungeon to an outdoor courtyard, among many other edits. Beethoven also composed a fresh overture—known now as the *Fidelio* Overture—that, unlike the previous ones, makes no explicit reference to the ensuing drama. (However, *Leonore* Overture No. 3 is still sometimes played before the penultimate scene of Act II, as in The Cleveland Orchestra’s performances.) The sum of these changes was to sacrifice some of the original work’s characterizations and subtleties in favor of a celebration of universal themes: hope over despair, humanity over evil, light over darkness, feminine virtue, Christ-like resignation, divine providence, and moral courage.

The sum of these changes was to sacrifice some of the original work’s characterizations and subtleties in favor of a celebration of universal themes: hope over despair, humanity over evil, light over darkness, feminine virtue, Christ-like resignation, divine providence, and moral courage.

Fidelio was, at long last, a hit, despite Beethoven’s sardonic remark to Treitschke that it would only win him “a martyr’s crown.” Indeed, the stars finally seemed to align, with the reworked opera’s premiere in May 1814 benefiting from the giddy atmosphere of Napoleon’s defeat by the Sixth Coalition. Over the next year, *Fidelio* was repeatedly performed for the monarchs and diplomats assembled at the Congress of Vienna as they decided how to carve up the European continent. The opera’s message of freedom from tyranny—facilitated, crucially, under the auspices of enlightened absolutism—set the tone for the Congress, commemorating Napoleon’s defeat while offering a vision of post-Napoleonic Europe that was at once ideologically progressive and politically conservative. ♪



IMAGE COURTESY OF MÜNCHENER DIGITALISIERUNGSZENTRUM DIGITALE BIBLIOTHEK

Leonore reveals her identity and stops the murder of her husband, Florestan, in this engraving by Vincent Grüner. The image was printed in the 1815 almanac for the Wiener Hof-Theater, compiled by Beethoven's acquaintance, dramatist Ignaz Franz Castelli.

by Allison Chu

FIDELIO'S FLIGHTS OF FREEDOM

Beethoven's clarion call for freedom and justice resounds as clear today as in its first performance in 1805

THE FIRST TIME WE MEET DON PIZARRO, the governor who rules over the prison where Florestan is unjustly incarcerated, he makes no effort to hide his malicious machinations. In his Act I aria, Pizarro menacingly addresses the unseen prisoner: "I will satisfy my desire for revenge / Your fate awaits you!" Don Pizarro is villainous, intent on targeting those who speak out against him. His agenda is clear—Florestan must die.

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote *Fidelio*, his only opera, during a time in which the ideas of revolutionary fervor, prison reform, and freedom through enlightenment were in vogue. Based on a French libretto by **Jean-Nicolas Bouilly**, *Fidelio* follows the model of the "rescue opera" popular before, during, and after the French Revolution. Many such operas thematized the imprisonment and rescue of political prisoners from the control of unlawful, tyrannical governments. In Vienna, French rescue operas such as **Luigi Cherubini's** *Lodoïska* (1791) and *Le deux journées* (1800) had already been produced to great success. Action-packed and appealing to a new working-class audience, rescue operas promoted the core Enlightenment values of self-determination and the triumph over oppressive forces.

Though structured as a *Singspiel*—a theatrical musical work in which the dialogue between musical numbers is spoken rather than sung in recitative—*Fidelio* clearly exemplifies the influences of its French predecessors. Set in a state prison, the opera follows the daring rescue efforts of Leonore, a desperate wife who disguises herself as a young prison guard named Fidelio to free her husband, Florestan. Maneuvering around Don Pizarro, Leonore ultimately succeeds in reuniting with Florestan and overthrowing Pizarro, and the opera concludes with a celebration of freedom. The version most often performed today was created in 1814 with the help of **Georg Friedrich Treitschke**, following 1806 revisions by **Stephan von Breuning**.

Notably, in the final version, Treitschke altered the ending to grant amnesty to all the prisoners. It was premiered during the Congress of Vienna to celebrate the defeat of **Napoleon**.

Nowhere in the opera are the musical pleas for freedom more apparent than in the famous Act I “Prisoners’ Chorus.” *Fidelio* has just gotten permission from Rocco, the jailer, for the prisoners to walk in the courtyard, a small reprieve from their grim reality. While the moment is dramaturgically extraneous to the larger plot, in this chorus, we momentarily glimpse the meaning of freedom. We are not privy to these prisoners’ convictions or identities—we know only that they are state prisoners. The anonymous men begin singing cautiously, softly gathering strength from the open air: “Oh, what joy / to breathe in the open air again!” Registral shifts sonically illustrate the text, differentiating between the open-air courtyard and the dungeon, the locus of imprisonment. Musically arcing upwards, the prisoners’ phrases relish the feeling of freedom, and they reach the apexes of their phrases on the words “Luft” and “Frei”—air and freedom. Yet just as quickly as the chorus began, the closing stanza of the three-part form arrives. The opening returns, this time at a softer dynamic level, closing the brief window to the outside world. As the prisoners shuffle back into their cells, we are reminded of how fleeting true liberation can be.

In our current moment, the cries of the imprisoned reverberate on a new frequency, prompting us to ask: Who are those nameless choristers kept behind bars?

Performing *Fidelio* has always been a political act. Government censors, working to protect the interests of the newly created Austrian Empire, banned the production just two weeks before the premiere at Vienna’s Theater an der Wien, citing political objections to the opera’s harshest scenes. Translator and librettist **Joseph Sonnleithner** then submitted a petition that appealed to **Empress Marie Theresa’s** admiration of the marital love theme and altered the setting to 18th-century Seville, which appeased government officials. The opera eventually opened to lukewarm reception and sparse attendance on November 20, 1805.

The exact nature of the tyrannical political power symbolized and embodied by Don Pizarro has been, and continues to be, mutable, taking on different guises in various performances at key historical junctures. During World War II, **Arturo Toscanini** conducted annual productions of *Fidelio* at the Salzburg Festival between 1935 and 1937 that have been understood as protests against the Axis powers. But in 1938, following the annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany, *Fidelio* was performed as a celebration of liberation by the National Socialists. In 1945, *Fidelio* yet again marked a sense of freedom at Berlin’s Deutsche Oper as the first opera performed in the city after World War II.

Fidelio has also acted as a symbol of liberation beyond Europe. A 1980 production of the opera in Buenos Aires notably flew under the radar of a regime that, like the malicious Don Pizarro, had similarly detained 30,000 political prisoners. And in South Africa, as musicologist **Juliana M. Pistorius** has shown, pivotal productions of the opera in 1994 and 2004 were associated with the nation’s democratic transition. More recently, director **Francesca Zambello** timed Washington National Opera’s 2024 production to coincide with Election Day in the US.

In our current moment, the cries of the imprisoned reverberate on a new frequency, prompting us to ask: Who are those nameless choristers kept behind bars? From those wrongly accused of crimes they did not commit, to those held in immigration detention centers and punished for seeking new lives, incarceration has yet again emerged as a pressing issue in contemporary discourse. Without a Leonore to rescue them, many are trapped within the United States’s current system of mass incarceration—one that imprisons at a higher rate than any other country. Yet the story of *Fidelio* is, at its core, one about humanity and the power of courage in the face of despair. To experience *Fidelio*, then, is to question the Don Pizarros who cling to tyranny, and to listen to those who remain imprisoned out of sight. ♪

Allison Chu is an assistant professor of musicology at Vanderbilt University and a scholar of race and identity in American opera and contemporary music.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Fidelio is a poignant work of art that engages critical issues including courage, power, corruption, justice, and prison reform. Here are several local organizations that are committed to serving the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated populations in and around Northeast Ohio:

Urban League of Greater Cleveland

Focused on eliminating barriers that prevent communities of color from achieving their full potential
ulcleveland.org

Renovare

Cleveland-based ensemble that employs music as a tool for personal growth and healing, frequently working with women in the Northeast Reintegration Center
renovaremusic.org

Power of Harmony Foundation

Using choral music and mentorship to support youth in correctional facilities
powerofharmonyfoundation.org

EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute

Providing culinary training and holistic support for formerly incarcerated adults
edwinsrestaurant.org

Passages Ohio

Helping recently incarcerated fathers and parents reconnect with and support their families
passages-oh.org

The Cleveland Freedom Project

Youth-led organization that advocates for systemic changes in the juvenile justice system
clevelandfreedomproject.org

ACLU of Ohio

Cleveland-based chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, which seeks to preserve civil liberties and advance civil rights for all Ohioans
acluohio.org

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland

Provides “second chance” legal representation for formerly incarcerated people, helping them clear barriers to stable housing and employment
lasclv.org



IMAGE COURTESY OF STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN

by Jessica Waldoff

LEONORE

A PORTRAIT OF COURAGE

Though Leonore's actions echo the 18th-century fight for women's rights, her character represents much more

FROM A 21ST-CENTURY VANTAGE POINT, it is tempting to view Leonore's courageous actions in *Fidelio* against the backdrop of 18th-century debates over women's rights that produced foundational texts such as **Judith Sargent Murray's** *On the Equality of the Sexes* (1790), **Olympe de Gouges's** *Declaration of the Rights of Woman* (1791), and **Mary Wollstonecraft's** *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). **Ludwig van Beethoven's** *Leonore*, however, does not engage in any such debates. She is a woman of action.

In the years preceding and during the Age of Revolution, many operas, especially in France, claimed to represent actual events and were thus billed as "fait historique." Several centered on the actions of a heroine who rescues her beloved from imprisonment: *Le déserteur* (1769), an early and especially well-known example; *Le comte d'Albert* (1787) in which a wife saves her husband; *The Prisoner* (1792), an English pastiche (adapting music by **Dalayrac** and **Mozart**) in which two women pose as soldiers; and *Léonore, ou L'amour conjugal* (1798), on which Beethoven and his librettists based *Fidelio*.

Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, author of the libretto on which all subsequent *Léonore* operas relied, had trained in law and served as a judge in Tours during the Reign of Terror. He later said in his memoirs that he based his drama on "a sublime deed of heroism and devotion by [a lady] ... whose noble efforts I had the happiness of assisting."

Writing about the idealization of women in literature in *A Room of One's Own* (1929), **Virginia Woolf** points to a curious paradox that aptly describes the duality of the Leonore/*Fidelio* figure: "[In] real life a respectable woman could hardly show her face alone in the street, and yet on the stage woman equals or surpasses man." Leonore knows she cannot achieve her objective as a woman and has therefore disguised herself as a man. This simple fact is essential to understanding the opera's action.

In 1822, **Beethoven** attended the Vienna revival of *Fidelio* and was captivated by German soprano **Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient** (1804–1860) as Leonore. Though profoundly deaf by this point, the composer allegedly offered to write her another opera, but this never materialized. Schröder-Devrient later went on to create several soprano roles for **Wagner**, including Senta in *The Flying Dutchman* and Venus in *Tannhäuser*.

For most of Act I, we only glimpse Leonore through her disguise. It is not until her grand *scena* before the finale that we discover her full capacity for courage, love, and hope. Leonore has overheard Don Pizarro’s diabolical plan to murder her husband (Florestan), and when she enters, her inner turmoil can be heard in the orchestra. She tries to make sense of Pizarro’s rage as the music moves toward his key (D major). But then, suddenly, she imagines a rainbow shining above her, represented in the winds and in the unexpected key of C major, a key associated with love and triumph (especially in the Act II finale).

The aria type Beethoven employs here (a two-tempo rondo) was particularly associated with complex and emotionally fraught situations for noble heroines. It begins slowly in a bright E major, the key of the opera’s overture but otherwise

unique to Leonore in this opera. Three horns, an audible manifestation of her innermost thoughts, engage in an exquisite dialogue with the voice. *Coloratura* aptly paints the image of how love will reach (“erreichen”) its goal. The tempo soon picks up as Leonore declares her resolve. Huge leaps, vocal runs, and an ascent to a high B emphasize the key word “Gattenliebe” (marital love).

In the Act II quartet, the opera’s climax, Leonore’s resolve is put to the test. Pizarro begins the ensemble in his key, but the music, characterized by frequent chromatic motion, drives continually onward, reflecting the action at every turn. As Leonore steps forward to shield Florestan from Pizarro’s dagger, she deflects the established harmony yet again. Unaccompanied and exposed, she dares Pizarro to kill her first, reaching up to a high B-flat. The battle of wills continues for more than 40 bars until the trumpet call is heard. This signal announcing the minister’s arrival changes everything: Leonore has achieved freedom for her beloved Florestan.

Two supreme moments of satisfaction now unfold for Leonore. First, the private reunion of husband and wife, in which extended *a due* passages (simultaneous singing in thirds) appropriately dramatize two hearts beating as one. The placement right before the finale is conventional, but this particular love duet, with its dynamic range, unexpected pauses, and heart-racing energy, conveys emotional exuberance as only Beethoven can.



IMAGE COURTESY OF THEATERMUSEUM, WIEN

PHOTO BY ERICH AUERBACH/NULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

Since its premiere in 1805, generations of legendary sopranos have appeared in the role of Leonore, including **Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient** (above left), **Lotte Lehmann**, **Birgit Nilsson**, **Jessye Norman**, and **Nina Stemme**, to name a few. Welsh soprano **Gwyneth Jones** (right) appeared alongside tenor **Ronald Dowd** in a London production of the opera in 1967.



save you.” And at the opera’s end, she attributes courage to love: “true love knows no fear.” Through her actions, Leonore demonstrates the essential message of Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication*, that freedom must “strengthen [woman’s] reason till she comprehend her duty, and see in what manner it is connected with her real good.” ♪

Jessica Waldoff is Carol and Park B. Smith Professor of Music at the College of the Holy Cross. She has published widely on the music of Mozart and his contemporaries. Her most recent book is *The Cambridge Companion to The Magic Flute* (2023).

The second such moment occurs in the Act II finale, when the minister (Don Fernando) invites Leonore to unlock Florestan’s chains. The music here makes an unexpected shift of tempo, texture, key, and mood. As Leonore gives thanks, the music captures the wonder of freedom. Its transformative stillness recalls the promise of Leonore’s rainbow in her *scena* and the quiet “shock tutti” passage in the dungeon after the trumpet signal is heard. The overwhelming emotion of the moment (“Augenblick”) appears to stop time and heighten the senses.

Fidelio’s celebration of love, hope, and freedom may be summed up in one word: Leonore.

The opera’s final celebration in the next section focuses on Leonore as the chorus (comprising prisoners and townspeople, including women) sings together: “Whoever has won a lovely wife / Let him join in our jubilation” (a paraphrase of lines from **Friedrich Schiller’s** “An die Freude,” now familiar from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony). The text setting is harmonious and euphoric. In the opera’s remaining bars, we hear this refrain sung repeatedly by the main characters and the chorus in turn.

Fidelio’s celebration of love, hope, and freedom may be summed up in one word: Leonore. She is the opera’s primary champion of compassion, justice, and courage. In Act I, it is she who insists that the prisoners be released into the open air. In Act II, upon first seeing the prisoner in the dungeon, she exclaims, “Whoever you are, I will



IMAGE COURTESY OF HIGH ROAD TOURING

MAY 17

SUNDAY | 4 PM

Reinberger Chamber Hall at Severance Music Center

COURAGE AND POETRY: AN AFTERNOON WITH TANK BALL

[POETRY] IS MY FIRST LOVE. And the first to love me back. She's grown with me. Sometimes she don't want to deal with me. It's a relationship. Sometimes you don't wanna do what you have to do. If she taps me on the shoulder and she wants to go out on a date, I must be ready to support her. I gotta be ready to ignore everybody and go in on that poem. I really just see it as something that loves me back; it's safe. You could write about anything, and the page will never judge your deep secrets if you don't show it to nobody. And I love that.
—Tarriona "Tank" Ball (interviewed for Under the Radar magazine, January 2025)

ARTIST
Tarriona "Tank" Ball, spoken word

MUSICIAN
Terence Blanchard, trumpet
Festival Curator

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Hailing from New Orleans, Tarriona "Tank" Ball is the frontwoman of the Grammy-winning group Tank and the Bangas. The four-piece ensemble has a rare knack for combining musical styles—fiery soul, deft hip-hop, deep-drove R&B, and subtle jazz—into one dazzling, cohesive whole that evokes the scope of New Orleans music while retaining a distinctive feel all its own.

Known for her amazing ability to write, Ball released her first poetry book, *Vulnerable AF*, in 2021, followed by *The Thing About Falling* in 2025. Tank and the Bangas also recently released their newest album, *The Last Balloon*, on Verve Forecast.

Ball has collaborated with artists like Norah Jones, Lalah Hathaway, Robert Glasper, Moonchild, Brasstracks, and many more.

Led by Tarriona "Tank" Ball, Tank and the Bangas won the 2017 NPR Tiny Desk Concert and were nominated in the Best New Artist category at the 2020 Grammy Awards. The group ultimately won a Grammy in 2025 for Best Spoken Word Album.





IMAGE COURTESY OF EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

MAY 18

MONDAY | 7 PM

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

BRYAN STEVENSON ON COURAGE

PROXIMITY HAS TAUGHT ME SOME BASIC AND HUMBLING TRUTHS, including this vital lesson: *Each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done.* My work with the poor and the incarcerated has persuaded me that the opposite of poverty is not wealth; the opposite of poverty is justice.

—Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* (2014)

PROGRAM MODERATOR

Terence Blanchard, *Festival Curator*

SPECIAL GUEST

Halim Flowers, *Festival Exhibition Artist*



ABOUT THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Bryan Stevenson is the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), a human rights organization based in Montgomery, Alabama. Under his leadership, EJI has won major legal challenges eliminating excessive and unfair sentencing, exonerating over 140 innocent death-row prisoners, confronting abuse of the incarcerated and the mentally ill, and aiding children prosecuted as adults.

Stevenson has initiated major anti-poverty and anti-discrimination efforts that challenge inequality in America. He also led the creation of EJI's highly acclaimed Legacy Sites, including the Legacy Museum, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, and Freedom Monument Sculpture Park.

Stevenson's work has won him numerous awards including the prestigious MacArthur

Foundation "Genius" Prize, the American Bar Association Medal, the National Medal of Liberty from the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Olof Palme Prize for international human rights. Additionally, Stevenson has received over 50 honorary doctorates, was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2014, and was named to the 2015 Time 100 list, recognizing the world's most influential people. In 2023, he was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Joseph Biden.

Stevenson is the author of the critically acclaimed *New York Times* bestseller *Just Mercy*, which was adapted into a major motion picture, winning the American Bar Association's 2020 Silver Gavel Award as well as four NAACP Image Awards. Stevenson is also the subject of the Emmy Award-winning HBO documentary *True Justice*. He is a graduate of the Harvard Law School and the Harvard School of Government.

Since its founding in 1989, Bryan Stevenson's Equal Justice Initiative has provided legal aid to hundreds of prisoners, fought for criminal justice reforms, produced educational materials, and created museums and memorials that address the legacy of slavery in the United States.



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— celebrating the power of courage.

At KeyBank, we are passionate about supporting the arts and believe in their ability to inspire and transform. That's why we're proud to recognize the courage of Bryan Stevenson, Festival Keynote at the Mandel Opera & Humanities Festival.

Thank you, Bryan for inspiring us to choose hope.



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THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA

Considering Matthew Shepard

CHORUSES

PART OF THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA SUMMER CHORAL INSTITUTE

JUN 26 | FRI 7:30 PM

Severance Music Center

Selections from Craig Hella Johnson's *Considering Matthew Shepard*

Lisa Wong, conductor

Dashon Burton, bass-baritone

The Cleveland Orchestra Summer Choral Institute Chorus



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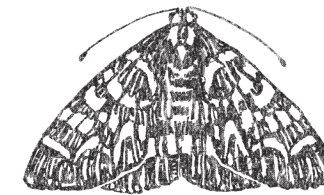
MAY 19

TUESDAY | 7 PM

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

THE MOTH MAINSTAGE LIVE FROM SEVERANCE

THE MOTH



FOLLOWING ITS SOLD-OUT CLEVELAND DEBUT LAST YEAR, *The Moth Mainstage* returns to Severance Music Center for a night of live storytelling and unforgettable personal journeys. In this two-part program, punctuated with musical interludes, five extraordinary storytellers share true stories inspired by the festival theme of *Courage*. Through tales of risk and resilience, of stepping into the unknown, and of finding courage amid fear, this quintessential *Moth* experience offers an evening of intimate connection and shared humanity.

When it comes to engaging and brilliant storytelling, *The Moth* never disappoints. *Moth* performances are the go-to for anyone who has ever wanted to hear the best of the art of storytelling.

—Forbes

HOST

Peter Aguero

STORYTELLERS

Donald Black Jr.
Terence Blanchard
Heather Rhoades
Mike Song
Renita Walls

CREW

Jodi Powell, *director*
Chloë Muñoz, *producer*

Alongside its acclaimed *Mainstage* events, the *Moth's* outreach includes storytelling competitions, educational initiatives, a Peabody Award-winning radio program, a podcast, books, a card game, and a fundraising gala.



Presented in partnership with Ideastream Public Media.



Scan the QR code for more information on the participants.



MAY 22

FRIDAY | 7:30 PM

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

This performance is approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes long, including one 20-minute intermission

HERO'S SONG

TWO PIECES ON THIS PROGRAM deal directly with our festival theme of *Courage*: Dvořák's *Hero's Song* and Adolphus Hailstork's tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. With these inspiring pieces, we have the premiere of Jüri Reinvere's double concerto, and another piece which has something to do with my own upbringing. When I was a youngster, I played second violin in a string quartet, and we played a contemporary piece by Polish composer Grażyna Bacewicz in a competition. I loved it but then forgot all about it. Decades later, I am glad to conduct one of her symphonies, the Fourth, which is a wonderful, exciting piece.

—Franz Welser-Möst

Franz Welser-Möst
CONDUCTOR

THE PROGRAM

Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941)
Epitaph (In Memoriam: Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Grażyna Bacewicz (1909–1969)
Symphony No. 4
I. Appassionato
II. Adagio
III. Scherzo: Vivace
IV. Adagio mesto—Allegro furioso

Jüri Reinvere (b. 1971)
Concerto for Violin, Harp, and Orchestra

Leila Josefowicz, violin
Trina Struble, harp
World Premiere; Commissioned by The Cleveland Orchestra

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)
A Hero's Song, Op. 111

Franz Welser-Möst leads The Cleveland Orchestra in a program inspired by the festival theme of *Courage*, opening with an ode to Civil Rights hero Martin Luther King, Jr. and concluding with the unnamed hero of Dvořák's symphonic poem.

Trina Struble's performance is generously supported by The Jean, Harry, and Brenda Fuchs Family Foundation.

PHOTO BY ROGER MASTROIANNI



PHOTO BY DON RICE, COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

by Douglas W. Shadle

CHOOSING COURAGE

Courageous figures and artistic choices unite in this era-spanning program

COURAGE IS A CHOICE. When we're riddled with doubt or fear about what lies ahead, and we choose to step forward anyway—that's courage. When we choose to accept whatever consequences await us—that's courage. When we choose to take a stand for what we believe in—that's courage. Courage in music arises from the vulnerability of self-expression. The famous line, "I know why the caged bird sings," from African American poet **Paul Laurence Dunbar's** "Sympathy" says it all: Even in physical confinement, a courageous voice refuses to be contained. In their own way, each piece on this program captures the composer's courage to lay bare an interior world of hope and resolve, with music carrying the capacity to inspire.

In their own way, each piece on this program captures the composer's courage to lay bare an interior world of hope and resolve, with music carrying the capacity to inspire.

Adolphus Hailstork's *Epitaph (In Memoriam: Martin Luther King, Jr.)*—a somber reflection on the death of the Civil Rights icon—presents us with a clear profile in courage. It opens with the gathering of graveside mourners who join in singing a melody that emerges from a viscous instrumental texture and eventually receives a full, humble statement in the flutes. Following a brief brass chorale, a light gesture in the harp prompts the group to shift focus to **Martin Luther King, Jr.'s** dream of a new world. Having seen a way forward, the mourners develop a fresh, steely resolve to fight for freedom on the path Dr. King paved for them.

Grażyna Bacewicz stands alongside contemporaries like England's **Rebecca Clarke** and America's **Margaret Bonds** as a prolific composer who has been unjustly overshadowed in a historically male-dominated industry. As scholarly recovery of their works and growing public interest have shown, the mere pursuit of the profes-

In the score to his *Epitaph*, composer **Adolphus Hailstork** wrote that the piece is a "study in understatement and control," reflecting the quiet grace, dignity, and resolve of its honoree, **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, and those who have taken up his mission.



Polish composer **Grażyna Bacewicz** fostered a remarkably productive career, writing four numbered symphonies, several concertos (including seven for violin), string quartets, piano works, vocal music, film scores, and much more.

sion was an act of courage against long-held stereotypes about women's capacity to excel in composition. Of course, the stereotypes have absolutely no basis in reality, as works like Bacewicz's Fourth Symphony amply demonstrate.

The symphony reflects the challenges and contradictions Bacewicz faced as a Polish artist working under Soviet-influenced cultural policy after World War II. Restrictions on creative expression were counterbalanced by high levels of institutional support and public visibility. Surviving letters show that, while she was afraid of the authoritarian regime, she clearly enjoyed composition and was fortunate that her evolving style aligned with top-down mandates. Through it all, she had the courage to be herself. Cast in a standard four-movement form, the symphony displays Bacewicz's fondness for using tiny musical fragments as the foundation for further musical elaboration. The vigorous first and fourth movements, for example, build dramatic arcs from a two-note motive. The work is also suffused with Bacewicz's tendency to use all the instruments at once and compose melodies with traces of folkloric rhythms and scales.

In a more literal sense, **Jüri Reinvere's** choice to write a new double concerto for violin and harp was courageous. There are practically no models in the repertoire

PHOTO BY ANDRZEJ ZBORSKI / ZNPY/COURTESY OF BACEWICZ.POL.MIC.PL

beyond **Louis Spohr's** G-major concertante dating from 1808, leaving Reinvere a wide-open but lonely terrain to explore. Scored for large instrumental forces, including glass and metal chimes, crotales, and other unusual percussion, the piece unfolds over 20 unbroken minutes, rather than the standard three-movement concerto form.

The work's core musical narrative follows the relationship between the two soloists. The violin is designed for long, flowing melodies, whereas notes on the harp fade immediately. The concerto opens with this sharp distinction on full display, but soon each instrument begins to take on more of the other's character as the orchestra tries to blend and obscure the soloists' identities, presenting gestures that push them in one dramatic direction or another. An astounding climax finds the entire orchestra in the duel between sustained tones and harp-like scales before coming to a quiet close reminiscent of the opening.

Dvořák ... described the main character as a “Slavic bard” whose heroism arises from the courage to sing, like Dunbar's caged bird, through the struggles of self-discovery, self-doubt, and self-mastery.



PHOTO BY JAN MULLAC/COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The four sections of **Antonín Dvořák's** (left) *A Hero's Song* return to several of the themes that opened the concert in Hailstork's *Epitaph*: optimism, disappointment and setback (here presented as a funeral march), hope and struggle (inflected by elements of the composer's Czech folklore), and the triumph of the human spirit. Seeking a text to explain the work for listeners, Dvořák contacted the poet **Julius Zeyer**, whose overwrought description fit the music but detracted from the interiority the composer hoped to convey. Dvořák eventually described the main character as a “Slavic bard” whose heroism arises from the courage to sing, like Dunbar's caged bird, through the struggles of self-discovery, self-doubt, and self-mastery.

While listening to each work on this program, we might think about how it relates to Leonore in disguise, working quietly and patiently to free her husband from unjust imprisonment. Or we can see Dunbar's caged bird, who flaps

his wings until they draw blood before singing to heaven to transcend his captivity. Courage like theirs is essential in unexpected moments. And when those moments arise, one critical question greets us: What choice will you make? 🎵

Douglas W. Shadle is an associate professor of musicology at Vanderbilt University and the author of two highly regarded books: Orchestrating the Nation and Antonín Dvořák's New World Symphony. A leading authority on composer Florence B. Price, he sits on the board of the International Florence Price Festival.



MAY 23

SATURDAY | 4 PM

Mandel Concert Hall at Severance Music Center

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA CHILDREN'S CHORUSES

SPRING CONCERT

JOIN THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA CHILDREN'S CHORUSES for a musical celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States. This program will highlight the power of American music to shape and tell our story. From the hopeful promise of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," to the joyful confidence of "Feeling Good," these songs reflect the resilience, creativity, and courage to dream that define the American spirit.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Preparatory Chorus

Jacob Young, *director*

The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Preparatory Chorus was formed in 2005 by Dr. Ann Usher to establish a foundation of vocal technique, musical literacy, and musicianship through quality children's choral literature. Members of the Preparatory Chorus strengthen their vocal production and choral performance skills and learn sight-reading using movable "do" solfège and Kodály/Curwen hand signs. Students also develop leadership skills that will help them strengthen the other choirs in which they participate. The Preparatory Chorus typically gives two performances each season, once in the winter and once in the spring.

The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Chorus

Jennifer Rozsa, *director*

The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Chorus was formed in the spring of 1967 under the direction of Jane Barker Casey to provide a high-quality choral group for the many orchestral works written for children's voices, and to offer choral training to school children in the Cleveland area. Their first performance was Britten's *Spring Symphony* with Robert Shaw conducting. Today, the Children's Chorus performs annually with The Cleveland Orchestra and The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus at Severance Music Center. Recent seasons have also seen performances with the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, Akron Symphony Orchestra, and The Cleveland Orchestra Youth Chorus.

The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Choruses appeared as part of *United in Song!* in 2025. Now, they take center stage in their own program that celebrates the 250th anniversary of the United States.

Support for The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Choruses is provided by the Wesley Family Foundation, The Edward and Ruth Wilkof Foundation, and Friends of The Cleveland Orchestra.



Scan the QR code for more program information and for the full singer roster.

PHOTO BY ROGER MASTROIANNI

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AUGUST 13 | 7 PM

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AUGUST 27 | 7 PM



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BIOGRAPHIES



FRANZ WELSER-MÖST

MUSIC DIRECTOR

KELVIN SMITH FAMILY CHAIR

NOW IN HIS 24TH SEASON, Franz Welser-Möst continues to shape an unmistakable sound culture as Music Director of The Cleveland Orchestra. Under his leadership, the Orchestra has earned repeated international acclaim for its musical excellence, reaffirmed its strong commitment to new music, and brought annual opera presentations back to the stage of Severance Music Center. In recent years, the Orchestra also launched its own streaming platform, **Adella.live**, and a recording label. Today, it boasts one of the youngest audiences in the United States.

In addition to residencies in the US and Europe, Welser-Möst and the Orchestra perform regularly at the world's leading international festivals. Welser-Möst will remain Music Director until 2027, making him the longest-serving music director of The Cleveland Orchestra.

Welser-Möst enjoys a particularly close and productive artistic partnership with the Vienna Philharmonic. He regularly conducts the orchestra in subscription concerts at the Vienna Musikverein, at the Salzburg Festival, and on tour in Europe, Japan, China, and the US, and has appeared three times on the podium for their celebrated New Year's Concert (2011, 2013, and 2023). At the Salzburg Festival, Welser-Möst has set new standards in interpretation as an opera conductor, with a special focus on the operas of **Richard Strauss**.

Among Welser-Möst's many honors and awards, he was named an Honorary Member of the Vienna Philharmonic in 2024, one of the orchestra's highest distinctions.

PHOTO BY SEBASTIAN FRÖHLICH

TERENCE BLANCHARD

FESTIVAL CURATOR



BOUNDARY-BREAKING AND GENRE-DEFYING, Terence Blanchard is recognized globally as a trumpet soloist and a prolific composer for film, television, opera, Broadway, orchestra, and for his own ensembles.

An eight-time Grammy winner, Blanchard became only the second African American composer after Quincy Jones to be nominated twice in the Best Original Score category at the 2021 Academy Awards. Alongside his work composing scores for over 20 Spike Lee projects, Blanchard's music has created strong backdrops to human stories like *The Woman King*, *One Night*

in Miami..., *Eve's Bayou*, the HBO drama series *Perry Mason*, and Apple TV's docu-series *They Call Me Magic* (for which Blanchard received an Emmy nomination).

Blanchard's second opera, *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, received its Metropolitan Opera premiere in September 2021, making it the first opera by an African American composer to appear at the Met in its 138-year history. The recording of those performances received the 2023 Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording, and the opera returned to the Met for a highly anticipated second run in April 2024. Blanchard's first opera, *Champion*, was performed at the Met in April 2023 to widespread critical acclaim. It received the Grammy for Best Opera Recording in 2024.

Blanchard's extensive recording catalog includes *Absence*, a tribute to Wayne Shorter created in collaboration with The E-Collective and Turtle Island Quartet. *Absence* received Grammy nominations in November 2021 for Best Instrumental Jazz Album and Best Improvised Jazz Solo for Blanchard. Blanchard's recorded work has placed him at the forefront of giving voice to human rights, civil rights, and racial injustice, including the 2016 album *Breathless*, an elegy for Eric Garner.

Born in New Orleans in 1962, Blanchard is a musical polymath who launched his solo career in the 1990s. Since then, he has released 20 solo albums, garnered 15 Grammy nominations, composed music for over 60 films, and received 10 major commissions. He was named a 2024 NEA Jazz Master as well as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and currently serves as the executive artistic director for SF Jazz, the largest non-profit jazz presenter in the world.

FEATURED PERFORMERS

ADRIENNE DANRICH

SOPRANO

The World(s) of Terence Blanchard



Adrienne Danrich's masterful interpretations of new works has received attention from both opera presenters and composers. The 2025–26 season sees Danrich return to

the Metropolitan Opera, sing performances of the *Fire Shut Up in My Bones Suite*, and appear with Cincinnati Opera in the world premiere of Kevin Day's *Lalovavi*.

In addition to singing, Danrich is a composer, lyricist, and sound designer. Her one-woman show, *This Little Light of Mine: The Stories of Marian Anderson and Leontyne Price*, received an Emmy Award for Outstanding Achievement for On-Camera Talent as a Performer and Narrator.

Danrich is a native of St. Louis and an alum of the Eastman School of Music and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

LEILA JOSEFOWICZ

VIOLIN

Hero's Song



Leila Josefowicz's passionate advocacy of contemporary violin music is reflected in her diverse programs and enthusiasm for performing new works. A favorite of living composers, Josefowicz

has premiered many concertos, including those by Matthias Pintscher, John Adams, and Esa-Pekka Salonen, all written for her.

This season, Josefowicz presents the world premiere of Jüri Reinvere's Concerto for Violin, Harp, and Orchestra with The Cleveland Orchestra and Music Director Franz Welser-Möst. Further engagements include The Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.

In recognition of her outstanding achievements and excellence in music, Josefowicz won the 2018 Avery Fisher Prize and was awarded a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship in 2008.

WILL LIVERMAN

BARITONE

The World(s) of Terence Blanchard



Grammy Award-winning baritone Will Liverman has been praised internationally for his versatility in both dramatic and comedic roles and for his dedication and vision as a composer,

artist, and advisor, helping to evolve and push the performing arts industry forward. He is co-creator of *The Factotum*, which premiered in a sold-out production at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2023. He was nominated for a 2026 Grammy Award for Best Classical Compendium.

A recipient of the Metropolitan Opera's 2022 Beverly Sills Artist Award, Liverman is an alumnus of the Ryan Opera Center at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and holds degrees from The Juilliard School and Wheaton College in Illinois.

JENNIFER ROZSA

DIRECTOR, THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA CHILDREN'S CHORUS

The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Chorus Spring Concert



Jennifer Rozsa is an active conductor and music educator. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in music education from Capital University's Conservatory of Music, received

Orff-Schulwerk certifications from the San Francisco International Orff Course, and pursued advanced studies at the Kodály Institute in Hungary. In 2024, she began her doctoral studies in music education at Kent State University.

Rozsa's professional background includes conducting positions with the San Francisco Boys Chorus and Peninsula Girls Chorus, alongside K-8 choir and general music teaching experience in Cleveland, San Francisco, and Chicago. An accomplished choral singer, she has performed with The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus and San Francisco Symphony Chorus and is currently a member of the Cleveland Chamber Choir.

ANDREW F. SCOTT

PROJECTIONIST

The World(s) of Terence Blanchard



Andrew F. Scott is a multidisciplinary artist and educator whose work explores memory, culture, technology, and public space. A key aspect of his practice is collabora-

tion—most notably with musicians such as Terence Blanchard, Fabian Almazan, and Brandee Younger—where he creates immersive visual experiences that enhance live performance and deepen audience engagement. He also collaborates with civic and community partners on public art projects that activate shared spaces and foster cultural connections.

Scott is an associate professor of art and technology at the University of Texas at Dallas. He holds a bachelor's from Long Island University, Southampton, and a master's from The Ohio State University, where he also studied at its Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design.

TRINA STRUBLE

PRINCIPAL HARP | ALICE CHALIFOUX CHAIR

Hero's Song



Trina Struble was appointed Principal Harp of The Cleveland Orchestra in October 2007. She joined the Orchestra as Assistant Principal Harp in 1992, after graduating from the Oberlin College

Conservatory of Music with a bachelor's degree in both harp and violin. She subsequently earned Master of Music degrees in harp and violin from the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Before joining the Orchestra, Struble toured with the American Soviet Youth Orchestra. She also performed with the National Repertory Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, The Florida Orchestra, and Houston Symphony. Struble joined the faculty of the Cleveland Institute of Music in September 2011 and taught previously at Baldwin Wallace University. She also teaches privately and presents masterclasses.

TURTLE ISLAND QUARTET

ENSEMBLE

The World(s) of Terence Blanchard



Since its founding in 1985, the Turtle Island Quartet has been a singular force in redefining the string quartet for the modern era. Winners of two Grammy Awards for Best Classical Crossover Album, the quartet fuses the classical chamber tradition with jazz, American roots, and global musical influences.

The Turtle Island Quartet has performed worldwide, collaborated with leading artists across genres, and helped reestablish improvisation as a central element of string quartet performance. The group's latest album, *Island Prayers*, features world premieres by David Balakrishnan, Terence Blanchard, Rhiannon Giddens, and Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate.

JACOB YOUNG

DIRECTOR, THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA CHILDREN'S PREPARATORY CHORUS

The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Chorus Spring Concert



Jacob Young is Director of The Cleveland Orchestra Children's Preparatory Chorus and Assistant Director of the Children's Chorus.

For over a decade, Young has taught music at a variety of schools and levels in Ohio and Kentucky, alongside teacher preparation courses at the University of Akron. Additionally, Young has directed choral ensembles from young children through adults and is active as a clinician and presenter, holding memberships with the Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA) and American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). Choirs under Young's direction have earned Superior and Distinguished ratings at OMEA and Kentucky Music Education Association (KMEA) adjudicated events.

Young holds a bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Ohio University.

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

FIDELIO CAST

TONY F. SIAS
NARRATOR



Tony F. Sias is the president & CEO of Karamu House, America's oldest Black producing theater. Under Sias, since 2015, Karamu raised over \$14 million for restoration and increased attendance. As a creative, Sias has produced, directed, and performed in over 150 productions. His work has been highlighted nationally in *The New York Times*, *American Theatre Magazine*, on NBC's *Today Show* with *Al Roker*, and more.

Sias's numerous recognitions include the Cleveland Arts Prize (Barbara S. Robinson Prize), *Cleveland Magazine's* Community Leader Award, and the Community Leadership Award from the NAACP's Cleveland Branch. In addition, he serves on the boards of Assembly for the Arts, Cleveland School of the Arts, and the Lake View Cemetery Association.

OWEN MCCAUSLAND
TENOR

Jaquino



Canadian tenor **Owen McCausland** is increasingly in demand for both operatic and symphonic engagements worldwide. Recent highlights include **Berg's** *Wozzeck* with the Canadian

Opera Company, **Mozart's** Requiem with the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, and *Così fan tutte* and *The Magic Flute* with Vancouver Opera. He returns to The Cleveland Orchestra after appearances in **Verdi's** *Otello* and **Puccini's** *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Additional prior engagements include **Haydn's** *The Creation* with the Victoria Symphony, **Weill's** *The Seven Deadly Sins* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and the world premiere of **Matthew Ricketts's** opera *Chaakapesh: The Trickster's Quest* with the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal under the baton of **Kent Nagano**.

ASHLEY EMERSON
SOPRANO

Marzelline



Soprano **Ashley Emerson** is sought after for her effervescent singing and storytelling in repertoire ranging from **Vivaldi** to **Thomas Adès**. In the 2025–26 season,

Emerson returns to The Cleveland Orchestra for **Beethoven's** *Fidelio* and makes her debut with Anchorage Opera in *The Medium* and *Gianni Schicchi*.

Emerson is a veteran of the Metropolitan Opera, where she holds over 220 performance credits. She has also appeared in major roles with Boston Lyric Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Seattle Opera, and Opera National de Bordeaux. In concert, Emerson has appeared with the Tanglewood Festival Orchestra, Brooklyn Art Song Society, Bangor Symphony Orchestra, and ChoralArt of Maine, among others.

Emerson received training at the University of Southern Maine, the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, and the Opera Theatre of St. Louis's Gardine Young Artist Program.

RAYMOND ACETO
BASS

Rocco



American bass **Raymond Aceto** has established a commanding presence among the world's leading opera companies and symphony orchestras, earning both critical and

popular acclaim. Highlights of his 2025–26 season include *Dead Man Walking* at San Francisco Opera and *Dialogues of the Carmelites* at The Dallas Opera. Other recent appearances include roles at the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, and Opéra de Montréal.

A graduate of the Metropolitan Opera's Young Artist Development Program, the Ohio-born bass has appeared frequently with the company since his debut during the 1992–93 season. Among his awards are Richard Tucker Foundation Career Grants and a Sullivan Foundation Award.

SARA JAKUBIAK
SOPRANO

Leonore



Sara Jakubiak is renowned for her ability to bring complex characters to life, blending musical understanding with dramatic instincts. Her 2025–26 season is a season of firsts.

She makes her La Scala debut in the opening-night production of **Shostakovich's** *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, sings her first Isolde with the London Symphony Orchestra, and opens the Norwegian National Opera season with her role debut as Rusalka.

Recent orchestral highlights include **Janáček's** *Glagolitic Mass* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, **Britten's** *War Requiem* with the Dresden Philharmoniker, and **Schoenberg's** *Erwartung* with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Jakubiak also has a significant discography, including the 2020 Opus Klassik Award-winning production of **Korngold's** *Das Wunder der Heliane* with Deutsche Oper Berlin.

Jakubiak hails from Bay City, Michigan and received her university training at Yale and the Cleveland Institute of Music.

TOMASZ KONIECZNY
BASS-BARITONE

Don Pizarro



Polish bass-baritone **Tomasz Konieczny** regularly appears at the world's most important opera houses including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Teatro Real Madrid, and at the

Bayreuth and Salzburg festivals.

Highlights of his 2025–26 season include *Arabella* and *Tristan und Isolde* at the Metropolitan, *Salome* at the Vienna State Opera, and *Fidelio* at the Bavarian State Opera and with The Cleveland Orchestra.

Konieczny is also a successful concert performer, with a repertoire ranging from **J.S. Bach** to **Penderecki**. His discography includes recordings of the *Ring* cycle and **Schubert's** *Winterreise*, alongside his recent lied CD, *From Secession to Distortion*.

Konieczny was named Austrian Kammer-sänger in 2019 and was awarded the Gold Medal for Cultural Merit "Gloria Artis" in 2022.

RONNIE DAILEY
BARITONE

First Prisoner



Ronnie Dailey is currently in his fourth season with The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus. He has performed as a soloist in **Vaughn Williams's** *Dona nobis pacem* with the Lorain County

Community College Civic Chorale, a soloist in **Mozart's** Requiem and *Regina coeli*, and is a frequent soloist and cantor at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland and Westminster Presbyterian Church in Akron. In addition, Dailey has served as both vocalist and composer for local ensembles, most recently composing for Singers Company. Dailey studied music education at The University of Akron.

FRANCISCO PRADO
BARITONE

Second Prisoner



Francisco Prado is in his ninth season with The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus. Previous roles with the Chorus include Peter in **J.S. Bach's** *St. John Passion*, the Steersman in **Wagner's**

Tristan und Isolde, and the wigmaker in **Richard Strauss's** *Ariadne auf Naxos*. He is also a member of Apollo's Singers, the chorus for Cleveland's Grammy Award-winning period-instrument orchestra, Apollo's Fire. Prado is a graduate of The Cleveland Institute of Music and currently serves as the director of music at St. Rocco Catholic Church.

DAVID BUTT PHILIP
TENOR

Florestan



David Butt Philip is one of Britain's most exciting tenors and quickly becoming a firm favorite on major international stages. A graduate of the Jette Parker Young Artist Program at the Royal

Opera House, he has earned major critical and public acclaim at the Wiener Staatsoper, Edinburgh International Festival, Bayerische Staatsoper, and Deutsche Oper Berlin, among others.

Highlights of the 2025–26 season include his company and role debut as Siegmund in *Die Walküre* at Teatro alla Scala, a return to the Wiener Staatsoper as Florestan in *Fidelio*, Apollo in *Daphne* with Seattle Opera, *The Flying Dutchman* and *Guerlieders* at the Tokyo Spring Festival, and Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with the Glyndebourne Festival.

DASHON BURTON
BASS-BARITONE

Don Fernando



Bass-baritone **Dashon Burton**'s 2025–26 season highlights include **Beethoven's** Ninth Symphony and *Fidelio* with The Cleveland Orchestra. He also sings **Mahler's** *Songs of a Wayfarer*

and **Mozart's** Requiem with the New Jersey Symphony, appears with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem, and presents a recital at The Phillips Collection.

Burton received the Grammy Award for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album in 2021 for **Ethyl Smyth's** *The Prison* with The Experiential Orchestra and has twice won with the vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth, of which he is a founding member. His discography also includes **Paul Moravec's** *Sanctuary Road* and **Caroline Shaw's** *The Listeners*.

Burton holds degrees from Oberlin College and Conservatory and Yale University. He is assistant professor of voice at Vanderbilt University.

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA

NOW FIRMLY IN ITS SECOND CENTURY, The Cleveland Orchestra, under the leadership of **Franz Welser-Möst** since 2002, is one of the most sought-after performing ensembles in the world. Year after year, the ensemble exemplifies extraordinary artistic excellence, creative programming, and community engagement. In recent years, *The New York Times* has called Cleveland “the best in America” for its virtuosity, elegance of sound, variety of color, and chamber-like musical cohesion.

Founded by **Adella Prentiss Hughes**, the Orchestra performed its inaugural concert in December 1918. By the middle of the century, decades of growth and sustained support had turned the ensemble into one of the most admired around the world.

The past decade has seen an increasing number of young people attending concerts, bringing fresh attention to The Cleveland Orchestra’s legendary sound and committed programming. More recently, the Orchestra launched

several bold digital projects, including the streaming platform **Adella.live** and its own recording label. Together, they have captured the Orchestra’s unique artistry and the musical achievements of the Welser-Möst and Cleveland Orchestra partnership.

The 2025–26 season marks Franz Welser-Möst’s 24th year as Music Director, a period in which The Cleveland Orchestra has earned unprecedented acclaim around the world, including a series of residencies at the Musikverein in Vienna, the first of its kind by an American orchestra, and a number of celebrated opera presentations.

Since 1918, seven music directors—**Nikolai Sokoloff**, **Artur Rodziński**, **Erich Leinsdorf**, **George Szell**, **Lorin Maazel**, **Christoph von Dohnányi**, and **Franz Welser-Möst**—have guided and shaped the ensemble’s growth and sound. Through concerts at home and on tour, broadcasts, and a catalog of acclaimed recordings, The Cleveland Orchestra is heard today by a growing group of fans around the world.



FRANZ WELSER-MÖST MUSIC DIRECTOR

Kelvin Smith Family Chair

FIRST VIOLINS

Joel Link
CONCERTMASTER
Blossom-Lee Chair

Elizabeth Fayette
FIRST ASSOCIATE
CONCERTMASTER
*Virginia M. Lindseth, PhD,
Chair*

Jung-Min Amy Lee
ASSOCIATE
CONCERTMASTER
*Gretchen D. and Ward
Smith Chair*

Zhan Shu
ASSISTANT
CONCERTMASTER
*Clara G. and George P.
Bickford Chair*

Stephen Tavani
ASSISTANT
CONCERTMASTER
*Dr. Ronald H. Krasney
Chair*

Wei-Fang Gu
*Drs. Paul M. and Renate H.
Duchesneau Chair*

Kim Gomez
*Elizabeth and Leslie
Kondorossy Chair*

CHUL-IN PARK

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Simon Chair*

Miho Hashizume
*Theodore Rautenberg
Chair*

Jeanne Preucil Rose
*Larry J.B. and Barbara S.
Robinson Chair*

Alicia Koelz
*Oswald and Phyllis Lerner
Gilroy Chair*

Yu Yuan
*Patty and John Collinson
Chair*

Isabel Trautwein
*Trevor and Jennie Jones
Chair*

Katherine Bormann

Analise Handke
Gladys B. Goetz Chair

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*Paul and Lucille Jones
Chair*

Genevieve Smelser

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*Alfred M. and Clara T.
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Eli Matthews¹

*Patricia M. Kozerefski and
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Jason Yu²
*James and Donna Reid
Chair*

Sonja Braaten Molloy

Carolyn Gadiel Warner

Elayna Duitman

Ioana Missits

Jeffrey Zehngut¹^

Kathleen Collins

Beth Woodside

Emma Shook
*Dr. Jeanette Grasselli
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Yun-Ting Lee
Deborah L. Neale Chair

Jiah Chung Chapdelaine

Liyuan Xie

Gawon Kim

Dustin Wilkes-Kim

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*Chaillé H. and Richard B.
Tullis Chair*

Gareth Zehngut¹^
*Charles M. and Janet G.
Kimball Chair*

Stanley Konopka²

Mark Jackobs
Jean Wall Bennett Chair

Lisa Boyko

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Sneed Chair*

Richard Waugh

Lembi Veskimets
The Morgan Sisters Chair

Eliesha Nelson¹
*Anthony and Diane
Wynshaw-Boris Chair*

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Zakany**

William Bender
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Louis D. Beaumont Chair

Richard Weiss¹
*The GAR Foundation
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Scott Dixon

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Trina Struble*
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*Elizabeth M. and William C.
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Jessica Sindell²^
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Robert Walters

ENGLISH HORN

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*Samuel C. and Bernette K.
Jaffe Chair*

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Afendi Yusuf*
Robert Marcellus Chair

Robert Woolfrey
*Victoire G. and Alfred M.
Rankin, Jr. Chair*

Daniel McKelway²
*Robert R. and Vilma L.
Kohn Chair*

Amy Zoloto

E-FLAT CLARINET

Daniel McKelway
*Stanley L. and Eloise M.
Morgan Chair*

BASS CLARINET

Amy Zoloto
*Myrna and James Spira
Chair*

BASSOONS

John Clouser*
*Louise Harkness Ingalls
Chair*

Gareth Thomas

Catherine Van Handel²
Sandra L. Haslinger Chair

Jonathan Sherwin

CONTRABASSOON

Jonathan Sherwin

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Lyle Steelman²^
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Shachar Israel²

BASS TROMBONE

Luke Sieve

**EUPHONIUM &
BASS TRUMPET**

Richard Stout

TUBA

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*Nathalie C. Spence and
Nathalie S. Boswell Chair*

TIMPANI

Zubin Hathi*
*Otto G. and Corinne T. Voss
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*Margaret Allen Ireland
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Thomas Sherwood

Tanner Tanyeri

Peter Nichols

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Taichi Fukumura
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
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James Feddeck
PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR &
MUSICAL ADVISOR OF THE
CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA YOUTH
ORCHESTRA
*Sidney and Doris Dworkin
Chair*

Lisa Wong
DIRECTOR OF CHORUSES
*Frances P. and Chester C.
Bolton Chair*

* Principal
§ Associate Principal
¹ First Assistant Principal
² Assistant Principal
^ Alum of The Cleveland
Orchestra Youth Orchestra
† In Memoriam

*This roster lists full-time members
of The Cleveland Orchestra. The
number and seating of musicians
on stage varies depending on the
piece being performed. Seating
within the string sections rotates
on a periodic basis.*

PHOTO BY YEVHEN GULENKO

With sincere gratitude to the musicians of The Cleveland Orchestra for their in-kind contributions supporting community programs and securing funding opportunities.

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA CHORUS

NOW IN ITS 74TH SEASON, The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus is celebrated for its versatility and refined musicianship, appearing regularly with The Cleveland Orchestra at Severance and Blossom music centers. As one of the few all-volunteer, professionally trained choruses affiliated with a major American orchestra, it received the 2019–20 Distinguished Service Award, recognizing extraordinary service to the Orchestra.

LISA WONG DIRECTOR OF CHORUSES

Frances P. and Chester C. Bolton Chair



Lisa Wong, a distinguished choral conductor and educator, serves as Director of Choruses for The Cleveland Orchestra, where she has prepared The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus and Blossom Festival Chorus

for acclaimed performances under conductors Franz Welser-Möst, Klaus Mäkelä, John Adams, Jane Glover, Susanna Mälkki, and Eric Whitacre, among others.

Wong served for 16 years as the Olive Williams Kettering Professor of Music at The College of Wooster. As director of the award-winning Wooster Chorus, she elevated the ensemble to national prominence through annual tours, performances at state and regional conferences, and the premieres of 15 new works. Her expertise in music education is informed by 32 years of classroom experience and extensive work as a clinician, adjudicator, and guest conductor.

A sought-after leader in the field, Wong has served as a grant panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and Chorus America and presented at state and national conferences on varied topics. She is President-Elect of the Ohio Choral Directors Association and served as the Repertoire and Resource Chair for World Music and Cultures and on the Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Ohio Music Education Association.

With degrees from West Chester University and the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, Wong's academic foundation is complemented by a rich career dedicated to inspiring and nurturing musicians of all ages.

Visit cochorus.com for more information on the Chorus and auditions.

SOPRANOS

Amy Foster Babinski
Claudia Barriga
Jesse Bobbitt
Emily Carlson
Signe Carlson
Ruby Chen
Maryssa Duncan
Emily Engle
Lisa Fedorovich
Emily Flood
Jennifer Gilles
Julia Halamek
Rebecca S. Hall
Sarah Henley
Lisa Hrusovsky
Rachel Imhoff
Shannon R. Jakubczak
Kiersten Johnson
Sarah Jones-Gould
Katie Kitchen
Hope Klassen-Kay
Brianna Knapp*
EvaCecilia Koh
Kate Macy
Gracie Mino
Sarah Moldover
Julie Myers-Pruchenski
Jennifer Heinert O'Leary
Katie Paskey
Victoria Peacock
Elizabeth Stockton
Perkins
Sarah Peterson
Stephanie Popik
Grace Prentice
Jylian Purtee
Lisa M. Ramsey
Mandi Rice
Emma Russell
Ellie Kleber Smith
Megan Tettau
Meagan Ulery
Cassie Utt
Sharilee Walker

ALTOS

Emily Austin
Debbie Bates
Riley Beistel
Kristina Bodnar
Carla Cashman
Barbara J. Clugh

Amber Dimoff
Shannon Dunning*
Brooke Emmel
Colleen Endrizzi
Shawna Hill
Karen S. Hunt
Sarah Hutchins
Maggie Keverline
Kayla Kim
Rebecca King
Kristi Krueger-O'Grady
Elise Leitzel
Victoria Marquard-Schultz
Danielle S. McDonald
Karla McMullen
Dawn Ostrowski
Abigail Patton
Ellie Petro
Andrea Pintabona
Toni Arnold Shreve
Ina Stanek-Michaelis
Melanie Tabak
Rachel Thibo
Kristen Tobey
Laure Wasserbauer
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Maggie Fairman
Williams
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Rong Chen
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* Shari Bierman Singer Fellow

Daniel J. Singer

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Daniel Overly

COLLABORATIVE PIANIST

Jill Harbaugh

DIRECTOR OF CHORAL OPERATIONS

Victoria Peacock

CHORUS COORDINATOR

Sarah Hutchins

CHAIR, OPERATING COMMITTEE

We thank the Shari Bierman Singer Family and Charles M. Hoppel and Marianne Karwowski Hoppel for their generous and continued support of The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus.

PHOTO BY ROGER MASTROIANNI

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Stagehand
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Stagehand
Nino Spadaro
Stagehand

Don Verba
Stagehand
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—Franz Welser-Möst, Music Director

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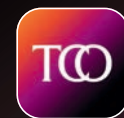
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