



**BEETHOVEN'S
"ODE TO JOY"
NINTH SYMPHONY**

August 27, 2021

HANDEL+HAYDN SOCIETY

BEETHOVEN'S "ODE TO JOY" NINTH SYMPHONY

August 27, 2021 (Rain Date: August 28, 2021)
DCR Hatch Memorial Shell

2,536th Concert

PERFORMERS

Marin Alsop, *conductor*

Susanna Phillips, *soprano*
Taylor Raven, *mezzo-soprano*
Issachah Savage, *tenor*
Dashon Burton, *bass-baritone*

Handel and Haydn Society Orchestra and Chorus
Handel and Haydn Society Youth Choruses

PROGRAM

Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Op. 125

Allegro ma non troppo e un poco maestoso
Molto vivace
Adagio molto e cantabile
Finale *

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

** U.S. Premiere of new text of "Ode to Joy" by Tracy K. Smith,
former United States Poet Laureate*

PROGRAM SPONSORS

MEDIA PARTNERS

The Boston Globe 

This program is made possible in part by the generous support of Boston Private, an SVB Company.

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The Education Program is funded in perpetuity by Karen S. and George D. Levy.

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HARRY CHRISTOPHERS'S

The waiting is over. Soon, woodwinds will whisper. Strings will soar. Voices will sparkle. And great masterpieces will be reborn. In no time, we'll be in the company of old friends. Reunited with our favorite music and musical virtuosos. With our universally acclaimed chorus and esteemed conductors from around the world.

It's time to reconnect with the Baroque and Classical music we love. The music we have missed. The music that has missed us.



VIVALDI *THE FOUR SEASONS*

Oct 8 + 10
Symphony Hall

PERFORMED BY
Aislinn Nosky,
violin and leader
H+H Orchestra



BEETHOVEN *SYMPHONY NO. 6*

Nov 5 + 7
Symphony Hall

PERFORMED BY
Laurence Equilbey,
conductor
H+H Orchestra

FINAL SEASON



HANDEL *MESSIAH*

Nov 26 + 27 + 28
Symphony Hall

Harry Christophers, *conductor*
Carolyn Sampson, *soprano*
Reginald Mobley, *countertenor*
James Way, *tenor*
Roderick Williams, *baritone*
H+H Orchestra and Chorus



BACH *CHRISTMAS*

Dec 3 (Limited Seating Available)
Dec 5 (Sold Out)
St. Cecilia Parish + First Church, Cambridge

Raphaël Pichon, *conductor*
Soloists, *TBD*
H+H Orchestra and Chorus



BEETHOVEN *SYMPHONY NO. 7*

Jan 7 + 9
Symphony Hall

Václav Luks, *conductor*
H+H Orchestra



HAYDN + MOZART

Jan 28 + 30
Symphony Hall

Harry Christophers, *conductor*
Aislinn Nosky, *violin*
Mary Bevan, *soprano*
Catherine Wyn-Rogers, *mezzo-soprano*
Jeremy Budd, *tenor*
Sumner Thompson, *baritone*
H+H Orchestra and Chorus



BACH + VIVALDI *GLORIA*

Apr 1 + 3
Symphony Hall

Jonathan Cohen, *conductor*
Joëlle Harvey, *soprano*
TBD, *alto*
Nicholas Phan, *tenor*
Tyler Duncan, *baritone*
H+H Orchestra and Chorus



HAYDN *THE CREATION*

Apr 29 + May 1
Symphony Hall

Harry Christophers, *conductor*
Joëlle Harvey, *soprano*
Robert Murray, *tenor*
Matthew Brook, *bass-baritone*
H+H Orchestra and Chorus

PROGRAM NOTES

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

When looking back over a composer's creative output, it is tempting to see a beginning, middle, and end. For study purposes, this can be helpful and illuminating; however, we must always remember that, in most instances, the composer may not have seen their "final" work as anything more than the "latest," with ideas to be shared and new musical problems to solve. Although Symphony No. 9 in D minor by Ludwig van Beethoven was his last completed symphony, it was by no means his final composition. Performances since its premiere in 1824 were "events" in their own right due, in part, to the large number of musicians needed to perform this work. The Boston premiere of this symphony in 1853 was the one of seven H+H performances of the work in the 19th century; in July 2015 H+H marked its 200th anniversary with a free performance at Copley Square.

Today's performance features [poetry by Tracy K. Smith](#), 22nd Poet Laureate of the United States, as one component of [All Together: Global Ode to Joy](#). Spearheaded by today's conductor Marin Alsop, the project includes performances of the Ninth Symphony on six continents in ten different languages as well as an international video project.

Smith's poetry for the final movement of the symphony, an adaptation of the original text by Friedrich Schiller, reflects on the ideals of the original poem and the work still to be done.

Symphony No. 9 in D minor, op. 125

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Beethoven, the eldest surviving son of the Bonn court musician Johann van Beethoven and Maria Magdalena Leym (Keverich), gave his first public keyboard concert when he was eight. His youth and talent were often compared with Mozart, a comparison encouraged by Beethoven's father, and, in 1787, Beethoven traveled to Vienna in order to study with him. The trip was cut short when Beethoven learned that his mother was ill and he returned to Bonn. Five years later, Beethoven went back to Vienna to study with Haydn.

Beethoven's fascination with the 1785 poem "An die Freude" by the renowned German poet Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) began in the 1790s; his first musical sketches of a line of the poem date from 1798. Ten years later, Beethoven composed and premiered the [Choral Fantasy](#), a work for piano, chorus, and orchestra. When describing the finale of the Ninth Symphony, Beethoven recalled this earlier work, but said that this latest finale was on a far grander scale.

Beethoven jotted down musical ideas as they came to him and then used them as he saw fit; ideas for multiple works were often sketched on the same page. Even as he worked on his Eighth Symphony, Beethoven [set the first words of Schiller's poem](#) and contemplated a symphony in the key of D minor. Then, between 1815 and 1818, he outlined a symphony in which the instruments would enter "one by one," wrote a bit of music that would become the opening theme of the second movement, and sketched ideas for the other movements. At the same time, he made notes for yet another symphony.

By the early 1820s, Beethoven was ready to give his full attention to his symphony project and by 1824 his latest symphony was complete. In length, the

number of instruments (not including the voice), and the emotional zeniths and nadirs reached, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony extended beyond all other symphonic works that had come before it.

The movements are connected by musical material that is prepared by the opening of the first movement, replete with an introduction featuring open intervals that pull the listener into a sound world that has been amplified to unprecedented levels. The second movement is tumultuous, a continuation and complement to the first, even as its Trio section anticipates the next movement. The reach and calm of the slow movement acts as a preparation—one might even say a meditation—for the finale.

The finale cannot be easily quantified in terms of its structure because it combines elements of the previous three movements, not only by recalling and dismissing the distinctive opening of each movement, but also by borrowing an element of the previous three movements' formal structures (the sonata form of movement 1, the scherzo elements of movement 2, and the variation features of movement 3). After rejecting the opening of the previous three movements, the "Ode to Joy" theme enters first played in the orchestra and then sung, today to [poetry by Tracy K. Smith](#). Just as Beethoven crafted the finale so that voice and instrument are distinct yet intertwined, Smith crafts poetry that reflects the musical phrasing.

Where Beethoven introduces a new theme, Smith's poetry reminds us of "All we've fractured, all we've stolen." This somber reflection becomes the rallying cry to "wake from our stupor" and become "one voice." Smith sets this transformation at one of the most ethereal moments in the movement as Beethoven extends the range of voice and orchestra before combining this new theme with the "Ode to Joy" theme.

In 1823, while working on the Ninth Symphony, Beethoven was offered a commission from the Handel and Haydn Society. Although he wrote about how pleased he was to know that his fame had reached across the ocean, he did not accept. That same year he did accept a commission for a set of string quartets from Prince Nicolas Galitzin and, after fulfilling that request, continued writing in that genre.

The premiere of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony took place on May 7, 1824, along with The Consecration of the House, an overture, and three movements from the Missa solemnis. Beethoven led this concert, but there was another conductor as well because, with Beethoven's hearing loss, his conducting sometimes became out of sync with the orchestra. The warm reception of his latest symphony was not known to the composer until someone turned him to face an audience applauding enthusiastically.

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* Principal

String players are listed alphabetically after the principal.

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Ruby White

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Cody Bowers
Elizabeth Eschen
Mary Gerbi
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Joss Holtz Richman
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Shreya Sarcar
Dhruva Schlondorff
Somin Virmani
Ryan Wickline
Sofia Zay
Manya Ziemiecki

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TEXT

“Ode to Joy”

Text by Tracy K. Smith

O friend, my heart has tired
Of such darkness.
Now it vies for joy.

Joy, bright God-spark born of Ever
Daughter of fresh paradise—
Where you walked once now walk rancor,
Greed, suspicion, anger, fright.
Joy, the breeze off all that's holy,
Pure with terror, wild as flame.
Make us brothers, give us comfort,
Bid us past such fear and hate.

If you've loved another's beauty
If you've craved the warmth of flesh,
If your spirit is invested
In another's sense of worth,
Lift your voice to touch my voice now,
Let our song bring joy to earth.
Lift your voice to touch my voice now,
Let our song bring joy to earth.

Joy like water, milk of mothers.
Kind and wicked all deserve
Joy's compassion freely given,
Joy which can't be sold or earned.
In the depths of blackest soil
In the lightless atmosphere
In the atom and the ether,
Animating all that is.

Let us feel it, let us heed it,
Let us seek its deepest kiss.
Let us live our brief lives mining
That which joy alone can give.

Battered planet, home of billions,
Our long shadow stalks your face.
All we've fractured, all we've stolen,
All we've sought blind to your grace.

Earth, forgive us, claim us, let us
Live in humble thanks and joy.
Let our hearts wake from our stupor,
Let us praise you in one voice.

ARTIST BIOS



Marin Alsop, conductor

A conductor of vision and distinction, Marin Alsop represents a powerful and inspiring voice. Convinced that music has the power to change lives, she is internationally recognized for her innovative approach to programming and audience development, her deep commitment to education, and her advocacy for music's importance in the world.

Alsop currently serves as Chief Conductor of the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, the first Music Director of the University of Maryland's National Orchestral Institute + Festival (NOI+F), and the first Chief Conductor and Curator of Chicago's Ravinia Festival, where she curates and conducts the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's summer residencies. She is also Conductor of Honour of Brazil's São Paulo Symphony Orchestra (OSESP) and will later this year assume the title of Music Director Laureate and OrchKids Founder of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, after an outstanding 14-year tenure as its Music Director. As well as enjoying longstanding relationships with the London Philharmonic and London Symphony Orchestras, she regularly guest conducts such major international ensembles as the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Orchestre de Paris and the Cleveland, La Scala, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Philadelphia and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestras. An ardent champion of new composition, she was Music Director of California's Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music for 25 years. Last year, in collaboration with YouTube, Google Arts & Culture and a host of the world's leading arts organizations, she spearheaded the #GlobalOdeToJoy, a crowd-sourced video project to celebrate Beethoven's 250th anniversary and amplify his Ninth Symphony's call for tolerance, unity and joy.

The first and only conductor to receive a MacArthur Fellowship, Alsop has also been honored with the World Economic Forum's Crystal Award and numerous honorary doctorates. Recognized with multiple Gramophone Awards, her extensive discography includes recordings for Decca, Harmonia Mundi, Naxos and Sony Classical. To promote and nurture the careers of her fellow female conductors, in 2002 she founded the Taki Concordia Conducting Fellowship, which was recently renamed in her honor as the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship.



Tracy K. Smith, poet

Tracy K. Smith is a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, memoirist, editor, translator and librettist. She served as the 22nd Poet Laureate of the United States from 2017-19, during which time she spearheaded *American Conversations: Celebrating Poetry in Rural Communities* with the Library of Congress, launched the American Public Media podcast *The Slowdown*, and edited the anthology *American Journal: Fifty Poems for Our Time*.

Smith is the author of the poetry collections *Wade in the Water*, which was awarded the 2018

Anisfield-Wolf Book Award; *Life on Mars*, which won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize; *Duende*, winner of the 2006 James Laughlin Award of the Academy of American Poets; and *The Body's Question*, which received the 2003 Cave Canem Prize. Her memoir, *Ordinary Light*, was a finalist for the 2015 National Book Award in nonfiction. She is the co-translator (with Changtai Bi) of *My Name Will Grow Wide like a Tree: Selected Poems of Yi Lei*, which was a finalist for the 2021 Griffin International Poetry Prize. *Such Color: New and Selected Poems* will be published in October 2021.

Among her other honors are the Academy Fellowship of the Academy of American Poets, the Harvard Arts Medal, the Columbia Medal for Excellence, a Smithsonian Ingenuity Award and an Essence Literary Award. She is a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

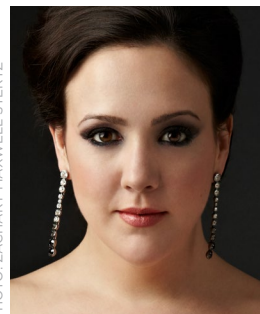


PHOTO: ZACHARY MAXWELL STERTZ

Susanna Phillips, soprano

Alabama native soprano Susanna Phillips continues to establish herself as one of today's most sought after singing actors and recitalists. Ms. Phillips is a recipient of the prestigious Met Opera 2010 Beverly Sills Artist Award. Ms. Phillips has sung at the Met Opera in the roles of Masetta, Pamina, Donna Anna, Rosalinde, Antonia/Stella, Micaëla, Donna Elvira, and Countess Almaviva. Role highlights include *Fiordigili*, which *The New York Times* called a "breakthrough night", and *Clémence* in the company's premiere of Kaija Saariaho's "L'amour de Loin."

Desired by the world's most renowned orchestras, Ms. Phillips has appeared with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Philadelphia Orchestra. She is dedicated to oratorio works with credits including Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Mahler's Second and Fourth Symphonies, and the Fauré and Mozart Requiems. An avid chamber music collaborator, Ms. Phillips has worked frequently with pianist Myra Huang. Together they have performed solo recitals all over the United States. Other career highlights include the title roles of Cleopatra and Agrippina with Boston Baroque, Stella in Previn's "A Streetcar Named Desire" opposite Renée Fleming, and Birdie in Blitzstein's "Regina."

Ms. Phillips co-founded Twickenham Fest, a chamber music festival in her native Huntsville, Alabama with bassoonist and Huntsville native, Matthew McDonald. Over 400 Huntsville residents traveled to New York City for Ms. Phillips's 2008 Met Opera debut in "La Bohème." She returns frequently to her native state for recitals and orchestral appearances.



PHOTO: SUZANNE VINNIK PHOTOGRAPHY

Taylor Raven, mezzo-soprano

Mezzo-soprano Taylor Raven is a "vocal sensation" (*Washington Classical Review*) and quickly establishing herself in opera, concert, and recital. Highlights of the 21/22 season include debuts with Houston Grand Opera for *Die Zauberflöte* (Dritte Dame), Washington Concert Opera for *Lakmé* (Mallika), and North Carolina Opera for Moravec's *Sanctuary Road*. On the concert stage she will make debuts with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Iowa, and return to the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Additional engagements include the world premiere of a song cycle commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier with Urban Arias and a return to the roster of the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Last season she made debuts at Des Moines Metro Opera in *Pique Dame* (Pauline) and Finger Lakes Opera in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Rosina). A recent graduate of the Young Artist Program at the LA Opera where she was seen in *La clemenza di Tito* (Annio), *Don Carlo* (Tebaldo), the Kosky production of *Die Zauberflöte* (Dritte Dame) conducted by James Colon, and *Hansel and Gretel* (Sandman). As a Filene Artist at Wolf Trap Opera she performed in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Rosina) and *L'heure espagnole* (Concepción).



Issachah Savage, *tenor*

Dramatic tenor Issachah Savage is garnering acclaim as a “heldentenor par excellence” with “trumpet-like, clear, open-throated, powerful” singing (*San Francisco Examiner*). Praised for his “impressive natural instrument” (*Opera News*), Mr. Savage is the winner of the Seattle International Wagner Competition earning the main prize, audience favorite prize, orchestra favorite prize, and a special honor by Speight Jenkins. In the 21/22 season Mr. Savage will return to LA Opera to sing the title role in *Tannhäuser*.

On the concert stage he will sing Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the National Symphony Orchestra (Gianandrea Noseda), Dallas Symphony Orchestra (Fabio Luisi), and Los Angeles Philharmonic (Gustavo Dudamel) and return to Cathedral Choral Society for Smyth’s *March of the Women*. Recent debuts include St. Louis Symphony and Handel and Haydn Society for Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, Colorado Symphony for Verdi Requiem, Act I of *Die Walküre* with Ose! Symphonic Orchestra in Evian, France and Quad Cities Symphony Orchestra, and Stravinsky *Pulcinella*/Beethoven Mass in C with the Jacksonville Symphony (FL). Additional engagements included a recital with Ramón Tebar in Naples, FL. Issachah sang the title role in Verdi’s *Otello* at Austin Lyric Opera. He made his European debut as in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Bacchus) at Théâtre du Capitole in Toulouse, France.



Dashon Burton, *bass-baritone*

Bass-baritone Dashon Burton has established a vibrant career in opera, recital, and with orchestra. In key elements of his repertoire — Bach’s *Passions* and the B minor Mass, Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Beethoven 9, the Brahms Requiem, Handel’s *Messiah*, and Mozart’s Requiem – Dashon is a frequent guest with the major orchestras of the United States, Europe, and Japan.

In recent seasons he performed these works and others with the Minnesota and National Arts Centre Orchestras, the St. Louis Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

A frequent guest of the Cleveland Orchestra, he sang Michael Tilson Thomas’ *Rilke Songs* there, led by the composer. In the fall of 2019, Dashon sang the world premiere of Caroline Shaw’s *The Listeners* (a part written by Shaw specifically for Burton), with the Philharmonia Baroque and Nicholas McGegan.

Opera engagements have included Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* in Dijon and Paris and Jupiter in Rameau’s *Castor et Pollux* with Les Talens Lyriques; Strauss’ *Salome* at the Salzburg Festival (led by Franz Welser-Möst in a production by Romeo Castellucci), and Peter Sellars’s production of Claude Vivier’s *Kopernikus, un rituel de mort* at Paris’ Théâtre de la Ville.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >

His album “Songs and Struggles of Redemption; We Shall Overcome,” was singled out by *The New York Times* as “profoundly moving...a beautiful and lovable disc.” Dashon is an original member of the groundbreaking vocal ensemble, Roomful of Teeth, with whom he won a Grammy for their recording of Caroline Shaw’s Pulitzer-Prizewinning Partita for 8 Voices. In March of 2021, Burton won his second Grammy, this time for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album for Dame Ethyl Smyth’s *The Prison* with The Experiential Orchestra on Chandos.

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ABOUT THE HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY



Boston's Grammy-winning Handel and Haydn Society performs Baroque and Classical music with a freshness, a vitality, and a creativity that inspires all ages. H+H has been captivating audiences for 207 consecutive seasons (the most of any performing arts organization in the United States) speaking to its singular success at converting new audiences to this extraordinary music, generation after generation.

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H+H performed the "Hallelujah" chorus from Handel's *Messiah* in its first concert in 1815, gave the American premiere in 1818, and ever since has been both a musical and a civic leader in the Boston community. During the Civil War, H+H gave numerous concerts in support of the Union Army (H+H member Julia Ward Howe wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic") and on January 1, 1863, H+H performed at the Grand Jubilee Concert celebrating the enactment of the Emancipation Proclamation. Two years later, H+H performed at the memorial service for Abraham Lincoln.

Today, H+H's Orchestra and Chorus delight more than 50,000 listeners annually with a nine-week subscription series at Symphony Hall and other leading venues. Through the Karen S. and George D. Levy Education Program, H+H supports seven youth choirs of singers in grades 2-12, and provides thousands of complimentary tickets to students and communities throughout Boston, ensuring the joy of music is accessible to all.

H+H's numerous free community concerts include an annual commemoration of the original 1863 Emancipation Proclamation concert on December 31 of every year, in collaboration with the Museum of African American History.

The artistic director of the Handel and Haydn Society is Harry Christophers, who is also founding artistic director of The Sixteen in London. Under Christophers's leadership, H+H has released 15 CDs on the Coro label and has toured nationally and internationally.

In all these ways, H+H fulfills its mission to inspire the intellect, touch the heart, elevate the soul, and connect all of us with our shared humanity through transformative experiences with Baroque and Classical music.

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