# BERLIOZ REQUIEM

REQUIEM LA MORT D'ORPHÉE KENNETH TARVER, TENOR

# **HECTOR BERLIOZ**

Requiem

	Requiem et Kyrie: Introït9:23
	Dies irae: Prose—Tuba mirum
	Quid sum miser
	Rex tremendæ5:36
)	Quaerens me
)	Lacrymosa9:59
'	Offertorium: Chœur des âmes du Purgatoire
3	Hostias
)	Sanctus
)	Agnus Dei
	Kenneth Tarver, tenor
	Seattle Symphony Chorale   Seattle Pro Musica
1	La mort d'Orphée ("The Death of Orpheus") 12:55 Introduction et Monologue— Bacchanale Kenneth Tarver, tenor Seattle Symphony Chorale

# SEATTLESYMPHONY.ORG

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# SEATTLE SYMPHONY

The Seattle Symphony is one of America's leading symphony orchestras and is internationally acclaimed for its innovative programming and extensive recording history. Under the leadership of Music Director Ludovic Morlot since September 2011, the Symphony is heard from September through July by more than 500,000 people through live performances and radio broadcasts. It performs in one of the finest modern concert halls in the world — the acoustically superb Benaroya Hall — in downtown Seattle. Its extensive education and community engagement programs reach over 65,000 children and adults each year. The Seattle Symphony has a deep commitment to new music, commissioning many works by living composers each season. The orchestra has made nearly 150 recordings and has received three Grammy Awards, 23 Grammy nominations, two Emmy Awards and numerous other accolades. In 2014 the Symphony launched its in-house recording label, Seattle Symphony Media.





# LUDOVIC MORLOT, CONDUCTOR

As the Seattle Symphony's Music Director, Ludovic Morlot has been received with extraordinary enthusiasm by musicians and audiences alike, who have praised him for his deeply musical interpretations, his innovative programming and his focus on community collaboration. From 2012 to 2014 Morlot was also Chief Conductor of La Monnaie, one of Europe's most prestigious opera houses.

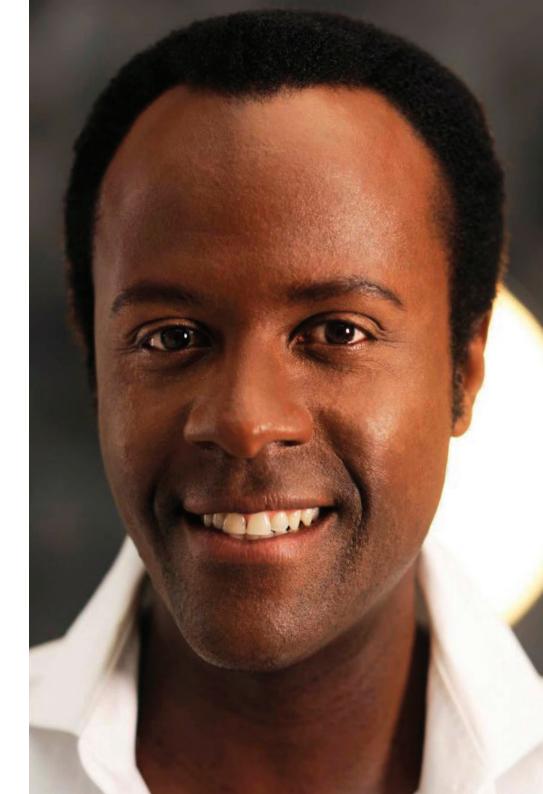
In the U.S., Ludovic Morlot has conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra and Pittsburgh Symphony. Additionally, he has conducted the Budapest Festival Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Dresden Staatskapelle, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre National de France, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra and the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich.

Trained as a violinist, Morlot studied conducting at the Royal Academy of Music in London and then at the Royal College of Music as recipient of the Norman del Mar Conducting Fellowship. Morlot was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music in 2014 in recognition of his significant contributions to music. He is Chair of Orchestral Conducting Studies at the University of Washington School of Music.

# KENNETH TARVER, TENOR

Kenneth Tarver is considered one of the outstanding Bel Canto tenors of his generation, acknowledged for his beauty of tone, virtuosic technique, extensive and even vocal range, coupled with an attractive and elegant stage presence. A specialist in Mozart and demanding virtuosic operatic repertoire, he has appeared at the most prestigious opera houses and concert halls around the world, performing both wellknown and seldom-performed works with conductors such as René Jacobs, Riccardo Chailly, Pierre Boulez and Claudio Abbado.

He has appeared at leading opera houses, including the Royal Opera House-Covent Garden, Wiener Staatsoper, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Bayerische Staatsoper, Dresden Semperoper, Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, Opéra Comique in Paris, Theatre de La Monnaie in Brussels, the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the Festival in Aix-en-Provence, cultivating a wide repertoire from Baroque through Classical (Handel, Mozart, Haydn), Bel Canto (Rossini, Donizetti, Berlioz) and contemporary repertoire (Shchedrin, Stravinsky). As a recording artist, Tarver has an extensive catalogue and has been awarded two Grammys.



# SEATTLE SYMPHONY

LUDOVIC MORLOT

The Harriet Overton Stimson Music Director

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- on Requiem

 Concertmaster on La mort d'Orphée

- 2016 recording Principal on Requiem
- ~ Principal on
- La mort d'Orphée 2015 recording
- Principal on La mort d'Orphée
- 2016 recording • Extra musician on
- Requiem Extra musician on La mort d'Orphée

Jeanne Case

# SEATTLE SYMPHONY CHORALE

The Seattle Symphony Chorale serves as the official chorus of the Seattle Symphony. Over the past four decades, the Chorale has grown in artistry and stature, establishing itself as a highly respected ensemble. Critics have described the Chorale's work as "beautiful, prayerful, expressive," "superb" and "robust," and have praised it for its "impressive clarity and precision." The Chorale's 120 volunteer members, who are teachers, doctors, attorneys, musicians, students, bankers and professionals from all fields, bring not only musical excellence, but a sheer love of music and performance to their endeavor. Directed by Joseph Crnko. Associate Conductor for Choral Activities, the Chorale performs with the Seattle Symphony both onstage and in recorded performances.

#### JOSEPH CRNKO

#### Associate Conductor for Choral Activities

SOPRANO Rachel Nofziger Caitlin Anderson-Patterson Laura Ash Amanda Bender Caitlyn Blankenship Lolly Brasseur Bree Brotnov Ellen Cambron Emma Crew Erin M. Ellis Jacquelyn Ernst Zanne Gerrard Kaitlyn Gervais Samantha Gorham Emily Han Teryl Hawk Elizabeth Husmann Caitlin Hutten Sharon Jarnigan Elizabeth Johnson Katy Kaltenbrun Seung Hee Kim Lori Knoebel Lillian Lahiri Kori Loomis Janelle Maronev

Alyssa Mendlein

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Kristen Nelson

Helen Odom Nicolle Omiste Margaret Paul Sasha S. Philip Kaitlvn Purvear Emily Reed Kirsten Ruddy Ana Ryker Emily Sana Barbara Scheel\* Laura A. Shepherd Joy Chan Tappen Bonnie Thomas Catherine Thornslev Toby Trachy Andrea Wells

## ALTO

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Lisa De Luca Robin Denis Cindy Funaro Carla J. Gifford Amy Gleixner Kelly Goodin Catherine Haddon Shan Jiang Sara Larson

Aurora de la Cruz

### Shreya Joseph Inger Kirkman\* Amy Lassen Rachel Lieder Simeon Vanessa Maxwell Monica Namkung Angela Oberdeck Katy Pedelty Erica J. Peterson Angela Petrucci Karis Pratt Beth Puryear Alexia Regner Valerie Rice Emily Ridgway Dale Schlotzhauer Darcy Schmidt Carreen A. Smith

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Kathryn Tewson

Paula Thomas

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BASS John Allwright Christopher Benfield Jay Bishop Hal Bomgardner Andrew Cross Darrel Ede Morgan Elliott Evan Figueras Curtis Fonger Steven Franz David Gary Raphael Hadac Kelvin Helmeid Rob Jones Ronald Knoebel Tim Krivanek KC Lee Thomas C. Loomis Bryan Lung Glenn Nielsen Brandon John Reid Ken Rice Martin Rothwell\* Edward Sam Christopher Smith Garrett Smith Jim Snyder Joseph To Michael Uyyek Jared White \* principal of section for Requiem

# SEATTLE PRO MUSICA

Seattle Pro Musica is a critically acclaimed choral organization whose mission is to enrich and inspire audiences, singers and community through the experience of choral artistry, and to increase access to and appreciation of choral music. Recipient of the Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence and the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming, Seattle Pro Musica is ranked by American Record Guide as "among America's very best choirs." Under the baton of Artistic Director and Conductor Karen P. Thomas, Seattle Pro Musica has received international acclaim for its recordings and live performances. Choir & Organ writes: "Seattle Pro Musica presents a cappella singing at its best." Fanfare says: "This is truly an extraordinary choir." Seattle Pro Musica has appeared by invitation for numerous international and national festivals, and has performed with Jane Eaglen, Andrea Bocelli, Josh Groban, Pacific MusicWorks and the Seattle Symphony. In 2014 members of Seattle Pro Musica appeared on the Grammy Award-winning album Winds of Samsara.

#### **KAREN P. THOMAS**

Artistic Director & Conductor

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Stephanie Grav Ashlev Husmann Teresa Nemeth Katie Skovholt Jenny Spence SOPRANO 2

Lillian Balmforth Jonna Farley Erin Gabriel Sophia Jung Shadia Kawa Elaine Lee Ada Ng Jan Strand Judy Williams

ALTO 1 Marissa Burkev Allison Freel Emily Jordan Liz Langeland Teena Littleton Rose Morrison Corina Rahmia Jessica Staire Marit Trelstad Hannah Won

## ALTO 2

Gail Broder Cathy Federici Miriam Nunley Liz Reed Hawk Kelly Sanderbeck **Elizabeth Sanders**  Karen Segar Anna Thelen

#### TENOR 1 Chris Burch

Jacob Buys Casey Glick Anthony Gromko Jim Howeth Kevin Kralman

#### TENOR 2

David Dodman **Rich Eckert** Grégoire Lurton Jonathan Siehl Danny Szydlo Fred Williams

## BASS 1

Jim Bartscher John Draxler Ben Flynn Ryan Gao Frank Hadder Peter Hemmen Rick Johnson Wes Kim Josh Smith

BASS 2

Brian Grant Peter Lifland Tom Lin Lee Maneman Jon Repp Chris Rule Grant Vandehev

TENOR **KENNETH TARVER** SINGS FROM THE LOFT OF THE WATJEN CONCERT ORGAN DURING A SEATTLE SYMPHONY PERFORMANCE OF **BERLIOZ'S** REQUIEM.

# THE MUSIC OF BERLIOZ

The first performance of Hector Berlioz's *Grande messe des morts*, or **Requiem**, took place in Paris in December 1837. It was one of the high points of its author's career, but this triumph did not come easily. Still in his early 30s, Berlioz was widely considered the untamed radical among French composers, and the conservative bureaucrats who controlled the Paris Opéra, the Conservatoire and other musical institutions saw fit to place obstacles in his path whenever they could. In the case of the Requiem, these nearly proved fatal to one of the monuments of 19th-century French music.

The composition was engendered in 1836 by a commission from France's Minister of the Interior, whose duties included overseeing artistic affairs for the government. This official, Berlioz wrote in his *Memoirs*, "belonged to that small minority of French politicians who are interested in music, and to the still more select company who have a feeling for it." The Requiem he asked Berlioz to compose was to be performed in honor of the martyrs of the Revolution of 1830, the brief uprising that thwarted the efforts of King Charles X to extend his powers.

Although Berlioz fulfilled the commission in the short time allowed him, the government summarily cancelled the performance shortly before it was to take place. But in October 1837 a French general, Charles-Marie de Damrémont, was killed while leading an assault on the Algerian city of Constantine. His death occasioned a solemn funeral service in Paris, and this revived plans to present Berlioz's Requiem. But the composer's troubles were not yet over. First Luigi Cherubini, the powerful director of the Conservatoire and composer of several requiem masses, took offense at being passed over in favor of a young upstart on this important occasion, and he maneuvered behind the scenes to have Berlioz's work replaced with one of his own. Berlioz managed to ward off this threat, but he failed to prevent another intrusion: the insistence by an unnamed official that the performance be entrusted to François Habeneck.

The most distinguished French conductor of the day, Habeneck was now an old man and no friend to Berlioz. The composer's misgivings about Habeneck's ability to direct the large and complex work proved well founded when, during the performance, the venerable conductor paused in his labors for a pinch of snuff, allowing the musicians simply to play on without his direction. This occurred just at the approach of a critical transition between sections — "the one moment," Berlioz exclaims in his *Memoirs*, "in which the conductor's direction is absolutely

indispensable." The composer managed to save the performance by leaping to his feet and leading the musicians through the passage, but he remained incensed at what he suspected was a plot to sabotage him. If a conspiracy did exist, however, it clearly failed. The success of the Requiem greatly boosted Berlioz's standing in France, and it stands as one of his finest achievements.

In composing his Requiem, Berlioz liberally rearranged the traditional Latin text of the *Missa pro defunctis*, for his goal was to exploit the musical and dramatic potential of the Catholic funeral liturgy rather than to produce a narrow, literal reading. The music is impressive on a number of counts, most obviously in its heroic scale. Berlioz delighted in grandiose effects, and he orchestrated them superbly. But we should not assume that in employing large forces, great sonorities and an expansive musical architecture he was merely indulging his own proclivities. On the contrary, these features of the work were pragmatic responses to the occasion and setting for which it was written.

From the start, Berlioz understood that he was composing for an important civic ceremony, and in France this brought certain expectations. The tradition of large-scale compositions for public gatherings established during the French Revolution had carried over into the Imperial era of Napoleon and his successors, and such music was expected to glorify the state as much as display the composer's artistry.

In addition to fulfilling this need, Berlioz was careful to consider the acoustic space for which he was writing. The Church of the Invalides, where the performance was to take place, is among the largest in Paris, and music composed on an insufficient scale would seem incongruous in its vast confines. Berlioz solved this problem boldly. He employed a large contingent of singers and instrumentalists for his performance and used the spatial configuration of the church to dramatic effect by stationing four brass choirs in separate corners, thereby creating the striking antiphonal sonorities, the calls and responses, of the *Tuba mirum* section.

But despite the overall grandeur of the score, much of the Requiem is restrained and intimate in tone. Indeed, the quiet passages serve to heighten the effect of the more dramatic ones. The *Dies irae* passage, for example, which usually is set to thunderous music, appears here as a gentle chant that makes the terror of the *Tuba mirum* all the more vivid. Similarly, the silencing of the orchestra in the *Quaerens me* throws the violent instrumental figures in the ensuing *Lacrymosa* into sharper relief.

Numerous other instances of imaginative orchestration can be heard throughout the Requiem, none more remarkable than the combination of trombones and flutes in the *Hostias*. Berlioz's masterful use of contrast can also be observed in *Sanctus*, with the abrupt change of tone between the busily contrapuntal *Hosanna* and the heavenly stillness of a tenor solo surrounded by ethereal high-register sounds in the orchestra. (In a wonderful stroke, Berlioz retains this halo of orchestral tone when the *Hosanna* resumes).

It hardly needs to be stated that these and other effects serve a larger artistic purpose, and that for all its drama this composition is ultimately a deeply felt spiritual declaration. Near the end of his life, Berlioz declared that if all his works had to perish he would ask reprieve only for the Requiem. The music's beauty justifies his choice.

The difficulties Berlioz encountered in connection with his Requiem were not a singular instance of hostility from the French musical establishment. As the history of his canatata *La mort d'Orphée* shows, they were part of a pattern that plagued him from the beginning of his career. Upon completing his courses at the Paris Conservatoire, Berlioz tried and failed three times to gain the Prix de Rome, a residency in the Italian capital that was routinely awarded to promising young French artists. He attained the prize on his fourth try only by suppressing his instincts and forcing himself to write the kind of academically correct music expected by the Conservatoire professors.

The Prix de Rome competition entailed the composition of a cantata on a text chosen by the jury. In 1827, the year Berlioz first entered the contest, the selected verses related a classical story, the death of the mythic singer Orpheus following his journey to the underworld and the loss of his beloved Eurydice.

Berlioz was thrilled by this subject, though not in the form it was rendered in the verses supplied by the judges. With intuitive skill, he rewrote the text, making it more compact and powerful. He then appended a passage from Virgil, a poet he had known since boyhood, to expand the text. This done, he proceeded to set the much-emboldened words to equally bold music.

The result, *La mort d'Orphée*, was musically compelling but disastrous in terms of Berlioz's ambitions. Rhythmic and other novelties defeated the musicians who attempted to realize the work before the Prix de Rome jury, and their performance collapsed in shambles. The assembled worthies declared the score unplayable, and one of them later chided Berlioz for imagining that any novelties remained in the field of music.

Berlioz subtitled his cantata *Monologue et Bacchanale*. While the composition is more complex than this indicates, the description does serve to delineate its two

broad elements, Orpheus' soliloquy and his fatal confrontation with a group of bacchantes (who stand in for the Furies of the classical Greek myth). The orchestral prelude, with its instrumental birdcalls and imaginative turns of harmony, evokes the enchanted grove where the action is set. Orpheus (solo tenor) acknowledges that the priestesses of Bacchus despise sorrowful lovers, but his grief over the death of Eurydice is such that he will brave their jealous fury.

He then takes up his lyre, "the only comfort left to me," to embellish his lament. But his song is to no avail. Enraged by his immoderate devotion to his lost beloved and his indifference to themselves, the Bacchantes turn on Orpheus. Berlioz indicates their approach with two chilling chords played by trombones, each echoed a moment later. Then, in an extraordinary passage, he superimposes the voices of Orpheus and the Bacchantes — he begging mercy and beseeching the aid of Apollo, they singing of vengeance and giving a running account as they beat and tear apart the singer's body. No less remarkable is the orchestral epilogue that follows, which seems to envision the spirit of Orpheus with his lyre ascending to heaven.

Liner notes © 2018 Paul Schiavo

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\*in memoriam

Producer: Dmitriy Lipay Engineers: Dmitriy Lipay & Alexander Lipay Executive Producers: Rosalie Contreras & Elena Dubinets Art Direction and Design: Jessica Forsythe Cover Photo: Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

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