



Clarice Presents

BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:

MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY

Jonathon Heyward, music director | Julia Bullock, soprano

Friday, February 28, 2025 • 8PM

DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL

AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND

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BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:
MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY

Jonathon Heyward, *conductor*
Julia Bullock, *soprano*

Antonín Dvořák
 (1841–1904)

Carnival Overture, op. 92

Jessie Montgomery
 (b. 1981)

Five Freedom Songs
 My Lord, What a Morning
 Lay dis Body Down
 I Want to Go Home
 My Father, How Long?
 The Day of Judgement
 Julia Bullock, soprano

INTERMISSION

Gustav Mahler
 (1860–1911)

Symphony No. 4 in G Major
 Bedächtig, nicht eilen
 In gemächlicher Bewegung, ohne Hast
 Ruhevoll (Poco adagio)
 Sehr behaglich
 Julia Bullock, soprano

This BSO performance is made possible in part by the major support of Eddie C. and C. Sylvia Brown. The BSO's performances at The Clarice, and across the State, are also made possible through the major support of Robert E. Meyerhoff and Rheda Becker.

This performance is supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation and the University of Maryland's Arts for All initiative.



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Carnival Overture

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

Antonín Dvořák's composing career was slow to bloom, his first real breakthroughs coming when he was pushing 40, but by the time he turned 50 he had become celebrated as the leading composer of the Czech Lands. In 1891, the year he reached that landmark birthday, he became professor of composition and instrumentation at Prague Conservatory, received an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University and was approached about signing on as director of the National Conservatory in New York City, a position he would commence the following year.

His *Carnival Overture* also dates from 1891. It was the second in a triptych of concert overtures meant to portray impressions of what a human soul might experience, in both positive and negative aspects. *Nature, Life, and Love* was his original name for the set, which was to be published under the single opus number 91, and it is in that form that the works were presented at their joint premiere. But Dvořák soon decided to publish them with more distinct identities, and when they appeared in print it was as three separate pieces: *In Nature's Realm*, Op. 91; *Carnival*, Op. 92; and *Othello*, Op. 93.

He used the title *Life (Carnival)* in his sketches for the second of these pieces, and then gave it the provisional name *A Czech Carnival*, but later he opted for the more general *Carnival*. It does indeed depict the high-spirited tumult of a festive carnival setting—barkers and vendors, boisterous crowds and even, in a gentle passage, what Dvořák said was “a pair of straying lovers.” In a letter to the publisher Fritz Simrock, Dvořák's champion Johannes Brahms judged this work to be “merry” and remarked that “music directors will be thankful to you” for publishing the overtures, which they are. Dvořák conducted the joint premiere of the three pieces in Prague in April 1892, and six months later, on October 21, he included them in a program he led at Carnegie Hall. That event was billed as a celebration (nine days late) of the 400th anniversary of Columbus' “discovery” of America, but it was surely of more compelling interest for officially introducing New York's music community to its distinguished new member.

Five Freedom Songs

JESSIE MONTGOMERY

“Music is my connection to the world,” wrote Jessie Montgomery. “It guides me to understand my place in relation to others and challenges me to make clear the things I do not understand.” A graduate of New York University and The Juilliard School, she is pursuing a Ph.D. in composition at Princeton University. Since 1999, she has been affiliated with the Sphinx Organization, which provides opportunities for musicians from Black and other minority communities. She has appeared often as a violinist with the Silkroad Ensemble and Sphinx Virtuosi, and was a member of PUBLIQuartet and the Catalyst Quartet. She recently completed a three-year term as composer-in-residence of the Chicago Symphony.

She conceived *Five Freedom Songs* in collaboration with soprano Julia Bullock. Says Montgomery, “We wanted to create a song cycle that honors our shared African-American heritage and the tradition of the spiritual, while also experimenting with non-traditional stylistic contexts. Each of the five songs in this cycle are sourced from the historical anthology *Slave Songs of the United States* (originally published by A. Simpson & Co., New York, 1867), which categorizes each song based on origin and social context.

“For example, *My Lord, What a Morning* is actually the original lyric to the more popular spiritual *Stars Begin to Fall*, which also originated in the southeastern slave states. *I Want to Go Home* also originates from the Southeastern states, and my setting is inspired by the simple way it was transcribed as a simple seven-note melody without an indicated rhythm, which inspired me to write it in a hybrid Gregorian chant/spiritual style. *Lay dis Body Down*, a funeral song said to originate from the region surrounding South Carolina, is set in an improvised style, wherein each part of the ensemble chooses their own pacing of the line to create a swirling meditation. *My Father, How Long?* contains the refrain, ‘We will soon be free, we will soon be free, De Lord will call us home,’ the words of which reflect the dual meaning between spiritual salvation and freedom from oppression. It is a song that emerged from a jail in Georgetown, SC at the break of the Great Rebellion, and [is] accompanied by percussive sounds in the strings evoking the chain gang. *The Day of Judgment*, originates from the region surrounding Louisiana and is set as an uneasy celebration over the refrain of a traditional West African drumming pattern.”

Symphony No. 4

GUSTAV MAHLER

Gustav Mahler spent the summer of 1899 at Bad Aussee, a stunning locale in Austria's Salzkammergut, and during his last ten days there he began to map out his Fourth Symphony. He filed away his sketches in August and did not return to them until the following summer, this time at the villa he was building at Maiernigg, in southern Austria. He told his amanuensis Natalie Bauer-Lechner that, when he returned to the project, it had progressed to “a much more advanced stage than it had reached in Aussee without my having given it a moment's real attention in the meantime...that my second self should have worked on the symphony throughout the ten months of winter sleep (with all the frightful nightmares of the theatre business) is unbelievable!” By August 5, his symphony was effectively completed, though he continued to revise it for the rest of his life.

He had a head start with the symphony. In 1892, he had written a song—first with a piano accompaniment, a few weeks later in an orchestral version—titled *Das himmlische Leben*, (The Heavenly Life) on a text drawn from the purported folk anthology *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. He contemplated using his setting of *Das himmlische Leben*, to conclude his Third Symphony but he discarded the idea and made the song the point of departure for his Fourth, where it would stand as the finale. He then crafted the first three movements as preparation for that song-finale, which he once referred to as “the top of the Symphony's pyramidal structure.” It caps an extensive, incident-laden first movement, a wry scherzo (Mahler indicated that he intended it as a sort of “danse macabre”), and a supernal Adagio (which Mahler ranked as his finest slow movement, although his oeuvre offers several worthy competitors). The conductor Bruno Walter, Mahler's assistant when this piece was germinating, reported, “Referring to the profound quiet and clear beauty of the *andante* [sic], Mahler said to me that they were caused by his vision of one of the church sepulchers showing the recumbent stone image of the deceased with the arms crossed in eternal sleep.” Everything reaches its destination in Mahler's simple song. It is intoned, moreover, by a soprano who, Mahler insisted (in a note he inserted in the first edition of the score), should render her four verses “with childlike, cheerful expression; entirely without parody!”

Symphony No. 4, Final Movement

“Das himmlische Leben”

(aus Des Knaben Wunderhorn)

*Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden,
D’rum tun wir das Irdische meiden.
Kein weltlich’ Getümmel
Hört man nicht im Himmel!
Lebt alles in sanftester Ruh’!
Wir führen ein englisches Leben!
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben!
Wir tanzen und springen,
Wir hüpfen und singen!
Sankt Peter im Himmel sieht zu!*

*Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset,
Der Metzger Herodes d’rauf passet!
Wir führen ein geduldig’s,
Unschuldig’s, geduldig’s,
Ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!
Sankt Lucas den Ochs’n töt schlachten
Ohn’ einig’s Bedenken und Achten;
Der Wein kost’ kein Heller
Im himmlischen Keller;
Die Englein, die backen das Brot.*

*Gut’ Kräuter von allerhand Arten,
Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten!
Gut’ Spargel, Fisolten
Und was wir nur wollen,
Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!
Gut’ Äpfel, gut’ Birn’ und gut’ Trauben;
Die Gärtner, die alles erlauben!
Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen?
Auf offener Straßen
Sie laufen herbei!*

*Sollt’ ein Fasttag etwa kommen,
Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden
angeschwommen!
Dort läuft schon Sankt Peter
Mit Netz und mit Köder,
Zum himmlischen Weiher hinein.[N]
Sankt Martha die Köchin muß sein!*

*Kein’ Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
Die unsrer verglichen kann werden.
Elftausend Jungfrauen
Zu tanzen sich trauen!
Sankt Ursula selbst dazu lacht!
Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten
Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten!
Die englischen Stimmen
Ermuntern die Sinnen!
Daß alles für Freuden erwacht.*

“The Heavenly Life”

(from Des Knaben Wunderhorn,
translated by Deryck Cooke)

We revel in heavenly pleasures,
Leaving all that is earthly behind us.
No worldly turmoil
Is heard in heaven;
We all live in sweetest peace.
We lead an angelic existence,
And so we are perfectly happy.
We dance and leap,
And skip and sing;
Saint Peter in Heaven looks on.

Saint John has lost his lambkin,
And butcher Herod is lurking:
We lead a patient,
Guiltless, patient,
Darling lambkin to death.
Saint Luke is slaying the oxen,
Without the least hesitation;
Wine costs not a farthing
In the Heavenly tavern;
The angels bake the bread.

Fine sprouts of every description,
Are growing in Heaven’s garden.
Fine asparagus, fine herbs,
And all we desire,
Huge platefuls for us are prepared.
Fine apples, fine pears and fine grapes,
The gardeners let us pick freely.
You want venison, hare?
In the open streets
They go running around.

And when there’s a holiday near,
All the fishes come joyfully
swimming;
And off runs Saint Peter
With net and with bait,
Towards the celestial pond.
Saint Martha will have to be cook!

There’s no music at all on the earth
Which can ever compare with ours.
Eleven thousand virgins
Are set dancing.
Saint Ursula herself laughs to see it!
Cecilia with her companions
Are splendid court musicians.
The angelic voices
Delight the senses,
For all things awake to joy.

JONATHON HEYWARD



Jonathon Heyward is one of the most exciting conductors on the international scene. He is both Music Director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Renée and Robert Belfer Music Director of Lincoln Center's Summer Orchestra.

Jonathon's guest conducting highlights in the U.K. include debuts and re-invitations with the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, BBC Symphony, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, The Hallé in Manchester and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. In continental Europe, Jonathon collaborates with the Castilla y León Symphony, Galicia Symphony, Danish National Symphony, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, Brussels Philharmonic, Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine, Tonhalle Düsseldorf, Hamburg Symphony and MDR-Leipzig Symphony.

In 2021, Jonathon made his Wolf Trap debut conducting the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington D.C., and in 2023, he debuted with the Chicago Symphony at the Ravinia Festival. Further USA highlights include the New York Philharmonic, the Atlanta, Detroit, Houston, Seattle and St. Louis symphonies, and the Minnesota Orchestra.

Born in Charleston, Jonathon trained as a cellist at the age of ten. He studied conducting at the Boston Conservatory of Music and continued lessons with Sian Edwards at London's Royal Academy of Music. Before leaving the Academy, he was appointed assistant conductor of the Hallé Orchestra, where he was mentored by Sir Mark Elder and became Music Director of the Hallé Youth Orchestra. In 2023, he became a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music.

Jonathon is committed to education and community outreach work, as well as to including new music within his imaginative concert programs.

JULIA BULLOCK



One of Musical America's 2021 "Artists of the Year," Julia Bullock is an American classical singer who "communicates intense, authentic feeling, as if she were singing right from her soul" (*Opera News*). Combining versatile artistry with a probing intellect and commanding stage presence, she has headlined productions and concerts at preeminent arts institutions around the world. An innovative curator in high demand from a diverse group of organizations, she has held positions including collaborative partner of Esa-Pekka Salonen and 2019–20 Artist in Residence at the San Francisco Symphony, 2020–22 Artist in Residence of London's Guildhall School, and 2018–19 Artist in Residence at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Bullock's opera debuts include San Francisco Opera in the world premiere of *Girls of the Golden West*; Santa Fe Opera in *Doctor Atomic*; Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and Dutch National Opera in *The Rake's Progress*; the English National Opera, Teatro Real and Bolshoi Theatre in the title role of *The Indian Queen*; and Dutch National Opera, Bregenz Festsspiele, and Park Avenue Armory in the premiere of Michel van der Aa's *Upload*. In concert, she has collaborated with the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, NHK Symphony, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester, and London's Philharmonia and London Symphony Orchestras, while her recital highlights include appearances at New York's Carnegie Hall, Boston's Celebrity Series, Washington's Kennedy Center, London's Wigmore Hall, and the Mostly Mozart and Ojai Music festivals. Released by Nonesuch, Bullock's solo album debut, *Walking in the Dark*, was featured in The New York Times's "Best Classical Music Tracks of 2022" and named one of the "Ten Best Classical Albums of 2022" by NPR. Her growing discography also includes GRAMMY-nominated accounts of *West Side Story* and *Doctor Atomic*, as well as the soundtrack of Amazon Prime Video's 2021 *The Underground Railroad*, composed by Nicholas Britell. Committed to integrating community activism with her musical life, Bullock is also a prominent voice for social consciousness and change.