

HARMONIA

ORCHESTRA & CHORUS



2025–2026 SEASON

TESTAMENTS

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WELCOME TO THE 2025–2026 SEASON OF HARMONIA!

Join us as we delve into the artistic testaments of history's most original composers. In works as varied as Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, Antonín Dvořák's *Te Deum* and George Frideric Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, we will explore these musical statements on life's grandest themes—from love to death to the universe itself.

PHOTO: John Contello



WILLIAM WHITE
Music Director

The 2025–2026 season marks William White's eighth as Harmonia's music director. Maestro White is a conductor, composer, teacher, writer and performer whose musical career has spanned genres and crossed disciplines. For four seasons he served as assistant conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, working closely with music director Louis Langrée and an array of guest artists, including John Adams, Philip Glass, Jennifer Higdon and Itzhak Perlman. A noted pedagogue, he has led some of the nation's finest youth orchestra programs, including Portland's Metropolitan Youth Symphony and the Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Maestro White maintains a significant career as a composer of music for the concert stage, theater, cinema, church, radio and film. His compositions—including major choral-orchestral works written specifically for Harmonia—have been performed throughout North America, as well as in Asia and Europe, and several have been released on the MSR Classics, Cedille and Parma record labels. Recordings of his music can be heard at www.willcwhite.com, where he also maintains a blog and publishing business.

William White earned a master's degree in conducting from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music, studying symphonic and operatic repertoire with David Effron and Arthur Fagan. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of Chicago, where his principal teachers were composer Easley Blackwood and conductor Barbara Schubert. In 2004, he began attending the Pierre Monteux School for Conductors under the tutelage of Michael Jinbo, later serving as the school's conducting associate, and then as its composer-in-residence.

Hailing from Bethesda, Maryland, Maestro White began his musical training as a violist. (You can keep any jokes to yourself.) He is active as a clinician, arranger and guest conductor, particularly of his own works. Mr. White is editor of *Tone Prose*, a weekly Substack newsletter about the ever-changing world of classical music. From 2020 to 2022, he produced and co-hosted a podcast, *The Classical Gabfest*, and he has dabbled in the world of educational YouTube videos with *Ask a Maestro*.

On May 3, 2018, William White was named the third music director of Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers, now known as Harmonia. He also serves as artistic director of the Sedona Symphony in Sedona, Arizona.

Dances of Death

Saturday, November 8, 2025 • 7:30 p.m.

First Free Methodist Church

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

William White, conductor



ALFRED SCHNITTKE (1934–1998)

*“Agitato I” from *Story of an Unknown Actor**

SERGEI RACHMANINOV (1873–1943)

*“Blessed art Thou, O Lord” from *All-Night Vigil*, Op. 37*

WILLIAM C. WHITE (*1983)

Dies Irae, Op. 61 — WORLD PREMIERE

Zachary Lenox, baritone

— intermission —

SERGEI RACHMANINOV

Symphonic Dances, Op. 45

Non Allegro

Andante con moto: Tempo di Valse

Lento assai — Allegro vivace

Please silence cell phones and other electronics, and refrain from the use of cameras and recording devices during the performance.

Refreshments will be available in the Fine Center during intermission.

Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus

William White, music director • George Shangrow, founder

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Maestro's Prelude

Dear Listener,

Hallowe'en comes but once a year. Unfortunately, the date doesn't line up with our concert schedule, but I see no reason that that should stop me from programming a concert charged with dark energy — and that's exactly what we have in store tonight.

Let's start with Rachmaninov, since he's the major force of gravity on this program. For all that we associate his music with voluptuous, romantic melodies, it's his sinister, driving textures that have drawn so many of us into his orbit. Rachmaninov was obsessed with death, and we don't need to know anything about his biography in order to know this fact: he proclaims it loud and clear in his music. For one, he loves a dramatic tam-tam stroke, always a symbol of death in Russian symphonic music. (Join us in February for Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* symphony if you want to hear the *locus classicus* of this bit of musical symbolism.) But the main giveaway of his morbid mindset is his near-constant allusion to the melody that is most commonly associated with death: the "Dies Irae."

You're going to hear the "Dies Irae" tune a lot in tonight's concert, and that's by design. This is a program in which the pieces on the first half "add up" to the big work on the second half. The "Dies Irae" is quoted heavily by Rachmaninov in his Symphonic Dances, but that's not the only tune that he quotes. Rachmaninov was a chronically ill 66-year-old man when he composed the piece, and at least part of him knew that he was writing a testament for posterity. He quotes some of his own earlier works, including a glorious movement from his *All-Night Vigil*, which you'll hear tonight in its original choral incarnation.

But what of this "Dies Irae" tune? The song comes from the 13th century and it tells of the end of days. It's not really about death, per se, but it's been associated with death for several hundred years because it found its way into the Roman Mass for the Dead (the so-called "Requiem"). To understand more about the connection between the tune and the lyrics of the "Dies Irae," I bid you read the program notes for my new piece, which will receive its world premiere tonight.

And how does the concert opener by Alfred Schnittke fit into this whole thing? Schnittke is a composer barely known in North America, but he's a modern legend in Russia, and a well-known quantity in Europe. I happen to be an enormous fan, and I've been wanting to bring his music to Harmonia for a while. His dark, zany energy is a big source of inspiration for my own work, and in many ways I think he was the inheritor of the Russian musical tradition of Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and Shostakovich. This little movement sets the stage for a thrill ride of a concert, and I hope you'll enjoy the experience.



Guest Artist

Praised for "a broad, resonant baritone that is exquisitely controlled throughout his entire range," **Zachary Lenox** has performed across North America, including the roles of Silvio (*Pagliacci*), Marcello (*La Bohème*), Marullo (*Rigoletto*), Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Guglielmo and Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Father (*Hansel and Gretel*), Sid (*Albert Herring*), Gianni Schicchi and Betto (*Gianni Schicchi*), and Dick Deadeye (*H.M.S. Pinafore*). He has appeared with Portland Opera



Opera Parallèle, Pacific Music Works, Cascadia Chamber Opera, Portland Summerfest, Portland Chamber Orchestra, Portland Concert Opera, Eugene Concert Choir, Bravo Northwest and the Astoria Music Festival. Concert appearances include Handel's *Messiah*, *Samson* and *Judas Maccabeus*, Haydn's *Lord Nelson* Mass, Schubert's Mass in G, the Verdi and Fauré Requiems, and many works of J.S. Bach, including the *St. Matthew Passion* with Harmonia. Engagements during the 2025–2026 season include Orff's *Carmina Burana* with both the Vancouver (WA) Symphony and the Willamette Master Chorus, Bach's BWV 147 with Epiphany Seattle, the role of Mr. Gobineau in Menotti's *The Medium* with Ping & Woof Opera, Mozart's Requiem with the Auburn Symphony, and Handel's *Messiah* with Harmonia.

Program Notes

Alfred Schnittke

"Agitato I" from *Story of an Unknown Actor*

Schnittke was born in Engels, Russia, on November 24, 1934, and died in Hamburg, Germany, on August 3, 1998. He composed the score for *Story of an Unknown Actor* in 1976. The 2002 concert version prepared by Frank Strobel includes parts for piano, organ and harpsichord, as well as electric guitar and bass guitar.

The son of a German-Jewish father and a German-speaking mother who hailed from Engels, the capital of the Volga German Republic in the Soviet Union, Alfred Schnittke began studying piano in Vienna when his family briefly moved there in 1946. He subsequently took up musical studies in Moscow, first at the October Music School and later at the Moscow Conservatory, where he remained a student until 1961. He then joined the faculty, working at the institution for another decade. Around that time he also became enamored with serialism, which immediately put him at odds with the Soviet party-line musical establishment. He would eventually embrace a philosophy identified as "polystylism," in which he juxtaposed musical influences from across the centuries.

With performances of his concert music few and far between, Schnittke earned much of his income from the

cinema, writing 60-plus film scores over the course of three decades. Most of these were Russian movies that gained little exposure in the West — had he been given the opportunity to score films in Europe, he may well have been ranked with such high-profile composers as Ennio Morricone and Michel Legrand.

Story of an Unknown Actor (1976), helmed by prolific Russian director Aleksandr Zarkhi, follows a middle-aged actor in a Siberian theater troupe as he faces the end of his career. Schnittke's score is largely monothematic, with a single melody heard in a multitude of guises across 12 cues that constitute over a third of the film's 83-minute running time. "Agitato I" accompanies a montage early in the film, with the melody heard seven times. In each instance, a four-bar introduction precedes the 16-bar theme that consists of four four-bar phrases, all capped by a brief coda.

Sergei Rachmaninov

"Blessed art Thou, O Lord" from *All-Night Vigil*, Op. 37

Rachmaninov was born April 1, 1873, at Semyonovo (near Novgorod), Russia, and died March 28, 1943, in Beverly Hills, California. He composed his All-Night Vigil for unaccompanied chorus in February 1915 for the Moscow Synodal Choir, which gave the premiere on March 15 of that year.

Rachmaninov may have been inspired to create his *All-Night Vigil* — an hour-long work that he composed over a mere two weeks in early 1915 — by a performance a year earlier of his 1910 *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, which in retrospect he found lacking. He dedicated the *Vigil* to Stepan Smolensky, former director of the Moscow Synodal School, whose successor Alexander Kastalsy influenced Rachmaninov during the compositional process.

Unlike the *Liturgy*, which consisted entirely of newly composed Rachmaninov melodies, the *Vigil* mixes new thematic material with actual plainchants, some of them newer Greek and Kiev chants, but others ancient *znameni* (from the Russian for "signs") handed down via oral tradition for centuries and then encoded in special notation, or signs. The 15 movements of the *All-Night Vigil* consist of six vespers (for an evening prayer service) followed by nine *matins* (for morning prayer). In the Russian Orthodox Church, these would be sung beginning on the eve of a holy day, from 6:00 p.m. on a Saturday to 9:00 a.m. on Sunday morning.

The ninth movement, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord," is one of the *matins* derived from the *znameni*. Barrie Martyn calls it "one of the most elaborate items in the whole composition and illustrates the way in which Rachmaninov uses countless rhythmic and harmonic variations and choral shadings of a brief chant for a whole narrative. Thus the same flexible formula serves both for the stern opening refrain for tenors and basses . . . and, contrastingly slower, for the soprano and alto statement of the angel host's amazement at finding Our Lord alive and for the angel telling the women to look at the tomb."

Martyn notes that a "particularly delightful feature of this piece is the way in which the different paragraphs are joined by a single held note, usually hummed."

William C. White

Dies Irae, Op. 68

William Coleman White was born August 16, 1983, in Fairfax, Virginia. He composed this work during the summer of 2025; it receives its first performance this evening. In addition to baritone soloist and chorus, the score calls for one each of piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, Eb clarinet, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon and contrabassoon, 2 horns, trumpet, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, percussion (flexatone, daluo, suspended cymbal, ratchet, tam-tam, chimes, bass drum, snare drum, finger cymbals and triangle), piano, organ, harpischord and strings, plus two offstage groups (each consisting of a trumpet, horn and trombone) and a processional drum.

William White is of course familiar to Harmonia audiences as the ensemble's music director (see the program cover for biographical details). He has provided the following commentary about his newest composition:

Dies Irae is the third major choral-orchestral work I have composed for Harmonia. The first, *The Muses* (2022), had as its subject the mystery of artistic inspiration. The second, *Cassandra* (2024), was about speaking truth to power. The subject of *Dies Irae* is righteous indignation (and its constant bedfellow, rank hypocrisy).

The Text

The "*Dies Irae*" is a Latin poem that likely dates from the middle of the 13th century AD. The identity of the poet is lost to the ages, but there is a good chance it was written by Latino Malabranca, a Roman noble and clergyman whose uncle was elevated to the papacy. Malabranca himself attained an exceptionally high rank in the Catholic hierarchy, being named head of the Papal Inquisition in 1278. This was the period during which the Inquisition was at its most zealous, with the church council frequently turning over heretics to local authorities for all manner of medieval punishment. It's this association that makes me suspect Malabranca as the likeliest of the poem's authorial candidates, given its themes of revenge and retribution.

In its original form, the poem featured 18 verses of three lines each. At some point in the centuries that followed its initial composition, the final verse was modified, breaking the verse pattern and scansion. What we have now is a poem of 20 verses in which the first 17 flow with a highly regular (and disturbingly sing-song) lilt, and the final three constitute a disjointed appendix.

The poem's content is, in effect, a gloss on the Book of Revelation: the final, controversial book of the New Testament. The poem distills Revelation's dark vision of the Day of Judgment, when the Judge of Righteousness (presumably God the Father, but perhaps Jesus) will descend to Earth to separate the wicked from the blessed. In just a few short lines, the poem presents all of the most powerful images associated with this event: the summoning of the dead from their graves, the blast of the trumpet, the heavenly Judge reading his verdicts from "the book in which all is contained," and the eternal hellfire waiting for those who don't pass muster.

The Requiem

The next step in this poem's history is one that I will admit I find altogether perplexing. At some point in the ~150 years that followed, the poem was subsumed into the Requiem Mass and became a formal part of the Roman Catholic liturgy for the dead. I can only imagine the first time that a (literal) Goth edgelord stood up to read a poem at his dad's funeral and launched in with, "The day of wrath, that day will dissolve the world in ashes." I wish there could have been an *Office*-style mockumentary to capture the wide-eyed side glances between the other parishioners.

However it happened, the poem became part of the liturgy, and it is in this form that the words have become so well known today. Many great composers have set these words to music as part of their music for the complete Requiem Mass. Mozart's and Verdi's settings have even achieved escape velocity and become well known outside the confines of classical music.

The Melody

The music of Mozart and Verdi should not, however, be confused with the original musical setting of the words of the "Dies Irae." The poem was first set to music very early on, probably before the year 1300, as a Gregorian chant:



The tune has gone on to have a life of its own, especially the first eight-note motive, and *most* especially the first four notes. This little melodic riff has become a musical shorthand for all things related to death and the macabre. It has been quoted — just the notes mind you, not the words — by everyone from Berlioz to Chopin to Brahms to Liszt to Mahler to Shostakovich to Ligeti to Wendy Carlos to Stephen Sondheim. The composer who got the most mileage out of it has got to have been Sergei Rachmaninov, who was obsessed with death and wanted everyone to know it.

The plainchant setting of the "Dies Irae" is, however, not limited to the first eight notes: all 20 lines of the poem are set to music in a rather complicated melodic structure that (bear with me) goes aabbcc aabbcc aabbccdef. The b section (not to mention the c, d, e or f sections) is hardly ever referenced in music by other composers.

Beyond The Requiem

Given the fact that the "Dies Irae" was written as a standalone poem, I find it surprising that it has only rarely been set to music outside the context of the Requiem Mass. In fact, the only instance I know of a composer using the text in this way comes from Jean-Baptiste Lully in 1683.

I was inspired to set the text while preparing for Harmonia's performance of the Mozart Requiem in November

of 2022. It wasn't until then that I learned about the history of the "Dies Irae," and when I found out that it began life as an independent text, it just seemed like the most obvious thing in the world to set it as a standalone composition.

That was all well and good, but then I had a decision to make: whether to set the words to my own original music or to use the pre-existing Gregorian chant melody. And if I did use the chant, would I use the whole thing, or just make occasional allusions to the "head motive" during the piece?

I decided to go for broke. In this piece — with precious few exceptions — the entire chant melody is presented intact, tethered to its original words. As far as I can tell, this hasn't been attempted since a Requiem setting of Antoine Brumel in 1500, but I can assure you, it has led to exceedingly different results.

The Judge

Not surprisingly for a poem about the day of judgement, the "Dies Irae" makes frequent reference to "Judex," that is, "The Judge," but this judge never enters the scene as a "character" per se. That hole at the center of the text makes one wonder, if the judge did show up, what would he say?

This became a pressing issue for me, because early on in my conceptualization of this piece, I decided to include a part for solo baritone, and not just for any solo baritone, but specifically for Zachary Lenox. I had been wanting to write something substantial for Mr. Lenox since he began appearing as a soloist with Harmonia four years ago. I have rarely encountered a bass-baritone (which I'm convinced he really is) who is able to wield such grandeur of sound with such virtuosity of technique.

But I had to decide if the soloist would sing bits of the actual "Dies Irae" text or something else. This resulted in a wild-goose chase, from court verdicts throughout history (including in the Inquisition) to ancient documents concerning justice, and I even considered commissioning a contemporary poet to create something new.

Then on one fateful night, an hours-long session of multi-lingual Googling led me to *the* perfect text: the anonymous libretto of an obscure Latin cantata by Marc-Antoine Charpentier titled *Extremum Dei Judicium*.

Extremum Dei Judicium

Very little information survives about *Extremum Dei Judicium* ("God's Last Judgment"). As far as anyone can tell, it was composed in Paris in the 1690s. Charpentier, a middle-Baroque French composer best known for his *Messe de minuit* ("Midnight Mass for Christmas") had studied in Rome during the 1660s with Giacomo Carissimi, the Italian composer who basically invented the genre of the Latin oratorio (exemplified by his *Jephthe*, a favorite of some extremely peculiar people).

Extremum Dei Judicium is exactly what I was after, basically a rendering of the "Dies Irae" into a dramatic scene. (Charpentier referred to his works in this genre as "*histoires sacrées*.") There are roles for angels, a chorus of the damned, a chorus of the blessed, and — most crucially — God.

It took me ages to track down a source for the actual text of this oratorio, but I was able to find a scan of a handwritten vocal part created for a performance in France in the 1970s. As I started reading the first “*Récit de Dieu*,” my internal alarm bells began ringing. I typed out the text as quickly as I could so that I could check Google Translate against my barely adequate literacy in Latin.

“Hear, O heavens, what I say, let the Earth hear the words of my mouth. I have looked down from on high upon the children of men to see if there is any that understandeth or seeketh after God: and there is none that doeth good, not one. Wicked and perverse generation, dost thou render this unto thy Lord? Foolish and unwise people, dost thou render this unto thy God?”

Now that’s what I’m talking about!

The Orchestra

I have scored this work for a rather eccentric instrumentarium. First and foremost are three keyboards: piano, organ and harpsichord, a trio highly favored by the Alfred Schnittke, who was, is, and shall remain one of my primary musical inspirations. (I will freely admit that, in many ways, this piece is my version of Schnittke’s *Faust* Cantata.)

The woodwind section is also unusual, in that there is one of each instrument, but not just one flute, one oboe, etc. I invited all the siblings along, so there’s piccolo, English horn, clarinets in three sizes, and contrabassoon.

The brass section is normal, except that the players are dispersed around the hall in such a way as to make for dramatic effect (which I will not spoil here). The percussion section includes several toys, such as the flexatone, along with certain left-field instruments, such as the daluo (a Chinese ascending-pitch hand gong.)

The Form

The piece is through-composed, but there are definite “movements” within this form: the first six verses of the “*Dies Irae*” comprise the opening section, followed by an arioso and rage aria for the Judge (in the mode of a manic, bluesy lounge-lizard song).

This is followed by a “slow movement” for the chorus once again, singing the seventh through twelfth verses of the poem. Then we get another arioso for the Judge, followed by a pair of songs for his character in which the chorus also sings. The first of these is the only extended portion of the piece set in the major mode; the second is a “broken mirror” reflection of the first (naturally, in minor), in which I imagined what it would sound like if Elvis were to sing a Verdi aria. In Latin.

The work concludes with a slow-building coda, an unholy benediction, and a final amen.

— William White

Sergei Rachmaninov

Symphonic Dances, Op. 45

Rachmaninov composed this work during July and August of 1940, orchestrating it over the next two months and completing the full score on October 29. Eugene Ormandy conducted the

Philadelphia Orchestra in the premiere on January 3, 1941. The score requires triple woodwinds (including piccolo, English horn, bass clarinet and contrabassoon, plus alto saxophone), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, harp, piano, timpani, percussion (triangle, tambourine, bass drum, side drum, tam-tam, cymbals, xylophone, chimes and glockenspiel) and strings.

In addition to four numbered piano concertos and three numbered symphonies (plus a “choral symphony,” *The Bells*), Sergei Rachmaninov composed a concerto-in-all-but name (the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* of 1934) and one last symphonic foray (the *Symphonic Dances* of 1940). While these two late-in-life works featured the soaring melodies and lush orchestration for which he was famous, each also exhibited a newfound compactness of form and spikier, more adventurous harmonies. The *Symphonic Dances* would be Rachmaninov’s final work, the only major piece he composed entirely in the United States.

During the 1930s, Rachmaninov’s career as one of the world’s greatest pianists left less and less time to devote to composition. But he spent the summer of 1940 at a rented estate on Long Island where, writes Michael Steinberg, “there was enough space to allow Rachmaninov a room where he could not be heard composing, that being a condition *sine qua non*.” He spent the hours between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. practicing for his upcoming fall concert tour and writing his first orchestral work since his 1936 third symphony.

After completing a piano score, Rachmaninov wrote an August 21 letter to Philadelphia Orchestra music director Eugene Ormandy announcing “a new symphonic piece, which I naturally want to give first to you and your orchestra,” as a result of the composer’s decades-long association with Ormandy and his Philadelphians. “Unfortunately, my concert tour begins on October 14,” the letter continued. “I have a great deal of practice to do and I don’t know whether I shall be able to finish the orchestration before November.” He was, in fact, able to meet that deadline, completing the full score on October 29, while simultaneously preparing a version for two pianos.

Rachmaninov’s original title for the piece was *Fantastic Dances*, its three movements called “Midday,” “Twilight” and “Midnight.” He then thought of simply calling it “Dances,” but “was afraid people would think I had written dance music for jazz orchestras.” Ultimately, he dispensed with descriptive movement titles and dubbed the work “*Symphonic Dances*”: Edvard Grieg, Cyril Scott and Paul Hindemith had all used that term before him, and Leonard Bernstein after, but today “*Symphonic Dances*” first and foremost brings to mind Rachmaninov.

The concept of a set of orchestral dances may have been inspired by the thought of turning the piece into a ballet: his *Paganini Rhapsody* had enjoyed much success when choreographed by the Russian-born Michael Fokine (who also happened to be a Long Island resident that summer). Rachmaninov played through the piece for Fokine, who wrote: “Before the hearing I was a little scared of the Russian element that you had mentioned, but yesterday I fell in love with it, and it seemed to me appropriate and beautiful.”

A Fokine ballet, however, never came to fruition and the choreographer died two years later.

The opening movement begins quietly, with a simple descending triad that soon explodes into a forceful C-minor statement from the full orchestra, the three descending notes of the triad extending into longer and longer phrases to form a complete melody. The rhythmic opening material eventually subsides, with oboes and clarinets providing simple accompaniment for an expansive E-major melody carried by an alto saxophone. Having never written for the instrument before, the composer consulted famed Broadway orchestrator Robert Russell Bennett. "At that time he played over his score for me on the piano and I was delighted to see his approach... was quite the same as that of all of us when we try to imitate the sound of the orchestra at the keyboard," Bennett reported. "He sang, whistled, stamped, rolled his chords, and otherwise conducted himself not as one would expect of so great and impeccable piano virtuoso." (For the bowings in the score, Rachmaninov consulted none other than the violin virtuoso Fritz Kreisler.)

Strings take up the soaring saxophone melody, leading to a recapitulation of the opening material. In a brief but remarkable coda, Rachmaninov quotes a theme from his disastrously received Symphony No. 1 of 1897, recasting a minor-mode march motive into a luscious C-major melody. The movement ends much as it began: quietly, and dominated by the descending triad from the opening bars (albeit now in C major).

Muted brass instruments introduce the central movement, which soon establishes itself as a *valse fantastique*, but in $\frac{6}{8}$ and $\frac{9}{8}$ meter rather than the traditional $\frac{3}{4}$, allowing for an ebb-and-flow pulse compared to the more regular beat of waltz time. Here Rachmaninov mixes sugary-sweet Romanticism with melancholy chromaticism. "These waltzes are not festive, but resigned and anxious by turn," writes Steven Ledbetter, who compares this movement to Ravel's *La Valse* and Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*, "the harmonic turns of which recall Rachmaninov's waltz etched in acid."

After a brief, slow introduction, the finale (also predominantly in $\frac{9}{8}$ and $\frac{6}{8}$) is dominated by syncopated rhythms with displaced accents that suggest Stravinskian mixed meters, followed by a more malleable central episode. Rachmaninov eventually introduces two melodies that battle against each other: the first is from "Blessed art Thou, O Lord" in his 1915 *All-Night Vigil*, and the other is the "Dies Irae," which had featured in a number of his major works over the previous decades. Near the end, the composer writes "Alliluya" in the score at the point where he quotes the "Alleluia" passage from "Blessed art Thou, O Lord."

Although Rachmaninov was already suffering from health issues that would lead him to move to Beverly Hills for its warm climate and proximity to musical friends and colleagues, it is difficult to state with certainty that the Symphonic Dances constituted a conscious final statement, but it functions as a magnificent one, nevertheless.

— Jeff Eldridge



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English Horn

Margaret Siple

Clarinet

Steven Noffsinger*
 Chris Peterson

Bass Clarinet

Cynthia Ely

Saxophone

Marcel Helland

Bassoon

Jeff Eldridge*
 David Wall

Contrabassoon

Michel Jolivet

French Horn

Barney Blough
 Laurie Heidt*
 Matthew Kruse
 Carey LaMothe
 Robin Stangland

Trumpet

Patrick Hunninghake*
 Nick Simko
 Janet Young

Trombone

John Griffin*
 Nathaniel Oxford
 Bruce Reed

Tuba

David Brewer

Timpani

Dan Oie

Percussion

Ginny Bear
 Eric Daane
 Kathie Flood
 Amy Vandergon
 Matthew Walton

Harp

Juliet Stratton

Keyboard

Sheila Bristow*
 Youngjin Joo
 Luke Raffanti

Electric Guitar

Sixing Chen

Bass Guitar

Robert Shangrow

Soprano

Barb Anderson
 Ann Bridges
 Kaitlin Cho
 Abigail Cooper
 Karen Dunstan
 Hsing-Hui Hsu
 Peggy Hudson
 Alivia Jones
 Peggy Kurtz §
 Danny Maggs
 Veena Ramakrishnan
 Kyla Roberts
 Ananya Saxena
 Nancy Shasteen
 Cassie Van Pay
 Jennylynn Vidas
 Cassandra Willock

Alto

Sharon Agnew
 Janelle Burris
 Elyse Christensen
 Anjali Chudasama
 Susanna Erber
 Pamela Ivezić
 Ellen Kaisse
 Theodora Letz §
 Laurie Medill
 Esther Ranjbar

Tenor

Dan Charlson §
 Sixing Chen
 William Ekstrom
 Aaron Giles
 Steve Kauffman
 Aaron Keyt
 Lincoln Klopfenstein
 Geoffrey Lambeth
 Matt McLeod
 Lyon Stewart
 Rick Thompson
 Jon White

Bass

Stephen Carl
 Rabi Lahiri
 Charles Liu
 Evan Norberg
 Jeremy Pfister Schneider
 Glenn Ramsdell
 Kevin Read
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** *concertmaster*

* *principal*

§ *section leader*

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Harmonia, a non-profit 501(c)3 arts organization, thanks all of the supporters who have made our first 56 years possible. The above list includes tax-deductible gifts received from August 1, 2024, through October 25, 2025. Please e-mail giving@harmoniasseattle.org if you notice omissions or inaccuracies. Contributions are fully tax-deductible. To make a donation, please visit harmoniasseattle.org/support or call 206-682-5208.



About Harmonia

Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus is a vocal-instrumental ensemble unique among Pacific Northwest musical organizations, combining a 75-member orchestra with a 55-voice chorus to perform oratorio masterworks alongside symphonic and a *cappella* repertoire, world premieres and chamber music.

Founded by George Shangrow in 1969 as the Seattle Chamber Singers, from its inception the group performed a diverse array of music—works of the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods to contemporary pieces and world premieres—accompanied by an *ad hoc* group of instrumentalists for Bach cantatas and Handel oratorios (many of which received their first Seattle performances at SCS concerts). Over the past five-plus decades, the ensemble has performed all of the greatest choral-orchestral masterpieces, including Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*, Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms' *German Requiem*, Haydn's *The Seasons* and Britten's *War Requiem*. Meanwhile, the orchestra, partnering with world-class soloists, has explored the symphonic repertoire, programming beloved warhorses alongside seldom-performed gems.

After George Shangrow lost his life in a car crash in 2010, the volunteer performers of Harmonia partnered with a number of distinguished guest conductors to carry on the astounding musical legacy he had created. Clinton Smith served as the ensemble's second music director from 2013 to 2017, and William White began his tenure in 2018. In 2021, the organization rebranded as Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus.

Support Harmonia

As with any performing-arts organization, ticket proceeds provide only a fraction of our operating costs. In order to continue our mission of bringing great music to Seattle-area audiences, we depend on financial support from individuals, foundations and corporations. Every gift, no matter what size, enables us to perform more music and reach more people. Donors are acknowledged in our concert programs (unless they prefer to remain anonymous) and receive special benefits, including invitations to exclusive events.

Harmonia accepts gifts in many forms beyond one-time cash donations, including **financial instruments** such as stocks, properties and annuities. We also encourage donors to consider a recurring monthly contribution as part of our **Ostinato Giving Program**. Our **Commissioning Club** sponsors the creation of new works, including some you will hear this season.

Our planned-giving program, the **George Shangrow Society**, is named in honor of our founder, and accepts gifts in wills, trusts or beneficiary designations.

To contribute, navigate to harmoniasseattle.org/support, scan the QR code below, or visit the lobby during intermission or after the concert.



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venmo

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A JOYOUS TRILOGY

Saturday * October 4, 2025 * 7:30 P.M.

Shorecrest Performing Arts Center • Shoreline

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Serena Eduljee *soprano*

Charles Robert Stephens *baritone*

Quinn Mason *A Joyous Trilogy*

Antonín Dvořák *Te Deum*

Johannes Brahms *Symphony No. 1*

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * October 25, 2025 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

DANCES OF DEATH

Saturday * November 8, 2025 * 7:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Zachary Lenox *baritone*

Alfred Schnittke *Agitato*

Sergei Rachmaninov "Blessed Art Thou, O Lord"

William C. White *Dies Irae* **WORLD PREMIERE**

Sergei Rachmaninov *Symphonic Dances*

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * November 22, 2025 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Saturday * December 13, 2025 * 2:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Sunday * December 14, 2025 * 2:30 P.M.

Bastyr University Chapel • Kenmore

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Ellaina Lewis *soprano*

Sarah Larkworthy *mezzo-soprano*

Edward Graves *tenor*

José Rubio *baritone*

Handel *Messiah*

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * January 24, 2026 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

REFLECTIONS

Saturday * February 7, 2026 * 7:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Chorus

Samuel Barber *Reincarnations*

Huntley Beyer *Reflections* **WORLD PREMIERE**

plus music by **Esmail, Burleigh, Purcell, Paulus, Bristow** and **Runestad**

PATHOS

Saturday * February 28, 2026 * 7:30 P.M.

Northshore Concert Hall • Kenmore

Harmonia Orchestra

Rachel Lee Priday, *violin*

Jean Sibelius *Karelia* Overture

Carlos Garcia *Violin Concerto* **WORLD PREMIERE**

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 6 ("Pathétique")*

ISRAEL IN EGYPT

Saturday * March 28, 2026 * 2:30 P.M.

First Free Methodist Church • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

George Frideric Handel *Israel in Egypt*

HARMONIA CHAMBER PLAYERS

Saturday * April 11, 2026 * 2:00 P.M.

University Unitarian Church • Seattle

THE PLANETS

Friday * May 8, 2026 * 8:00 P.M.

Benaroya Hall • Seattle

Harmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Wellspring Ensemble

Rose Beattie *mezzo-soprano*

Robert Kechley *Fanfare*

Lili Boulanger *Psaume XXIV*

Lili Boulanger *Du fond de l'abîme*

Gustav Holst *The Planets*

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PEACOCKS & PEARLS

Friday * May 29, 2026 * 6:00 P.M.

Brockey Center at South Seattle College

William C. White *La Bonne Chose*