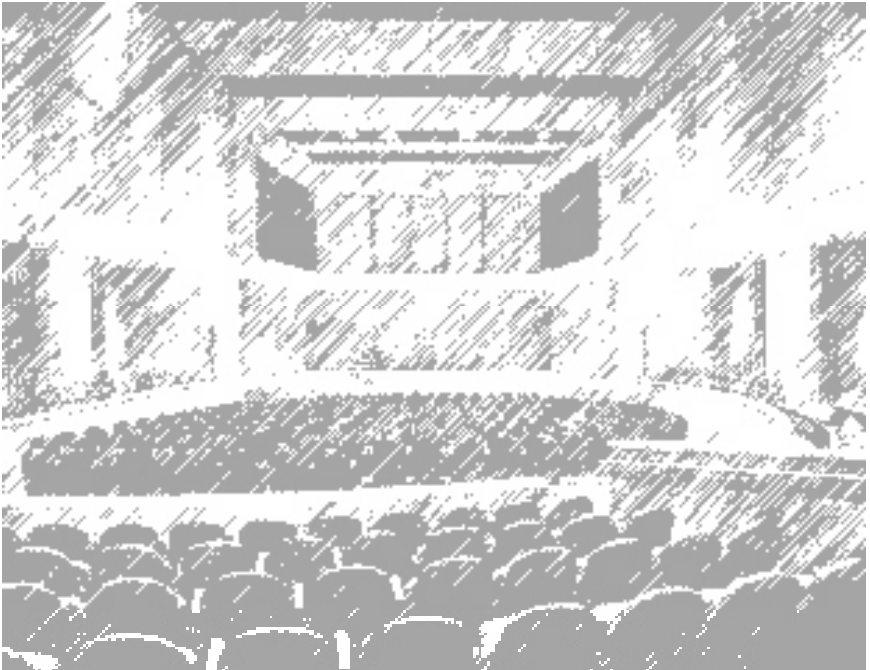


Kennesaw State University
College of the Arts
School of Music

presents

KSU Symphony Orchestra
KSU Chamber Singers
Georgia Symphony Orchestra Chorus

Leah Partridge, soprano
Jason Hardy, bass



Wednesday, September 11, 2013

8:00 p.m

Dr. Bobbie Bailey & Performance Center, Morgan Hall
Second Concert of the 2013-14 Concert Season

Program

Kennesaw State University Symphony Orchestra
Michael Alexander, conductor

ARVO PÄRT (b. 1935)
Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten

JENNIFER HIGDON (b. 1962)
blue cathedral

Intermission

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)
Ein deutsches Requiem, op. 45

1. Selig sind, die da Leid tragen
2. Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras
3. Herr, lehre doch mich
4. Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen
5. Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit
6. Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt
7. Selig sind die Toten

Leah Partridge, soprano
Jason Hardy, bass

Kennesaw State University Chamber Singers
Leslie J. Blackwell, conductor

Georgia Symphony Orchestra Chorus
Bryan Black, conductor

Program Notes

Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten

ARVO PÄRT

(b. 1935)

"In the past years we have had so many losses in the world of music to mourn. Why did the date of Benjamin Britten's death - 4 December 1976 - touch such a chord in me? During this time I was obviously at the point where I could recognize the magnitude of such a loss. Inexplicable feelings of guilt, more than that even, arose in me. I had just discovered Britten for myself. Just before his death I began to appreciate the unusual purity of his music - I had had the same impression of the same kind of purity in the the ballads of Guillaume de Machaut. And besides, for a long time I had wanted to meet Britten personally - and now it would not come to that."

Arvo Pärt

blue cathedral

JENNIFER HIGDON

(b. 1962)

Blue...like the sky. Where all possibilities soar. Cathedrals...a place of thought, growth, spiritual expression...serving as a symbolic doorway in to and out of this world. Blue represents all potential and the progression of journeys. Cathedrals represent a place of beginnings, endings, solitude, fellowship, contemplation, knowledge and growth.

As I was writing this piece, I found myself imagining a journey through a glass cathedral in the sky. Because the walls would be transparent, I saw the image of clouds and blueness permeating from the outside of this church. In my mind's eye the listener would enter from the back of the sanctuary, floating along the corridor amongst giant crystal pillars, moving in a contemplative stance. The stained glass windows' figures would start moving with song, singing a heavenly music. The listener would float down the aisle, slowly moving upward at first and then progressing at a quicker pace, rising towards an immense ceiling which would open to the sky...as this journey progressed, the speed of the traveler would increase, rushing forward and upward. I wanted to create the sensation of contemplation and quiet peace at the beginning, moving towards the feeling of celebration and ecstatic expansion of the soul, all the while singing along with that heavenly music.

These were my thoughts when The Curtis Institute of Music commissioned me to write a work to commemorate its 75th anniversary. Curtis is a house

of knowledge - a place to reach towards that beautiful expression of the soul which comes through music. I began writing this piece at a unique juncture in my life and found myself pondering the question of what makes a life. The recent loss of my younger brother, Andrew Blue, made me reflect on the amazing journeys that we all make in our lives, crossing paths with so many individuals singularly and collectively, learning and growing each step of the way. This piece represents the expression of the individual and the group...our inner travels and the places our souls carry us, the lessons we learn, and the growth we experience. In tribute to my brother, I feature solos for the clarinet (the instrument he played) and the flute (the instrument I play). Because I am the older sibling, it is the flute that appears first in this dialog. At the end of the work, the two instruments continue their dialogue, but it is the flute that drops out and the clarinet that continues on in the upward progressing journey.

This is a story that commemorates living and passing through places of knowledge and of sharing and of that song called life.

About the Composer

Jennifer Higdon, Pulitzer-prize winner (b. Brooklyn, NY, December 31, 1962), is one of the most performed living American composers working today. Her list of commissioners range from the Cleveland Orchestra to the Philadelphia Orchestra; from eighth blackbird to the Tokyo String Quartet; and from The President's Own Marine Band to such artists as Hilary Hahn.

Higdon received the 2010 Pulitzer Prize in Music for her *Violin Concerto*, with the committee citing Higdon's work as a "deeply engaging piece that combines flowing lyricism with dazzling virtuosity." She has also received awards from the Serge Koussevitzky Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Academy of Arts & Letters (two awards), the Pew Fellowship in the Arts, Meet-the-Composer, the National Endowment for the Arts, and ASCAP.

In January, 2010, Higdon received a GRAMMY for *Best Contemporary Classical Composition* for her *Percussion Concerto*. She holds the Rock Chair in Composition at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

Translations

Ein deutsches Requiem, op. 45
JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

1. Selig sind, die da Leid tragen

Selig sind, die da Leid tragen,
denn sie sollen getröstet werden.

Die mit Tränen säen,
werden mit Freuden ernten.
Sie gehen ihn und weinen,
und tragen edlen Samen,
und kommen mit Freuden
und bringen ihre Garben.

Blessed are those who mourn
for they shall be comforted.

Matthew 5:4

Those who sow with tears
will reap with joy.
They go forth and weep,
bearing precious seeds,
and return rejoicing,
bringing their sheaves.

Psalms 126:5-6

2. Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras

Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras
und alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen
wie des Grases Blumen.
Das Gras ist verdorret
und die Blume abgefallen.

For all flesh is like the grass,
and all the magnificence of mortals
is like the flowers of the grass.
The grass has withered,
and the flower has fallen away.

I Peter 1:24

So seid nun geduldig, lieben Brüder,
bis auf die Zukunft des Herrn.
Siehe, ein Ackermann wartet
auf die köstliche Frucht der Erde
und ist geduldig darüber,
bis er empfahe
den Morgenregen und Abendregen.

So now Be patient, dear friends,
until the life hereafter.
Behold, a husbandman waits
for the precious fruit of the earth
and is patient
until he receives
the early and later rain.

James 5:7

Aber des Herrn Wort bleibet in
Ewigkeit.

But the word of the Lord endures
forever.

I Peter 1:25

Die Erlöseten des Herrn werden
wieder kommen,
und gen Zion kommen mit Jauchzen;
ewige Freude wird über ihrem Haupte
sein;
Freude und Wonne werden sie
ergreifen
und Schmerz und Seufzen wird
weg müssen.

The redeemed of the Lord will return,
and come to Zion with shouts of joy;
eternal joy will be upon their heads,
joy and delight will overcome them
and sorrow and sighing will have to
depart.

Isaiah 35:10

3. Herr, lehre doch mich

Herr, lehre doch mich,
daß ein Ende mit mir haben muß,
und mein Leben ein Ziel hat,
und ich davon muß.
Siehe, meine Tage sind
einer Hand breit vor dir,
und mein Leben ist wie nichts vor dir.
Ach, wie gar nichts sind alle Menschen,
die doch so sicher leben.
Sie gehen daher wie ein Schemen,
und machen ihnen viel vergebliche
Unruhe;
sie sammeln und wissen nicht
wer es kriegen wird.
Nun Herr, wes soll ich mich trösten?

Ich hoffe auf dich.

Lord teach me
that I must have an end,
and that my life has an end,
and that I must pass away.
Behold, my days here
are but a handbreath before you,
and my life is nothing before you.
Ah, how insignificant all mortals are,
and yet they live so confidently.
They go about like a phantom
and create so much vain disquiet;
they gather things and know not
who will receive them.
Now, Lord, in whom shall I find
consolation?
I trust in you.

Psalms 39:4-7

Der Gerechten Seelen sind in Gottes
Hand,
und keine Qual rühret sie an.

The souls of the righteous are in God's
hands,
and no torment touches them.

Wisdom 3:1

4. Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen,
Herr Zebaoth!
Meine Seele verlangt und sehnet sich
nach den Vorhöfen des Herrn;
mein Leib und Seele freuen sich
in dem lebendigen Gott.
Wohl denen, die in deinem Hause
wohnen,
die loben dich immerdar.

How lovely are your dwellings,
O Lord of Hosts!
My soul yearns and longs
for the courts of the Lord;
my body and soul rejoice
in the living God.
Blessed are those who dwell in your
house,
those who praise you forever more.

Psalms 84:1-2, 4

5. Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit;
aber ich will euch wieder sehen
und euer Herz soll sich freuen
und eure Freude soll niemand von euch
nehmen.

You now have sorrow;
but I want to see you again,
and your heart shall rejoice,
and no one shall take your joy from
you.

John 16:22

Sehet mich an:
Ich habe eine kleine Zeit Mühe und
Arbeit gehabt,
und habe großen Trost funden.

Look upon me:
I have toiled and labored a brief time,
and now I have found great comfort.

Ecclesiasticus 51:35

Ich will euch trösten,
wie einen seine Mutter tröstet.

I want to comfort you,
as one is comforted by his mother.

Isaiah 66:13

6. Denn wir haben hie kleine bleibende Statt

Denn wir haben hie kleine bleibende
Statt,
sondern die zukünftige suchen wir.

For here we have no permanent place,
but we seek one to come.

Hebrews 13:14

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis:
Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen,
wir werden aber alle verwandelt
werden;
und dasselbige plötzlich in einem
Augenblick
zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune.
Denn es wird die Posaune schallen
und die Toten werden auferstehen
unverweslich,
und wir werden verwandelt werden.
Dann wird erfüllet werden
das Wort, das geschrieben steht:
Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg.
Tod, wo ist dein Stachel?
Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg?

Behold, I tell you a mystery;
We will not all die,
but we will all be transformed,
and transformed suddenly, in an instant,
at the time of the last trumpet,
For the trumpet will sound,
and the dead will rise up incorruptible,
and we will be transformed.
Then will be fulfilled
the word that is written:
"Death is swallowed up in victory.
Death, where is your sting?
Hell, where is your victory?"

I Corinthians 15:51-55

Herr, du bist würdig zu nehmen
Preis und Ehre und Kraft
denn du hast alle Dinge geschaffen,
und durch deinen Willen haben sie
das Wesen und sind geschaffen.

Lord, you are worthy to receive
praise and honor and might,
for you have created all things,
and by your will they have
their being and are created.

Revelation 4:11

7. Selig sind die Toten

Selig sind die Toten,
die in dem Herren sterben
von nun an.
Ja, der Geist spricht,
daß sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit,
denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach.

Blessed are the dead
who die in the Lord
from now on.
Yea, the Spirit says
that they may rest from their labor,
and their works follow after them.

Revelation 14:13

Personnel

KSU Symphony Orchestra

Flute

Catherine Flinchum
Charis Hanson
Catherine Rothery

Oboe

Lisa Mason
Alejandro Sifuentes

Clarinet

Katherine Cook
Jonathan Itkin
Kadie Johnston
Chia-Jing Tang

Bassoon

Jordan Alfredson
Sarah Fluker
Shelby Jones
Dustin Price

Horn

David Anders
Kristen Arvold
Sarah Jarrett
Lauren Mayo

Trumpet

Jesse Baker
John Thomas Burson
Stacey Novik

Trombone

Michael DeSousa
Michael Lockwood

Bass Trombone

Joseph Poole

Tuba

Meliinda Mason

Harp

Tyler Hartley

Piano

Hallie Imeson

Percussion

Cameron Austin
Janna Graham
Levi Lyman
Kyle Pridgen

Violin 1

Jarred Cook
DuMarkus Davis
Ryan Gregory
Sarah Hoefler
Grace Johnston
Danielle Moller
Jonathan Urizar
Anneka Zee

Violin 2

Rachel Campbell
Micah David
Amanda Esposito
Sara Rose Halverson
Terry Keeling
Lauren Miller

Brittany Thayer
Kevin Williams

Viola

Katie Baumgarten
Justin Brookins
Audine Crosse
Hannah Howard
Hallie Imeson
Kyle Mayes
Perry Morris
Samantha Tang
Natalie Thompson

Cello

Kathryn Encisco
Hannah Grussing
Rachel Halverson
Avery McCoy
Michael Roberts
Dorian Silva
Michael Thomas

Bass

Jarod Boles
David Metrio
Matthew Richards
Nicholas Scholefield
Nick Twarog

KSU Chamber Singers

Soprano

Vanessa Burham
Victoria Caracci
Emily Crisp
Sydney Eckart
Megan Gibson
Amy Hebel
Carley Hoffman
Julie Mitchell
Ashley Naffziger
Shannan O'Dowd
Siobhan Rodriguez

Alto

Tory Bethune
Naarah Callender

Camille Hathaway
Karen Martin
Avery Rabbitt
Susan Reyes
Kim Royer
Madeline Scott
Paris Werner

Tenor

Kris Davis
Eric Donaldson
Jake Glover
Joseph McBrayer
Terry Pendleton
Forrest Starr
Travis St. Dic

Alex Trull
Alex Turner
Brian Van Buskirk

Bass

Michael Bart
Michael Cass
Sean Eliason
Dylan Gray
Daniel Hidalgo
Erinn Johnson
Timothy Marshall
Jason Raphael
Andy Tuttle

Georgia Symphony Orchestra Chorus

Soprano

Lanie Baxter
Sharon Bohart
Cindy Bohn
Nita Burge
Atheleen Burley
Amber Connor
Elaine Federico
Jackie Gannon
Bettye Gilbert
Greta Glenn
Grace Graiser
Barbara Hammond
Ann Hixson
Nancy Hodges
Melanie Johnson
Judy Jones
Kathleen Landolt
Cynthia Lash
Stephanie Loomis
Brenda Rhodes
Luci Roberts
Diane Smith
Patty Smitherman
Patricia Snider
Barbara Suarez

Alto

Janet Adams
Heather Blalock

Sara Branch
Glendol Browder
Mary Campbell
Denise Cook
Joanna Cox
Phaeye Dalton
Donna Dedula
Nancy East
Tiffany Fannin
Lynda Gelarden
Joanna Grisham
Debra Harris
Judy Harvey
Diane Heym
Susan Hollows
Mary Hyde
Cindy Landis
Berna Levine
Sharon Lewis
Beverly Martin
Debra McCracken
Linda Melnick
Sally Miller
Allison Nance
Katie Price
Riny Schartman
Laura Searcy
Christine Shoemaker
Joan Solomon
Nissa Summerlin

Susan Traendly
Sandra Vasa-Sideris

Tenor

James Banks
Tom Federico
Ben Glosson
Johnny Gravley
Eddie Harmon
Dean Hawkinson
Greg Picciano
David Pylate
Kenneth Tyner

Bass/Baritone

Don Bieber
Jim Bohart
Chuck Cook
Falk Dorn
David Erstfeld
Joseph Ferst
Brian Loomis
Phillip McCollough
Carlos Menendez
Buddy Moor
John Morgan
Ray Peters
Randall Ribarsky
Al Searcy
Ray Taylor
Rick Wagner

Biographies

Leah Partridge, soprano

Leah Partridge is the new Assistant Professor of Voice at Kennesaw State University and has received consistent praise world-wide for her compelling stage presence and intelligent interpretations of opera's most beloved characters. *Opera Magazine* admired her for her "clarity, accuracy and poise," and the *Detroit Free Press* hailed her for her "lovely presence and shining voice." Since making her debut in 2003 as Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Ms. Partridge has had a career full of remarkable milestones. Her Metropolitan Opera debut came in 2008 as the First Niece in Peter Grimes followed by a return engagement as La Charmeuse in *Thaïs*. Both roles were part of the MET's Live in HD broadcasts and were released on DVD (EMI). In 2010, Ms. Partridge performed Marie in *La fille du Regiment* with The Metropolitan Opera to great acclaim as a last minute replacement, which was captured live on Sirius Satellite Radio. In 2012, the soprano's recording "Finding Home", a collection of American

songs where she is accompanied by Ricky Ian Gordon and Jake Heggie, was released.

During the 2012-13 season, Ms. Partridge offered a role debut as Musetta in Opera Company of Philadelphia's production of *La boheme*, and joined Opera Grand Rapids as Violetta in *La Traviata*. She made her debut with Vlaamse Opera in Antwerp, Belgium in the Spring in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* playing the role of Cunegonde. Upcoming seasons include roles with the Seattle Opera, Opera Omaha, and Washington National Opera, among others.

During the 2011-12 season, the soprano portrayed Leila in *The Pearl Fishers* with both the Pittsburgh Opera and Michigan Opera Theatre, where her "beautiful soprano bounces from pillar to pillar of the Detroit Opera House, making Leila's voice as beautiful as the actress." (*The Daily Tribune*) European engagements included La Contessa di Folleville in Rossini's *Il Viaggio a Reims* with the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in Florence, Italy and with the Staatstheater Nurnberg in Germany, and the role of Adina in L'elisir d'amore with the Folies Lyrique in Montpellier, France.

During the 2010-11 season, she made her debut at the Semper Oper in Dresden, Germany as Violetta in *La Traviata* and returned to Florida Grand Opera to reprise the role of Roxane in David DiChiera's *Cyrano*, a role she created for the 2007 World Premiere in Detroit. *South Florida Classical Review* raved of her Roxane that she spent "much of the opera in the vocal ionosphere where she is clearly comfortable, easily spinning out high notes in DiChiera's long, arching melodies." In addition, she traveled to Eisenstadt, Austria where she performed with Mezzo-Soprano Elina Garanca in an outdoor concert with conductor Karel Mark Chichon, and offered a series of recitals of American Songs by Heggie, R.I. Gordan, Larsen, Corigliano, and Michael Tilson Thomas. During the 2009-2010 season, the soprano was heard as Adina in L'elisir d'amore with Atlanta Opera, returned to The Metropolitan Opera for productions of *La fille du regiment*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and *Hamlet* and made her company debut to great acclaim as Violetta in *La Traviata* with The Opera Company of Philadelphia.

Ms. Partridge opened the 2008–2009 season at Deutsche Oper Berlin singing Gilda in *Rigoletto*, and joined Washington Concert Opera to sing the title role in *Maria Padilla*, The Metropolitan Opera as La Charmeuse in *Thaïs*, Opera North as Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and Florida Grand Opera in the title role of *Lakmé* prompting *Opera News* to write that "Partridge's bell song was a little bit of magic: patient and confident, the whole of it was imbued with an air of mystery, intriguing nuance and rubato." In addition, she joined Marcello Giordani in a Superstar Series concert.

A highlight of the soprano's 2007-2008 season included her debut with Metropolitan Opera where she sang the First Niece in a new production

of Britten's *Peter Grimes*. In addition she joined Michigan Opera Theatre as Roxane in David DiChiera's *Cyrano* for its World Premiere production, and Florida Grand Opera as Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare*. Concert appearances during the season include Mahler's *Symphony No. 4* with the Augusta Symphony Orchestra, Barber's Knoxville: *Summer of 1915* with the Macon Symphony Orchestra, and a concert in Dresden, Germany.

A favorite among South Florida audiences, she has had a long relationship with the Florida Grand Opera performing such diverse roles as Violetta in *La Traviata*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Amina in *La Sonnambula*, Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare*, the title role in *Lakmé*, and Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The Miami Herald praised her performance of Lucia as "a singular triumph" and the Sun-Sentinel wrote that, "The charismatic singer has undeniable star quality... [her] precise high notes and subtle acting wedded pyrotechnics with dramatic truth in a way few artists can accomplish."

Additional operatic highlights include her debut at the Atlanta Opera as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Leila in *Les pêcheurs de perles* with Madison Opera, Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* with Michigan Opera Theatre, as well as Contessa di Folleville in *I Viaggio a Reims*, Leonore in Charles Dibdin's *The Padlock* and Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* all with Chicago Opera Theatre. Other recent engagements have included Cunégonde in *Candide* at Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova, Lucia at Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires, and Susanna in concert performances of *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Atlanta Symphony, conducted by Robert Spano. As a concert soloist, Ms. Partridge has sung Handel's *Messiah* with the Cleveland Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, and Atlanta Symphony. She returned to Atlanta for a performance entitled *Bernstein's Broadway*, featuring some of Leonard Bernstein's greatest stage music with the Atlanta Symphony under Robert Spano. She also appeared as a guest soloist in Atlanta Opera's spring gala. In addition to an extensive oratorio repertoire, she has been heard in concert performances of arias with orchestras including the North German Philharmonic, South London Philharmonic Orchestra, Gibraltar Philharmonic and Opera Omaha.

A native of Georgia, Ms. Partridge earned her Bachelor of Music degree from Mercer University and her Master of Music degree from Indiana University, where she received the prestigious Wilfred C. Bain opera fellowship. She won first place in the vocal competitions of Palm Beach Opera and Opera Birmingham and in 2004 was a National Semi-Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Competition.

Jason Hardy, bass

Jason Hardy, acclaimed on the opera, concert, and recital stage, has established himself as a leading singer and dramatic interpreter in a wide variety of repertoire.

Mr. Hardy has garnered acclaim in major roles of Mozart, most notably *Figaro and Leporello*, which have been seen at New York City Opera, Portland Opera, Madison Opera, Michigan Opera Theater, Cleveland Opera, Arizona Opera, Opera Omaha, Orlando Opera, Connecticut Opera, Opera Birmingham, and the Atlanta Opera. Elsewhere, he has performed leading roles with the Glimmerglass Festival, Baltimore Opera, Florentine Opera, Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, Opéra de Montréal, Nashville Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Toledo Opera, Berkshire Opera, Dayton Opera, Palm Beach Opera, and the Merola Opera Program of the San Francisco Opera. He also sang the role of Parsons under the baton of Maestro Lorin Maazel in the pre-production recording of his opera, *1984*.

Mr. Hardy was a Regional Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, National Finalist for the Lyric Opera of Chicago Center for American Artists, Grand Prize-winner of both the Florida Grand Opera Competition and the Heinz Rehfuss Singing Actor Competition, and a winner in the Liederkrantz Foundation, Palm Beach Opera, Fort Worth Opera, and the Oratorio Society of New York vocal competitions. He is also the recipient of a Sullivan Foundation Career Grant.

On the concert platform, Mr. Hardy has given numerous performances at Carnegie Hall, including Mozart's *Requiem* and *Ein Deutsches Requiem* by Brahms, both under the baton of John Rutter. Concert highlights also include debuts at the Kennedy Center, Avery Fisher Hall, and appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, National Chorale, New York Choral Society, New York City Ballet, Pacific Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Richmond Symphony and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

In recital, Mr Hardy performed song repertoire and vocal chamber works ranging from Purcell to Prokofiev at the prestigious Marlboro Music Festival. He has presented recitals nationwide under the auspices of the Marilyn Horne Foundation, including a debut recital at Carnegie's Weill Hall, where he performed the world premiere of John Musto's *viva sweet love*. Jason Hardy has released his first solo CD, entitled "Youth and Love", which is available on iTunes and several other online vendors.

Michael Alexander, conductor

Michael Alexander is the Director of Orchestras and Interim Director of the School of Music at Kennesaw State University and serves as the Music Director of the Georgia Symphony Orchestra. Active as a guest conductor, he has conducted in Europe, Australia and at various places in the United States, including performances with the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra, Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra, the Maikop Symphony Orchestra and the Novgorod String Orchestra in Russia, the Bacau and Ploiesti Philharmonic in Romania, and the Catania Music Fes-

tival in Italy. In the summer of 2004 and 2009, he served as Music Director for the Madison Savoyards Opera Company. He has also appeared as a guest conductor four times with the Summer Music Clinic Orchestra at the University of Wisconsin and with the 2003-2006 Maud-Powell Music Festival Orchestra in LaSalle, IL. In March 2010, he conducted the 11-12 Georgia All-State Orchestra, and in the summer of 2011, was a guest conductor at the Highlands Music Festival.

Under his leadership, the Georgia Symphony has presented critically acclaimed performances and has seen enormous growth. During his eight year tenure with the GSO, the group has added to its core of professional musicians, removed all of the debt it was under, expanded its budget, and created a comprehensive youth orchestra and chorus program with approximately 400 students from across the region.

In the summer of 2003, Dr. Alexander completed his Doctor of Musical Arts Degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in orchestral conducting. Prior to his current appointments, he has served on the faculties at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and Ripon College. Dr. Alexander began the orchestra program at Kennesaw State University and under his direction the KSU Orchestra has performed at the 2009 Georgia Music Educators Association Annual In-Service, hosted and performed at the 2010 College Orchestra Directors Association National Conference, and completed a three concert tour of Beijing and Xian, China in January of 2011. He has conducted several District Honor Orchestras and has also presented workshops and sessions for The Ohio State University String Teacher Workshop and at the Georgia Music Educators Association Annual In-Service.

Leslie J. Blackwell, conductor

Leslie J. Blackwell is the Director of Choral Activities and Associate Professor of Music and Music Education at Kennesaw State University where she has directed choral activities since 1998. Dr. Blackwell's duties include conducting the KSU Men's Ensemble and KSU Chamber Singers, as well as teaching advanced choral conducting and literature along with supervision of student teachers. A native of Georgia, Blackwell received the Associate of Arts degree from Gordon Junior College (1982), the Bachelor of Music in Music Education from West Georgia College (1984), the Master of Music from Georgia State University (1991), and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Kentucky (2002).

Choirs under Dr. Blackwell's direction have performed at National, Regional, and State conferences of the American Choral Directors Association as well as numerous Georgia Music Educators Association State Conventions. In 2010, Dr. Blackwell presented *Songs of South America* for the American Choral Directors Association with the KSU Chamber Singers,

featuring music of South America based upon her choral research and work in Argentina. In October 2013, the KSU Chamber Singers were selected to perform at the National Collegiate Choral Organization 5th National Conference.

Recognized for her work with men's voices, Dr. Blackwell served six seasons as the Artistic Director of the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus, conducted the 2013 Georgia All-State Men's Chorus, and established the KSU Male Chorus Day at Kennesaw State University, bringing upwards of 200 high school male students to campus. In 2007, the KSU Men's Ensemble was featured at the Georgia Music Educators Association In-Service Conference presentation, "Men Can't Live with Them, Can't Sing without Them!" The KSU Men's Ensemble performed at the 2012 Georgia Music Educators Association In-Service Conference in Savannah, Georgia, and was a featured choir at the American Choral Directors Association State Conference at Spivey Hall in summer, 2013. Most recently, the Kennesaw State University Men's Ensemble was selected to perform at the 2013 American Choral Directors National Conference in Dallas, Texas.

Influential musicians with whom Dr. Blackwell has worked are Robert Shaw, Ann Howard-Jones, Yoel Levi, Norma Raybon, John Haberlen, Rodney Eichenberger, David Maslanka, Ola Gjeilo, Ethan Sperry, and Jefferson Johnson.

In addition to her commitments at Kennesaw State University, Dr. Blackwell is active as a clinician and adjudicator and holds memberships in MENC, GMEA, and ACDA. She also serves on the Board of Directors for Georgia ACDA. Currently, Dr. Blackwell is the Artistic Director and Founding Director of the Kennesaw State University Community & Alumni Choir.

Bryan Black, conductor

Bryan Black has worked professionally as a conductor, educator, church musician and arts advocate in a variety of roles since moving to Atlanta more than a decade ago. He received training as an organist and pianist at the undergraduate level (BM, Samford University) but followed a passion for choral music and conducting at the graduate level (MM, The Florida State University). While at Florida State he was deeply influenced by Rodney Eichenberger—the internationally known master teacher who revolutionized a generation of conductors and teachers. Bryan also holds the "ZDaF" or "Certificate of German" presented by the Goethe-Institut in Berlin.

As a church musician, Black currently serves the 3,600 member First United Methodist Church of Marietta as Director of Music where he especially enjoys working with the sixty-voice Youth Choir. Previous church appointments have included work with the 1996 "Celebrate Faith and Arts" Olympic event and an invitational choir festival tour to Kristiansand, Norway.

The DeKalb Choral Guild, a seventy-voice community chorus based in Tucker, has been directed by Bryan since 2000. In this time the group has nearly tripled in size, made a tour of Germany and the Czech Republic, appeared three times at the Piccolo Spoleto festival in Charleston, performed for the Georgia ACDA state convention and will shortly release its first professional recording. The Guild has also collaborated twice with the Georgia Symphony Orchestra and partnered with the KSU Chorus to sing Johannes Brahms' monumental *Ein Deutsches Requiem* in the Murray Arts Center.

Before conducting the Guild, Black was a member of the ASO Chorus and Chamber Chorus for a number of years including Mr. Shaw's final performance of Bach's *B-minor Mass* held in Carnegie Hall. During this time he also taught on the faculty of Georgia State University and was a visiting conductor at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University.

After a successful musical project with the Atlanta Goethe-Institute (Hugo Distler's *Totentanz*), Bryan was awarded a "cultural ambassadorship" in 2004 which allowed him to attend an intensive course presented in Weimar, Germany.

For his contributions to the city's cultural life he was named a "Lexus Leader in the Arts" by Atlanta Public Broadcasting in 2003.



2013-2014 School of Music
Guest Artist Series

David Coucheron, violin
Julie Coucheron, piano

Monday, September 16, 2013

To purchase tickets, please call 770-423-6650, or visit ticketing.kennesaw.edu.

Kennesaw State University School of Music

The School of Music at KSU has dedicated, vibrant, and talented faculty and staff that are completely devoted to teaching, performing, scholarship, and serving our community. It is an incredibly exciting place to study, boasting state-of-the-art facilities with opportunities to produce and explore music in a dynamic place that is ahead of the curve for what it means to be a musician in the 21st century. Our students come from the leading musical honor organizations across the region and are poised to lead the cultural offerings and musical education in our area and beyond for years to come.

We welcome you to attend a concert, meet our faculty and staff, and feel the energy and excitement that our students exude. We are fully committed to our purpose as educators, performers, and scholars. We hope that you will find as much enjoyment in our product as we do in producing it.

For more information about the School of Music, please visit
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Upcoming Events

Unless otherwise noted, all events will take place at 8:00 pm in Morgan Concert Hall.

Thursday, September 12
Summit Piano Trio

Monday, September 16
Guest Artist Series: David Coucheron, violin and Julie Coucheron, piano

Tuesday, September 17
Wind Ensemble

Monday, September 23
Faculty String Trio

Tuesday, September 24
Guest Artist: Nova Thomas, soprano

Wednesday, September 25
Faculty Recital: David Watkins, piano

Thursday, September 26
Jazz Ensembles

Tuesday, October 1
Philharmonic & Concert Band

Thursday, October 3
University Chorale and Women's Choir

Saturday, October 5
Guest Artist Series: Petr Nouzovsky, cello and Patricia Goodson, piano

Monday, October 7
Faculty Recital: Christina Smith, flute and Robert Henry, piano

We welcome all guests with special needs and offer the following services: easy access, companion seating locations, accessible restrooms, and assisted listening devices. Please contact a patron services representative at 770-423-6650 to request services.