

Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth

presents

Handel Society of Dartmouth College

Filippo Ciabatti, conductor

Erma Mellinger, assistant conductor and vocal coach

with

Eva Rae Martinez, soprano

Luke Scott, bass-baritone

Chenyu Wang & Shuangning Liu, piano

Wednesday, November 6, 8 pm

Rollins Chapel • Dartmouth College • 2024

Handel Society of Dartmouth College is funded in part by the Friends of the Handel Society.

We thank Mrs. Selma Bornstein for her generous donation of the Petrof concert grand piano, given in loving memory of her husband Dr. Murray Bornstein and used for tonight's concert.

Program

Approximate duration: 75 minutes

A German Requiem, Op. 45

for soloists, chorus and two pianos

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

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

arr. August Grütters (1841–1911)

Program Notes

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) revealed his deepest feelings about life and death in his “German Requiem” (*Ein deutsches Requiem*, Op. 45). Written over about 10 years starting in his 20s—a period that encompassed the deaths of two people especially important to Brahms—the work doesn’t use the traditional Latin mass, but instead sets Brahms’s own selected text from the Lutheran Bible in German. Perhaps this personal connection to the text is one reason the Requiem is so profound and beautiful, painting a broad, detailed emotional canvas with splendid vocal and symphonic writing.

Music historians say Brahms was only in his 20s when he began to consider the groundbreaking step of composing a Requiem, or mass for the dead, based not on the traditional Latin Requiem mass text but on biblical texts that spoke more to his own personal beliefs. The idea began to take shape in his mind in 1857, a year after the death of his friend and mentor, Robert Schumann. But it wasn’t for another eight years, following the death of his mother, that he took

up completed the bulk of the work, adding other movements to it over the next four years.

Brahms himself chose the text, using the German Lutheran Bible that he, a Protestant northerner, grew up with. Unlike the traditional Requiem text, a German Requiem doesn’t directly allude to an afterlife. Instead, through careful choosing of text, Brahms creates a monumental work that consoles the living, starting with an opening movement that gently intones, “*Selig sind, die da Leid tragen*” (“Blessed are they that mourn”).

By 1869, the work stood complete as a seven-movement Requiem for chorus, soloists and orchestra. In the process, it became the central work of Brahms’ career, the one that established him as a composer of major stature and linked two of the most important spheres of his lifelong musical endeavor, the vocal and the symphonic.

Rebecca Bailey, 2018

About the Artists

Praised for his “sensitive and nuanced” musicianship and for delivering performances “with admirable sweep and tension,” **Filippo Ciabatti** is a dynamic and versatile conductor who enjoys a multifaceted career. A native of Florence, Italy, Mr. Ciabatti has appeared as a guest conductor with numerous orchestras in Europe and the Americas. He regularly serves as cover conductor for the Portland Symphony Orchestra (Maine) and will make his guest conducting debut for them in 2024. This year, he will also make his guest conducting debut with the Macon-Mercer Symphony Orchestra and the San Angelo Symphony (Texas).

Mr. Ciabatti has collaborated with artists including Philadelphia Orchestra concertmaster David Kim, baritone Nathan Gunn, cellist Gabriel Cabezas, pianist Sally Pinkas, flutist Luciano Tristaino and mandolinist Carlo Aonzo. An advocate for contemporary music and collaborations between musical genres, he premiered a secular oratorio composed by renowned jazz composer Taylor Ho Bynum, and commissioned a cello concerto by composer Noah Luna that was aired on NPR’s *From the Top*.

Since October 2023, he has been serving as Assistant Conductor of Boston Baroque. He is the founding Artistic Director of Upper Valley Baroque.

Also at ease on the opera stage, Mr. Ciabatti has recently been named Music Director of the Opera Company of Middlebury and has also conducted many full operatic productions while serving as guest conductor at Opera North (New Hampshire) and Lyric Theatre at Illinois.

Mr. Ciabatti is the Director of Orchestral and Choral Programs at the Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth College. Since the beginning of his tenure, he has been invested in working on innovative and cross-disciplinary projects that provide exceptional opportunities for both students and audiences.

As a collaborative pianist and vocal coach, Mr. Ciabatti has been on the faculty of Camerata de’ Bardi in New York City, and Scuola Italia per Giovani Cantanti Lirici in Sant’Angelo in Vado (Italy). He is currently on faculty at the summer opera program Opera Viva! in Verona (Italy).

Mr. Ciabatti holds advanced degrees in piano, choral conducting and orchestral conducting from Italy and the United States. He is the winner of the 2021 American Prize in Conducting (college/university division). In 2018, he served as a Conducting Fellow at the Aurora Music Festival (Sweden), under the direction of Jukka-Pekka Saraste.

Erma Mellinger (Assistant Conductor, Vocal Coach, Senior Lecturer) received her Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance, with Highest Distinction, from Northwestern University’s School of Music before earning her Master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music. After one year pursuing her doctorate, she embarked on her singing career as a principal artist with many major opera companies across the United States, including Florida Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, Cleveland Opera, Pittsburgh Opera Theater, Sarasota Opera and Chautauqua Opera, performing over thirty different roles. Ms. Mellinger is also at home on the concert stage having sung many solo recitals as well as performing as a soloist with orchestras across the country, and performing in France, England, Germany and Italy as soloist with the Handel Society. An accomplished voice teacher, Ms. Mellinger has been on the Dartmouth College faculty since 1996.

Eva Rae Martinez is a Colombian-American soprano based in New York City. Currently pursuing her Master’s degree in Opera at the Yale School of Music, Eva recently performed the role of Anne Trulove in *The Rake’s Progress*, and scenes from *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Lucia), *Florencia en el Amazonas* (Florencia), *La bohème* (Mimi), *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Blanche), and *Le nozze di Figaro*

About the Artists *continued*

(Contessa) with Yale Opera. Previously as a student at the Manhattan School of Music, she performed Samuel Barber’s “Knoxville: Summer of 1915” and the Mozart and Fauré Requiems. Eva spent this past summer studying at the Georg Solti Accademia in Castiglione della Pescaia, Italy, and as a young artist at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute. As a 2023 vocal fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center led by Dawn Upshaw, Eva performed as the soprano soloist in Mahler’s Fourth Symphony under the baton of Andris Nelsons. She was also a participant at Houston Grand Opera’s Young Artists’ Vocal Academy. Eva is a New England Region Encouragement Award Winner of the 2023 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. She is thrilled to be making her Carnegie Hall debut opening the Oratorio Society of New York’s 2024–2025 season as the soprano soloist in Orff’s *Carmina Burana*.

Bass-baritone **Luke Scott** appeared in New York’s Broadway district in the critically acclaimed *Figaro 90210*, and in *Don Giovanni* with Salt Marsh Opera, *Trial at Rouen* with Odyssey Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Opera Naples, Rogers and Hammerstein in concert with Opera Theater of Connecticut, *Tosca* with Long Island Lyric Opera, *La Bohème* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at the Natchez Festival, Lancelot in Camelot with Indianapolis Opera, and Purcell’s *Tempest* at the Connecticut Early Music Festival. Other appearances include *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Geneva Light Opera, *L’Elisire D’amore* with Opera Theater of Connecticut, *Die Zauberflöte* with Opera Vermont, *Ludus Danielis* with Boston Camerata, *South Pacific* with the Norwalk Symphony, *Figaro (Le Nozze di Figaro)* with Opera on the Avalon, *Argante (Rinaldo)* with Boston Opera Collaborative, and *Leporello (Don Giovanni)* with Opera Western Reserve. He has performed as an oratorio soloist with Newburyport Choral Society, New Haven Chorale, Cape Cod Symphony, and Eastern Connecticut Symphony. Mr. Scott was a finalist for the Art Song Preservation Society of New York competition, and has received awards from the Martina Arroyo Foundation, the American Prize in

opera, Bel Canto Scholarship Foundation, Shreveport Opera, and Gerda Lissner Foundation.

Dr. Chenyu Wang began her piano studies at age 5. She went on to study at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Eastman School of Music, Indiana University, and the Hartt School, University of Hartford. She has performed at masterclasses for legendary pianists such as Robert McDonald, Julian Martin, Luiz Castro, Boris Slutsky, Rebecca Pennys, Autur Pizarro, Jose Ramon Mendez, Blanca Uribe, Thomas Schumacher, Roberta Rust, and many others. Dr. Wang has been awarded several prizes including The American Prize in Piano Performance (2019–2020), IBLA Annual International Music Competition (2019), and Bartok-Kabalevsky-Prokofiev International Piano Competition (2019). Dr. Wang frequently performs solo and collaborative concerts in China, Europe, and the USA. As an experienced collaborative pianist, Dr. Wang played numerous rehearsals, juries, and concerts with both vocalists and instrumentalists at Eastman and Hartt. Dr. Wang also devotes her passion and energy to music education. She has taught over 50 students of various levels and backgrounds. Following her students’ successes at national and international piano competitions, she was awarded the Best Piano Teacher of Jiangxi Province by the Musician Association of Jiangxi, China, in 2018. Her students have been admitted to top music schools in both the United States and China.

Dr. Shuangning Liu received both an Artist Diploma and Doctor of Musical Arts from the Hartt School of Music under the guidance of renowned pianist Dr. Paul Rutman. He also holds degrees from the New England Conservatory and China Conservatory of Music. He won his first competition at age 9 and has since made a name for himself in international competitions and performances. In 1999, a special program, “Liu Shuangning’s Piano Journey,” was aired on Heilongjiang TV. Dr. Liu has performed in Asia, the Americas, Europe, and Australia, where he was selected by the China Musicians Association to

tour major cities such as Sydney, Melbourne, and Canberra. In addition to his solo work, Dr. Liu is keen on performing chamber music. He participated in more than 30 chamber music performances while at Hartt, with repertoire spanning from the Baroque period to the contemporary era. He has had the privilege of receiving guidance from renowned piano masters

such as Anne Koscielny, Raymond Hanson, Joseph Kalichstein, Hung-kuan Chen, Boaz Sharon, Margreet Francis, and Florence Millet. As a dedicated educator, Dr. Liu is serving as faculty at Irvine Conservatory of Music. His passion for music and teaching also inspired him to establish the Castle Piano Studio.

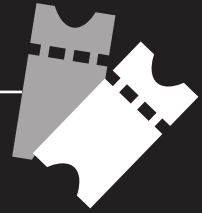
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Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Erin Anderson	Emma Ambroji	Charles Blandy GC	Jim Anderson
Jennifer Bates GC	Carol Barr	<i>Brian Clancy</i>	Greg Bazylewicz
Genie Braasch	Lynda Butler	Scot Drysdale	Alan Bergeron
Kate Caldwell	Kate Chamberlin	Jon Felde	<i>Sammy Bonasso ’24</i>
<i>Susan Cancio-Bello*</i>	Kathy Christie	Ed Felstead	Bill Braasch
Katina Christensen ’25	Ora Cullen	Edward Ferran GC	Jacob Cooper GC
Effie Cummings	<i>Anne Felde</i>	Peter Flannigan	Charlie Freeman
Melissa Dillier	Linda Fowler	Greg Johnson	Stephan Griffin GC
Janny Gao	Giselle Hart	Joel Lazar	Tyler Harwell
Mikilena Hall	Catherine Hedberg GC	Bob Maurer	Paul Hecht
Julianne Harden	Mardy High	Rick Read	Joe Kuester ’27
Qiana Johnson	Cara Hill	Cole Seagroves ’25+	Colby Lish ’25
Katie Kalata Rusch	Alicia Hodges	Marshall Ward	Will McKinney ’28
Elizabeth Keeley	Erica Ko	Hunter Wells	David Thron
Janet Poisson GC	Patty Ko		Allan Wieman
Gaby LaRoche	Rebecca Maggi		Ben Williams
Angelyn Liu ’28	Emma McMurray		
Juliette Madan	Rosemary Orgren		
Gerri Smith	Nina Peluso		
Aidan Wright	Jules Reed		
Astrid Olsen ’27	Irene Schaperdoth		
	Jo Shute		

Italics = section leader
* = President
+ = Student manager
GC = Guest chorister

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