

Society of Musical Arts

Stephen Culbertson, Music Director

Concert Program



Sunday, November 19, 2023

4:00 P.M.

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church
414 East Broad Street
Westfield, NJ 07090**

Orchestra November 2023

Stephen Culbertson, Music Director

FIRST VIOLIN

Susan Heerema*
Concert Master
Kelley Fahey
Mira Franke
Holly Horn
Jessica Mennella
Eugene Park
Len Tobias
Christine Yin

SECOND VIOLIN

Lillian Kessler*
Barbara Brandyberry
Eugene Ehrlich
Kelly Estrada
Michael Schneider
Luba Schnable-Unger
Ilona Wanner

VIOLA

Roland Hutchinson*
Ellen Hill
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Peggy Reynolds

CELLO

James Celestino*
Megan Doherty
Arnie Feldman
Colleen Helmacy
Helen Kong
Joe Orchard
Cheryl Tedesco

BASS

Bob Whiteley*
Ken Bannerman
Glenn Brady

FLUTE

Gail Berkshire*
Emily Thomsen

FLUTE /PICCOLO

Lisandra Hernandez
Bruno Mayoria

OBOE

Dick Franke*
Molly Raum

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

John Cannizzaro

CLARINET

Donna Dixon*
Theresa Hartman
Scott Porter

BASS CLARINET

Meg Opalka*

BASSOON

Dominic DellAntonia*
Mary Schwartz

FRENCH HORN

Paul Erickson*
Libby Schwartz
Wayne Plumer
Dana Bassett
Linda Lovstad

TRUMPET

Ivan Miller*
Darrell Frydlewicz
John Zdanewicz

TROMBONE

Jay Shanman*
John Vitkovsky
Robert Tiedemann

TUBA

David Olson*

HARP

Patricia Turse*

TIMPANI

Evan Chertok

PERCUSSION

Joe Whitfield*
Helene Kaplan
Garrett Vargo

* Principal

Today's concert is dedicated to the memory of Sam Paparatto



Remembering Sam

We announce with regret the passing of Sabatino "Sam" Paparatto this past August. Beloved husband of our President Laura Paparatto, Sam threw his support behind SOMA in many ways: through his service as secretary of our board, through financial and matching support via his employer and most important, through his advisory capacity and support of Laura. Today's concert is dedicated to Sam's memory. He will be sorely missed.

Society of Musical Arts

Stephen Culbertson, Conductor

Sunday, November 19, 2023

4:00 pm

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Mahler and Sibelius

Festival Overture on the American National Air

the audience is invited to join in singing
The Star Spangled Banner on cue from the stage.

**Dudley Buck
(1839 – 1909)**

Finlandia , Op. 26, No. 7

**Jean Sibelius
(1865 – 1957)**

~~~ Intermission ~~~

Symphony No. 4

*Bedächtig, nicht eilen
In gemächlicher Bewegung
Ruhevoll
Sehr behaglich*

**Gustav Mahler
(1860 – 1911)**

Nadine Robinson, soprano

Upcoming SOMA concerts!

at

St. Paul's Episcopal Church,
Westfield, NJ 07090

March 10, 2024

June 9, 2024

Mark your calendars, and see you here!

Meet today's featured Artist

Nadine Robinson

Soprano Nadine Robinson has been praised for the warmth and expressiveness of her singing. She has performed with the The Plainfield Symphony, Central Jersey Symphony Orchestra, New Brunswick Chamber Orchestra, The Little Opera Company of New Jersey, Rutgers Opera Company, New Jersey Concert Opera, Berkshire Opera, and at the Spoleto Festival dei due Mondi.



Her roles have included Micaela in Carmen, Susanna in Le Nozze di Figaro, Zerlina in Don Giovanni, Despina in Così fan tutte, Adina in L'Elisir d'Amore, Mabel in Pirates of Penzance, Oscar in Un Ballo in Maschera, Dido in Dido and Aeneas and the narrator role of Female Chorus in Benjamin Britten's The Rape of Lucretia. A frequent concert soloist, her notable performances have included Verdi's Requiem, Handel's Messiah, Vivaldi's Gloria, Haydn's Missa Cellensis, Mendelssohn's Lobgesang, Purcell's The Fairy Queen and Pergolesi's Stabat Mater as well as numerous works of Bach and Mozart. She maintains a private voice studio and currently resides in Highland Park, New Jersey with her husband, pianist and conductor Mark Hyczko and their daughter, Anna.

Upcoming Steeple Concerts at St. Paul's Westfield

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Program Notes

by Stephen Culbertson

Dudley Buck (1839-1909): Festival Overture on the American National Air *The Star-Spangled Banner*

This work began as Concert Variations for Organ, then was orchestrated in 1879 and performed that year to celebrate Independence Day. Note the word “Air” in the title; *The Star-Spangled Banner* would not become our National Anthem until 1931.

Buck was an important figure in America in the late 19th Century (some obituaries called him *the most important*). He was a leader in developing our choral tradition as well as being a concert organist and faculty member of New England Conservatory.

On cue from the stage, please stand and sing!

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957): Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 7

From 1809-1917, Finland was an “autonomous” Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire. And during this time, Finland's autonomy allowed a nationalist movement, resulting in the exclusively spoken Finnish language being developed into a modern written language. The 1835 national epic *Kalevala* (which has striking structural similarities to our *Song of Hiawatha*) was the first written work in Finnish. Sibelius was one of the leaders of the Finnish nationalist movement, which also included a poet, a painter and other cultural figures. By 1899, the relationship with Russia had soured to the point where *Päivälehti* (Today's Paper) was banned for three months. Under the cover of a raising money to fund the newspaper-men's pension fund, Sibelius wrote music for a set of historical tableaux that were first presented at the Swedish Theater in Helsinki on November 4. The last of these, *Finland Awakes!* didn't cause much of a stir at the

time. Still, the title was deemed too inciting for the Russian censors; so a month later the music was performed in a symphony concert with the title simply *Finale* (of the set of tableaux). Though it is not based on specific folk melodies, it immediately captured the essence and character of Finnish nationalism. The Helsinki Philharmonic performed it (with a new title, *Finlandia*, suggested by a patron of Sibelius) at the Paris World Exhibition in early 1900. Ever since, the music has been a source of inspiration for Finns and others throughout the world.

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) Symphony No. 4

Mahler was amazingly prolific in only two genres — symphonies and songs — considering (a) he only lived into his early 50s and (b) he was a full-time conductor, leading The Vienna Court (now State) Opera and the New York Philharmonic, among others. He tried to find time in the summers (this was well before the advent of Summer Music Festivals), but the years after Symphony No. 3 in 1896 were not very productive. His writer's block lasted until late 1899, when he made an outline for No. 4. He also insured that he would have a quiet space and built a “composing hut” on a property in the woods where he could work.



**Composing hut at Maiernigg
in the Austrian Alps**

The Fourth Symphony — like several of his orchestral works — is a hybrid of the two genres and marked a new direction for the composer. There is a sophistication in the form and orchestration that is not found in the earlier works. It is shorter (for Mahler) than the earlier and later symphonies with a smaller orchestra (no trombones or tuba and just a few percussion). He uses instruments more for color than volume. The short introduction featuring sleigh bells before the opening theme (almost akin to “Once upon a time” in a fairy tale) tells us that we are entering a different world: childlike simplicity, innocence, spirituality. There is a feeling of nostalgia, partially due to the melodies that are reminiscent of Schubert. In fact, Mahler spent his second summer of working on the symphony also reading all of Schubert's songs and chamber music! Mahler said, “But sometimes the atmosphere darkens and grows strangely terrifying. Not that the sky itself clouds over...But suddenly we become afraid

of it, just as on a beautiful day in the dun-dappled forest one is often overcome by a panic terror.”

Mahler referred to the following trumpet figure as “the little summons,” like a commander calling his troops. He uses the figure again in the opening funeral march of the Fifth Symphony. The previous melodies return, always with some alterations. The ending becomes almost a lullaby before the final outburst.

The second movement was originally given a subtitle: “Freund Hein [an allegorical figure from German folklore, representing death] strikes up the dance for us; he strokes the fiddle most strangely and plays us up to heaven.” The solo violin is tuned up a whole step, creating an eerie sound. There are contrasting, sentimental sections but Freund Hein returns with his fiddle.

The slow third movement is the heart of the symphony. Technically, it’s a double theme and variations with a passacaglia-type bass line. Interestingly, almost no commentators point out that it opens with a direct quote from the quartet in Beethoven’s *Fidelio*, *Mir ist so wunderbar*, Even the same key, G Major! The two themes build to a climax, then an somewhat playful passage before the horns get us back to the rather somber mood. After a quiet passage, the music stops and we are at the gates of heaven: one of the great moments in music! Mahler considered adding the trombones in this passage, but he managed to create a suitable depth of sound.

In the final movement, we are in heaven; or rather a child’s view of heaven. This song for solo voice and orchestra was written eight years before the symphony, so the first three movements were written with this outcome in mind. We now hear it as the source for most of the themes we’ve heard previously, as well as the destination for the whole work. The text is from Mahler’s favorite source *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, a collection of anonymous German folk poetry. The innocent quality the lyrics returns us to the opening moments. The last verse sums it all up: there is no music on earth that can compare, but Mahler does his best to capture the serenity of the moment.

Mahler considered his Fourth Symphony the most “perfect” of all his works.

Das himmlische Leben

(aus Des Knaben Wunderhorn)

Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden,
Drum 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 Ochsen tät 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, Fisolen
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.
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 The Youth's Magic Horn,
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.

not just music

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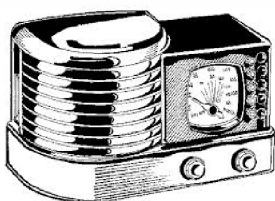


Stephen Culbertson, Music Director for the Society of Musical Arts, has conducted over 35 orchestras, opera productions, and ballet companies, ranging from major to community level, in Europe and the United States. Major engagements include a Spoleto USA debut on the 20th-Century Perspective Series and a new production of Prokofiev's Cinderella for the San Joaquin Ballet in California. In recent seasons, Culbertson has appeared with the Montclair Chamber Orchestra and Orchestra Society of Philadelphia. He has served as Music Director of the Sussex County (New Jersey) Community Orchestra and Associate Conductor of the Bergen (New Jersey) Philharmonic Orchestra. With the latter two orchestras, he conceived and conducted a series of family concerts for the community to great acclaim. He served on the board of Unity Concerts of NJ and was its Artistic Director for the 2002-3 season. Culbertson was recently named Artistic Director and Conductor of the Ridgewood Symphony.

After graduating from University of the Pacific in his native California, Culbertson was awarded a scholarship to study at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki (Finland) with famed conducting teacher Jorma Panula. During his five-year stay, he studied the works of Sibelius with the composer's son-in-law, Jussi Jalas, and conducted most of Finland's major ensembles: The Finnish National Opera, the Helsinki Philharmonic, The Finnish Radio Orchestra, The Vaasa and Tampere Operas, and the Oulu Philharmonic. In addition to conducting, he gained valuable experience (not to mention much-needed income) by singing in a number of professional choruses, including the Finnish Radio Choir, Savonlinna Opera Chorus and the Helsinki Festival production of Britten's Church Parables.

Culbertson introduced Finnish audiences to works by Copland, S.R. Beckler, John Forsman and many others. He introduced local listeners to American music by writing a six-hour series of radio programs entitled A History of American Music for the Finnish Broadcast Corporation. As a guest conductor, Culbertson has worked for the Netherlands Opera and appeared in Czechoslovakia (with the Košice State Philharmonic), Italy, Hungary, and England. Culbertson has been a strong advocate of American music as both a conductor and a publisher. In 1993, he co-founded Subito Music Publishing and became its President in 1997. From 1987 to 1992, he was director of the rental and publications departments for G. Schirmer, Inc., where he supervised the music preparation of, among others, John Corigliano's opera *The Ghosts of Versailles* (for the Metropolitan Opera) and *Symphony No. 1* (for the Chicago Symphony).

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Society of Musical Arts who we are

The Society of Musical Arts (SOMA) was founded in 1981 by Dr. Samuel Applebaum, New Jersey's world famous master teacher of the violin. We are continuing Dr. Applebaum's objectives to provide an opportunity for both amateur and professional string musicians to play baroque and classical music in a chamber orchestra and to present free public concerts with multi-generational appeal to the residents of Essex and surrounding counties.

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Laura Papparatto, President



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