

STERN CONDUCTS BRUCKNER'S SEVENTH

*Friday and Saturday, November 1-2, 2019 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, November 3, 2019 at 2 p.m.*

HELZBERG HALL, KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

MICHAEL STERN, *conductor*
KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY CHORUS,
CHARLES BRUFFY, *Chorus Director*

POULENC

"Salve Regina" (a cappella)
KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY CHORUS

STRAVINSKY

Symphony of Psalms
I. Psalm 38
II. Psalm 39
III. Psalm 150
KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY CHORUS

INTERMISSION

BRUCKNER

Symphony No. 7 in E Major
I. Allegro moderato
II. Adagio: Sehr feierlich und sehr langsam
III. Scherzo: Sehr schnell
IV. Finale: Bewegt, doch nicht schnell

Following Sunday's performance, there will be a G. Kenneth and Ann Baum Concert Comments talk-back session in Helzberg Hall to discuss the music and influences on the composers. There will be no Concert Comments on Friday or Saturday Night.

The 2019/20 season is generously sponsored by
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FRANCIS POULENC (1899–1963)

“Salve Regina” (1941) 5 minutes

A cappella mixed chorus.

Following the death of his dear friend, composer Pierre-Octave Ferroud (1900–1936), in a road accident, Poulenc made a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Black Madonna in Rocamadour, France. There, Poulenc rediscovered the Catholic faith that began to inform his compositions, both religious and secular. Poulenc composed his a cappella choral work “Salve Regina” in May 1941, during the Nazi occupation of France.



French composer Francis Poulenc composed his brief a cappella choral work “Salve Regina” (Hail, holy Queen) during the Nazi occupation of France.

Salve Regina, mater misericordiae,
vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve,
ad te clamamus, exsules filii evae,
ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.
Eia ergo, advocata nostra,
illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exilium ostende,
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis virgo Maria.

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,
our life, sweetness, and hope, hail,
to you we cry, the exiled children of Eve,
to you we send our sighs, mourning and weeping
In this valley of tears.
Therefore, our advocate,
turn your eyes of mercy toward us.
And Jesus, the blessed fruit of your womb,
show us after this our exile,
O clement, o loving, o sweet Virgin Mary.

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Stravinsky set his work for “a choral and instrumental ensemble in which the two elements should be on an equal footing, neither of them outweighing the other.”

IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)

Symphony of Psalms (1930, rev. 1948)

22 minutes

Mixed chorus, piccolo, 5 flutes, 4 oboes, English horn, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, piccolo trumpet, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, harp, 2 pianos, cellos and basses.

Igor Stravinsky composed his *Symphony of Psalms* in 1930, for the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In “Stravinsky: An Autobiography” (Simon and Schuster, NY, 1936), the Russian composer noted:

My idea was that my symphony should be a work with great contrapuntal

development, and for that it was necessary to increase the media at my disposal. I finally decided on a choral and instrumental ensemble in which the two elements should be on an equal footing, neither of them outweighing the other. In this instance my point of view as to the mutual relationship of the vocal and instrumental sections coincided with that of the masters of contrapuntal music, who also treated them as equals, and neither reduced the role of the choruses to that of a homophonous chant nor the function of the instrumental ensemble to that of an accompaniment.

I sought for my words, since they were to be sung, among those which had been written for singing. And quite naturally my first idea was to have recourse to the Psalms.

The score of Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms* contains the following dedication: “Symphony composed to the glory of GOD is dedicated to the ‘Boston Symphony Orchestra’ on the occasion of its 50th

anniversary.” However, the first performance of this magnificent work took place not in Boston, but in Brussels, at the Palais des Beaux Arts. Ernest Ansermet conducted the Brussels Philharmonic Society in the December 13, 1930 premiere. The Boston premiere, under Serge Koussevitsky’s baton, took place six days later.

The three movements are performed without pause.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

- I. Exaudi orationem meam, Domine, et deprecationem meam: auribus percipe lacrimas meas. Ne sileas, quoniam advena ego sum apud te et peregrinus, sicut omnes patres mei. Remitte mihi, ut refugerer priusquam abeam et amplius non ero.

Psalmus 38:13-14 (Vulgate)

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not Thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

Psalm 38:13-14 (King James)

- II. Expectans expectavi Dominum, et intendit mihi. Et exaudivit preces meas; et eduxit me de lacu miseriae, et de luto faecis. Et statuit super petram pedes meos: et direxit gressus meos. Et immisit in os meum canticum novum, carmen Deo nostro. Videbunt multi, videbunt et timebunt: et sperabunt in Domino.

Psalmus 39:1-3 (Vulgate)

I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

Psalm 39:1-3 (King James)

III. Alleluia.

Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus: Laudate eum in firmamento virtutis ejus. Laudate eum in virtutibus ejus: laudate eum secundum multitudinem magnitudinis ejus. Laudate eum in sono tubae: laudate eum in psalterio et cithara. Laudate eum in tympano et choro: laudate eum in chordis et organo. Laudate eum in cymbalis bene sonantibus: laudate eum in cymbalis jubilationibus: omnis spiritus laudet Dominum. Alleluia.

Psalmus 150 (Vulgate)

Alleluia.

Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Alleluia.

Psalm 150 (King James)

Symphony of Psalms by Igor Stravinsky

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KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY **FUN FACT**

NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE IN
SYMPHONY EDUCATION PROGRAMS ANNUALLY

40,000

ANTON BRUCKNER (1824-1896)

Symphony No. 7 in E Major (1883)

64 minutes

2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns,
4 Wagner tubas, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba,
timpani, cymbals, triangle and strings.

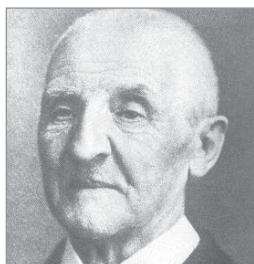
Anton Bruckner completed his Symphony No. 6 by the start of September 1881. Three weeks later, Bruckner commenced work on his Seventh, a symphony that would occupy the Austrian composer for the next two years.

In the summer of 1882, Bruckner journeyed to Bayreuth, Germany, for the premiere of Richard Wagner's final opera, *Parsifal*. Bruckner had long revered Wagner and his music. This visit to Bayreuth proved to be the final time that Bruckner and Wagner would see each other.

Later that year, Bruckner began work on the Seventh Symphony's second movement. As Bruckner confided to his pupil, Felix Mottl, "One day I came home and felt very sad. It is impossible, I thought, that the Master should live much longer. And then the C-sharp minor Adagio came to me."

By February 1883, Bruckner had finished the Symphony's opening and third movements. He also had composed the Adagio, up to the point of the slow-tempo movement's grand climax. Then, Bruckner learned Wagner had died in Venice on February 13. This devastating news provided Bruckner with the inspiration to pen the slow-tempo movement's beautiful closing measures, "And then I wept, oh, how I wept — and it was not until then that I wrote the music to mourn the maestro."

Bruckner completed his Seventh Symphony on September 5, 1883. The premiere took place in Leipzig on December 30, 1884, with Arthur Nikisch conducting the Gewandhaus Orchestra. For



While Bruckner's symphonies often met with fierce resistance during his lifetime, the Seventh was one of the Austrian composer's greatest successes.

many years, Bruckner had lived in Vienna, where he was highly regarded as a virtuoso organist and distinguished professor of music at both the Vienna Conservatory and Vienna University. However, acceptance of Bruckner's compositions by the Viennese critics was quite another matter. Bruckner's allegiance to Richard Wagner placed him in a highly unfavorable light with those who disdained the German opera composer and his revolutionary works. For those critics, Bruckner's epic symphonies were bombastic and incoherent Wagnerian monstrosities.

But the Leipzig premiere of the Seventh proved to be a vindication for Bruckner, and one of the greatest moments in the composer's life. The audience responded ecstatically, repeatedly calling for Bruckner to appear on stage, where he received two laurel wreaths. Three months later, Hermann Levi conducted the work in Munich. It was yet another success for Bruckner, who deemed it "the greatest I have ever had."

That same year, in 1885, the Vienna Philharmonic informed Bruckner they intended to perform his Symphony No. 7. Bruckner was leery of subjecting himself once again to the scrutiny of the hostile Viennese press. Nevertheless, on March 21, 1886, the Philharmonic and conductor Hans Richter offered the Vienna premiere of the Bruckner Seventh. The ecstatic response of the Vienna audience overwhelmed Bruckner. "As a result of the indescribable jubilation — after the first movement I was called on to the stage five or six times by tumultuous applause. At the end unending enthusiasm and curtain calls; laurel wreath from the Wagner Society and a banquet..."

Bruckner's fears that the press would receive his new symphony unfavorably proved to be well-founded. One critic even wrote, "Bruckner composes like a drunkard!" It is certain that Bruckner took great comfort in the audience response, as well as from a telegram, sent to the composer after the Vienna premiere, that stated, "Am deeply shaken — it was one of the greatest experiences I have ever had." The telegram author was fellow composer and Vienna resident Johann Strauss, Jr.

The Symphony No. 7 is in four movements. The first opens with one of Bruckner's trademarks (one inspired by its counterpart in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony), as tremolo strings provide the foundation for the first principal theme. The broad opening melody, launched by the horn and cellos, begins with an ascending phrase that returns in many guises throughout the Symphony. Two more themes follow, treated in expansive fashion. The movement concludes with a grand statement of the first theme. The slow-tempo second movement includes the memorial tribute to Wagner, a solemn passage for Wagner tubas, tuba and horns. After two epic movements, the Bruckner Seventh concludes with a far briefer Scherzo and Finale. The Scherzo is in the spirit of the *ländler*, a rustic peasant dance. The beautiful central Trio leads to reprise of the opening Scherzo. The Finale is based upon a theme introduced at the outset, a clear descendent of the Symphony's opening melody. The kinship between the two themes is reaffirmed in the majestic closing measures.

CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED VIOLINIST YURIY BEKKER HAS LED THE

Charleston Symphony Orchestra as concertmaster since 2007. Bekker served as the orchestra's acting artistic director from 2010 to 2014 and director of chamber orchestra from 2014 to 2015, playing a major role in the orchestra's successful resurgence. Bekker also was named the orchestra's principal pops conductor in 2016.



Bekker is an adjunct faculty member of the College of Charleston School of the Arts as a violin professor and as conductor of the College of Charleston Orchestra. He is music director of the Piccolo Spoleto Festival's Spotlight Chamber Music Series and

co-founder of the Charleston Chamber Music Institute. He also serves on faculty of the Ginkgold Chamber Music Festival in Miami. In 2011, the city of Charleston presented Bekker with the Outstanding Artistic Achievement award to honor his cultural contributions to the community. Bekker also served as concertmaster for the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra and the AIMS Festival in Graz, Austria. He has held additional positions with the Houston Symphony and the Houston Grand Opera and Ballet orchestras.

Bekker has performed worldwide as a guest concertmaster, chamber musician and soloist, including engagements with the Vancouver Symphony in British Columbia, Ulster Orchestra in Northern Ireland, Buffalo Philharmonic, Chicago Chamber Music Society, European Music Festival Stuttgart in Germany, Pacific Music Festival in Japan, Spoleto Festival USA, Piccolo Spoleto Festival, Aspen Music Festival and the Kennedy Center, among others. He has collaborated with Herbert Greenberg, Claudio Bohorquez, Alexander Kerr, Andres Cardenes, Andrew Armstrong, Robert DeMaine, Sara Chang, Gil Shaham, Ilya Kaler, Joshua Roman, JoAnn Falletta and Andrew Litton. As principal pops conductor of the Charleston Symphony, Bekker has worked with notable artists such as Ben Folds, Tony DeSare, Ellis Hall and Cirque de la Symphonie.

Bekker earned a graduate performance diploma from the Peabody Conservatory under the tutelage of Herbert Greenberg. He also holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Indiana University School of Music, where he studied violin with Nelli Shkolnikova and Ilya Kaler. His debut album, *Twentieth Century Duos*, received worldwide acclaim and a nomination for the International Classical Music Awards. Bekker performs on the 1638 "Franz Degen" Andrea Guarneri violin, generously on loan from an anonymous patron.

Visit yuriybekker.com for more information. ■



THE KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY CHORUS, LED BY GRAMMY®

Award-winning Chorus Director Charles Bruffy, is a 160-voice ensemble that continues its long tradition of excellence serving as “the choral voice of the Kansas City Symphony.” The Symphony Chorus has been offering quality choral music to the greater Kansas City metropolitan area since the early 1960s, first as the Mendelssohn Choir and then as the Civic Chorus. After the creation of the Kansas City Symphony, the Symphony Chorus assumed its current name and role in 1988. Before the appointment of Chorus Director Charles Bruffy in 2008, the Symphony Chorus worked under the direction of choral conductors Eph Ehly and Arnold Epley.

The Symphony Chorus has represented Kansas City in five concert tours, including performances in New York City, Boston, the Berkshires, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Mexico where it performed with the Mexico City Symphony. The Symphony Chorus women recorded Holst’s *The Planets* with the Kansas City Symphony in January 2015 for an album released by Reference Recordings on October 11, 2019. The Chorus performed with the Symphony at the 2019 American Choral Directors Association National Convention. The Chorus also represented the Symphony this fall by singing the national anthem at a Royals game.

The Kansas City Symphony Chorus musicians are all volunteers from the region’s extensive musical community selected through rigorous auditions. Members have rich backgrounds in both music education and performance, and are engaged as soloists and conductors in schools, churches and venues throughout the region. ■

Kansas City Symphony
CHORUS ROSTER

CHARLES BRUFFY, *chorus director*

PATRICE SOLLENBERGER, *assistant chorus director*

DAN VELICER, *accompanist*

KIMBERLY GEAR, *president*

JAN WIBERG, *librarian*

SOPRANO

Deborah Alburtus
Abby Bachkora
Nellie Bills
Paula Bowers
Elizabeth Brockhoff
Amy Burback
Skye Clements
Meaghan Coble
Audrey Duncan
Brenda Dunham
Judith Evnen
Hannah Fabean
Kimberly Gear
Bethany Glendenning
Holly Hacking
Erica Hazelton
Amy Kotecha
Hannah Kothmann
Nancy Lacy
Kristy Lambert
Zenita Lee
Marie Lerner-Sexton
Lindsey Marts
Hannah Mead
Sarah Meyer
Kathryn Nicolaus
Naomi Olivera
Keri Olson
Anna Pechenina
Florence (Emily) Pollard
Deborah Roach
Gretchen Rohrs
Jennifer Roth
Sierra Saylor
Sarah Schulte
Jerusha Staggs
Kathy Stayton
Hannah Steele
Sheree Stoppel
Gracie Tew
Amy Toeppen
Rebecca Tuttle
Jordan Tyler
Constance Van Engen
Annie Walsh

ALTO

Lori Allen
Lynne Beebe
Lauren Beemer
Joyce Bibens
Michelle Buechter
Bobbi Caggianelli
Kelly Carpenter
Barbara Ceballos
Jan Cohick
Sonja Coombes
Kate Cross
ChandaLynn Denson
Karen Eisele
Nicole Eubanks
June Farson
Tori Fugate
Alyxandra Gideon
Athena Gillespie
Staci Harvey
Julia Heriford
Bettye Hubbard
Dale Jarka
Lenette Johnson
Marggie Jones
Ashley Jones
Lori LeVine
Heidi Meadows
Svetlana Mitchell
Marysia Bojanski Moore
Shannon Moore
Karla Morgan Massia
Kaylee Osborne
Lindsey Patterson
Virginia Payne
Melissa Rausch
Allison Sowle
Karen Spalding
Lauren Suchy
Paulette A. Thompson
Sara Treffer
Marsha Wells
Jan Wiberg
Sarah Zung

TENOR

Leon Barnes
Tim Braselton
Paul Buechter
Kit Doyle
Phil Dunham
Keith Florea
Emerson Hartzler
JP Helder
Brandon Hottman
Cliff Hubbard
Russell Joy
Mark Lange
Richard Liantonio
Aaron Lukken
Trent Menssen
Joseph Neal
Jacob Overholtzer
Jonathan Plummer
Brandon Preece
Jeff Preuss
Dwight Purtle
Robert Ritter
Ward Russell
Aaron Sanggaard
Colin Starr
David Sutherland
Alan Taliercio
Travis Toeppen
Sheldon Vogt
Jeff Williams
Craig Zernickow

BASS

Doug Allen
Brett Anderson
Kalon Breckenridge
John Burke
Scott Connor
Robert Dothage
James R. Duncan
Bill Featherston
Lee Finch
Benjamin Forrester
Richard T. Gill
David Hess
Daniel Hockman
Eddie Huang
Riley Kurre
Bill Lacy
Art Lafex
Dave Lockett
Roger McDougle
Donald Milligan
Kenneth Moncrieff
Patrick Orlich
John Pinkston
Joe Potter
Jerry Radek
Roger Randall
David Reid
Ed Roberts
John Ross
Larry Sneegas
Joel Steelman
Robert Stepanich
James Stephens
Rick Stephenson
Patrick Sullivan
John Thiessen
Greg Toplikar
Keith Tucker
Ken Van Engen
Michael Wasleski
Ronald Williams

ONE OF THE MOST ADMIRED CHORAL CONDUCTORS IN THE

United States, Charles Bruffy began his career as a tenor soloist, performing with the Robert Shaw Festival Singers for recordings and concerts in France and concerts at Carnegie Hall. Shaw encouraged his development as a conductor. He received his undergraduate degree from Missouri State Western University in St. Joseph and his master's degree in voice performance from the Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.



Bruffy has been artistic director of the Kansas City Chorale since 1988 and chorus director for the Kansas City Symphony since 2008. He is also director of music for Rolling Hills Presbyterian Church.

Respected and renowned for his fresh and passionate interpretations of standards of the choral music repertoire — and for championing new music — he has commissioned and premiered works by composers such as Jean Belmont Ford, Ola Gjeilo, Matthew Harris, Anne Kilstofte, Libby Larsen, Zhou Long, Cecilia McDowall, Michael McGlynn, Stephen Paulus, Steven Sametz, Philip Stopford, Steven Stucky, Eric Whitacre and Chen Yi.

Under Bruffy's supervision, MusicSpoke and the Roger Dean Company, a division of the Lorenz Corporation, publish a choral series specializing in music for professional ensembles and sophisticated high school and college choirs. His eclectic discography includes five albums on the Nimbus label and eight recordings for Chandos Records, three of which have been recognized by the Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences with Grammy® Awards for Best Choral Performance. In 2017, Bruffy was recognized with the Signature Sinfonian award conferred by national fraternal society Phi Mu Alpha, recognizing "alumni members who have achieved a high standard of accomplishment in their field."

In his spare time, Bruffy breeds and raises Arabian and Saddlebred horses on his ranch just south of Kansas City in Cass County, Missouri. ■