

# MOZART REQUIEM & COPLAND

*"Do Not Go Gentle"*

**FEBRUARY 10, 2024 • 7:30 PM**

RACHEL M. SCHLESINGER CONCERT HALL AND ARTS CENTER

**FEBRUARY 11, 2024 • 3:00 PM**

GEORGE WASHINGTON MASONIC MEMORIAL

**James Ross, conductor**

## PROGRAM

AARON  
COPLAND

***Appalachian Spring***

MILAD YOUSUFI

***Aurora for Tabla and Orchestra\****

\*WORLD PREMIERE - Commissioned by  
Nancy Davenport for the *ASO at 80 Project*

**Hamid Habib Zada, tabla**

ANNA CLYNE

***Sound and Fury (2017)***

**Milad Yousufi, narrator**

- INTERMISSION -

W.A.  
MOZART

**Requiem in D minor, K. 626**

I. Introitus

V. Sanctus

II. Kyrie

VI. Benedictus

III. Sequentia

VII. Agnus Dei

IV. Offertorium

VIII. Communio

**Mandy Brown, soprano**

**Cara Schaefer, alto**

**Edward Washington II, tenor**

**Joshua Coleman, bass**

**CANTATE**

**Victoria Gau, music director**

Performance runtime will be approximately 120 minutes which includes a 20 minute intermission

*These concerts are underwritten by the  
Brock Family in memory of Harry L. Brock.*

## **Aurora**

Milad Yousufi (b. 1995)

Program notes from the composer

*Program Notes by James Reel  
unless where otherwise noted*



The opening starts with tabla and a drone-like pattern played by strings which is inspired by the Sufi's Dhikir/chant *Remembrance of God* that carries throughout the piece. The opening starts with a nostalgic melody, and the harmonic changes to major in the piece portray hope reflected by the light in the painting "Aurora." The piece ends in a sense of sorrow and grief mixed with hope which portrays the future of my homeland and a thousand wonderful memories that are gone forever. This piece is also inspired by one of my poems:

### ***Poem For My Mother:***

O westerly winds, I beg you do me a favor,

Go to my village, pass my greetings to the graves of my beloved ones,

A little farther is an old house, my heart, my mother lives there,

I beg you to touch her feet, tell her I will come home one day, Tell her I will  
come home one day...

O westerly winds, I beg you do me a favor,

Go to my village, pass my greetings to the graves of my beloved ones,

My heart is burning like a flame, and broken into pieces far from my home,

I will go home, where my beloved cared for me

I will go home one day, I will go home....

## **Appalachian Spring Suite**

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Aaron Copland spent the 1920s and early '30s delighting in his reputation as a bad boy of American music. Determined to shake off the German influences that had lodged earlier American composers in the Schumann-Brahms mode, Copland strove to bring something more distinctive to his music. Initially this meant using dissonance and difficult rhythms to mimic brash big-city life, which soon led to including elements of jazz and blues. But in the mid '30s, as his political ideals moved leftward and he began writing music for student

performers and for radio broadcast and film, he developed a more populist style, often borrowing the contours of folk music but supporting them with distinctive modern harmonies.

This reached its apogee in a series of dance scores he produced on American themes: *Billy the Kid* (1938), *Rodeo* (1942) and his masterpiece in this genre, *Appalachian Spring* (1944). This last work was written for choreographer Martha Graham; the story is a homespun sequence of events in a 19th-century Pennsylvania settlement. A young woman and man are about to be married; the scenario recounts how the entire community comes together to celebrate the wedding, to face the crisis of the Civil War, and ultimately to resume praying and working alongside each other. A highlight is a set of variations on the cheerful Shaker tune “Simple Gifts.”

Copland expanded the instrumentation (originally 13 instruments because of the dance theater’s cramped pit) for full orchestra, and a suite from the score—wistful and nostalgic, shorn of its moments of menace and crisis—immediately made the rounds of the leading American orchestras. *Appalachian Spring* received the 1945 Pulitzer Prize for Music and has remained a concert mainstay ever since.

## ***Sound and Fury* (2017)**

Anna Clyne (b. 1980)



London-born, New York-based Anna Clyne, according to 2022 statistics, is the eighth most performed contemporary composer in the world. She has achieved this partly through her frequent collaborations with artists in many other disciplines, her residencies with major orchestras such as the Chicago Symphony, and the sheer audience appeal of her music.

*Sound and Fury* was premiered in a 2019 concert that also included Haydn’s Symphony No. 60, “Il Distratto.” Clyne studied Haydn’s symphony closely and chose elements from each of its six movements

to develop in her own manner. Like Haydn's symphony, *Sound and Fury* falls into six sections (one leading directly into the next); the fifth uses one of Haydn's harmonic progressions as a bed to support the ideas of the final soliloquy in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, in which the title character likens life to "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Clyne states, "My intention with *Sound and Fury* is to take the listener on a journey that is both invigorating—with ferocious string gestures that are flung around the orchestra with skittish outbursts—and serene and reflective—with haunting melodies that emerge and recede."

## **Requiem in D minor, K. 626**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Count Franz von Walsegg was a bit of a scoundrel, commissioning works by accomplished composers and passing them off as his own. He wanted to commemorate the first anniversary of the death of his young wife with a Requiem Mass, and the task fell to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who in September of 1791 had himself fallen ill with some malady not clearly understood—perhaps rheumatic fever, perhaps mercury poisoning, perhaps any number of other things. Mozart was able to continue working for a while, even though he became bedridden in late November. But by his death on December 5, he had not finished what was becoming a remarkably dark and dramatic Requiem. At the insistence of his widow, Constanze, the completion fell to colleague Franz Xaver Süssmayr, who later claimed that the Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei movements were entirely his own work.

Constanze herself circulated some fictions surrounding the Requiem's composition, including the tale that Mozart received the commission from a mysterious anonymous messenger. (It was actually Mozart who was supposed to vow anonymity.) She did foil Walsegg's intention to claim credit for the Requiem by having it performed under Mozart's own name in a benefit concert after his death. The Süssmayr edition remained standard for more than a century, but there have been many alternative partial and full completions, especially since the 1970s.

It is in fact within these then-contemporary “expectations” that the Now in its 38th concert season, **Cantate** attracts many of the Washington, D.C. area’s finest choral musicians, selected annually by audition. The flagship Chamber Singers performs a broad range of great Western choral literature of the past five centuries and is recognized especially for its skilled interpretation of Baroque style, championing of neglected masterpieces, and adventurous programming of 20th- and 21st-century music, including the commissioning and premiering of choral works by composers well recognized across the United States. In 2021, the Concert Choir formed to increase Cantate’s capacity to present larger works. Cantate fosters and promotes the work of emerging talent through its biennial Young Composers’ Competition and annual Young Artists of Color program and partners with Montgomery College to present the annual Summer Choral Institute.

Founded in 1984 by Phyllis Isaacson and performing under the artistic direction of Gisèle Becker from 1994 to 2019, Cantate is now led by its third Music Director, Victoria Gau, well known in the Washington metropolitan area as a choral, orchestral, and operatic conductor, vocal coach, and music educator.



Photo by Stan Engebretson

**Victoria Gau** is Artistic Director and Conductor of the Capital City Symphony (DC) and Cantate Chamber Singers and Concert Choir, and the former Associate Conductor of National Philharmonic. Guest conducting includes the Alexandria (VA) and Akron (OH) Symphonies, the Friday Morning Music Club Orchestra, the Kennedy Center *Messiah* Sing-Along and, in spring 2024, the Columbia Orchestra. She has

served as Artistic Director of the Takoma Ensemble and Music Director of the Richmond Philharmonic Orchestra (VA). She has trained concert and opera choruses throughout the DMV and is also in demand as a youth orchestra festival conductor and clinician.



Proclaimed “consistently impressive” and “completely winning,” **Mandy Brown** is a soprano who is sure to charm. Her performances have brought her praise for her rich warm voice and refreshing honesty in her dramatic interpretations. She is passionate about operatic and concert work, as well as an avid recitalist and a performer of new works.

Ms. Brown is a sought-out soloist for concert work. She has performed with ensembles such as the National Symphony Orchestra’s Summer Music Institute, the Grammy-nominated Inscape Chamber Orchestra, Gourmet Symphony, the Washington Chamber Orchestra, the National Orchestral Institute & Festival, the New Dominion Chorale, Choral Arts Society of Washington, Chesapeake Chorale, Ensemble da Camera of Washington, and the McLean Youth Symphony Orchestra. Her concert work highlights include Mahler’s Symphony No.4, Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Hindemith’s *Die Junge Magd*, Verdi’s Requiem, Mozart’s Requiem, Mozart’s *Krönungsmesse*, Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Golijov’s *Tenebrae*, Stravinsky’s *Three Japanese Lyrics*, Bach’s *Coffee Cantata*, and Rutter’s Magnificat.



A native of Washington D.C., mezzo-soprano **Cara Schaefer** is recognized for “the kind of singing which is consummate in its power to communicate authentically” (*DC Metro Theater Arts*). She is known for her “wonderfully funny” portrayal of Ruth in Young Victorian Theatre Company’s *The Pirates of Penzance*, her “sexy, transcendent” interpretation of title role in *Le Cabaret de Carmen* with IN Series, Angela (*Chateau Margaux*) and Elena (*El Barbero de Sevilla*) with Teatro Lirico of DC, Mother (*Hansel and Gretel*) with Opera NoVa, and numerous appearances in the ensemble of Maryland Lyric Opera. Cara premiered the roles of Wo-Man Ray in *Caesar and the Mannequin* and Mary Billings in *Voices of Zion* with Alliance for New Music-Theatre and has appeared as a soloist in Capitol Hill Seventh Day Adventist Church’s *Messiah*, as well as Cantate’s Mozart’s Requiem (2020) and Lord Nelson Mass (2022). Ms. Schaefer is a two-time winner of the Maryland/DC chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing Auditions and a Grand Prize winner of the Sue Goetz Ross Memorial Competition.



American Tenor **Edward Washington II** was born in England, raised in Saudi Arabia and currently lives in New York City. He's celebrated for his soaring vocal range and generous stage presence. Armed with a B.M. from Stetson University and a master's from Morgan State University, Edward has honed his craft through rigorous training and academic excellence in the United States and abroad. Throughout his career, Edward has performed with prestigious opera companies including Opera Omaha, Detroit Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Metropolitan Opera. He has also performed in major concert Halls and music festivals showcasing his versatility as a vocal artist. His repertoire includes opera, oratorio, cantatas, art songs, musical theater, spirituals, and hymns. Edward is a passionate advocate for music education and physical health. He actively engages in advancing American music with his fraternity: Phi Mu Alpha, Sinfonia. He has premiered the works of four American composers.



**Joshua Coleman** sings with compassion and love for the art. Voice teacher Dr. Carl DuPont of Peabody Conservatory has regarded his voice as “the comfort from warm sheets fresh out of the dryer on winter evenings.” Mr. Coleman was a competitor in the 2022-2023 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition where he took home an Encouragement Award. Recent winner of both the 2020 and 2022 State and Regional rounds of the National Association of Teachers of Singing competition, Mr. Coleman was also awarded Runner Up at the 2019 Marian Anderson Vocal Competition. Most recently, Mr. Coleman has collaborated with Peabody Opera, Peabody Next Ensemble, and Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Choir. Some works include Pollock's *Earth to Kenzie*, Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. He has performed in larger masterworks such as Fauré's Requiem conducted by Tom Hall with the Baltimore Choral Art Society and excerpts from Handel's *Messiah* conducted by the late Michael Britt of Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church. Mr. Coleman is currently pursuing his B.M. in Vocal Performance.