Thursday, February 21, 8pm    |    THE WILLIAM AND HELENE POUNDS CONCERT
Saturday, February 23, 8pm   |    ANDRIS NELSONS conducting

BOULANGER    “D’UN SOIR TRISTE” ("OF A SAD EVENING")

DEBUSSY

“NOCTUENES”

Nuages. Modéré
Fêtes. Animé et très rythmé
Sirènes. Modérément animé

LORELEI ENSEMBLE,

BETH WILLER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

{INTERMISSION}

PUCCINI

“SUOR ANGELICA,” OPERA IN ONE ACT WITH A

LIBRETTO BY GIOVACCINO FORZANO

KRISTINE OPOLAIS, SOPRANO (SISTER ANGELICA)

VIOLETA URMANA, MEZZO-SOPRANO (THE PRINCESS, HER AUNT)

FATMA SAID, SOPRANO (SISTER GENOVIEFFA)

DANA BETH MILLER, MEZZO-SOPRANO (THE ABBESS)

MARYANN MCCORMICK, MEZZO-SOPRANO (THE MONITOR)

MEMBERS OF THE LORELEI ENSEMBLE:

EMILY MARVOSH, ALTO (MISTRESS OF THE NOVICES)

KATHERINE GROWDON, ALTO (SISTER OSMINA)

SARAH BRAILEY, SOPRANO (SISTER DOLCINA)

CHRISTINA ENGLISH, MEZZO-SOPRANO (THE INFIRMARY SISTER)

SOPHIE MICHAUX, MEZZO-SOPRANO, AND SARAH BRAILEY

(THE ALMS-SEEKING SISTERS)

MEG DUDLEY, SOPRANO (THE NOVICE)

CLAIRE MCNAMARA, MEZZO-SOPRANO, AND

SONJA TENGBLAD, SOPRANO (THE LAY SISTERS)

TANGLEWOOD FESTIVAL CHORUS AND

BOSTON SYMPHONY CHILDREN’S CHOIR,

JAMES BURTON, CONDUCTOR

EVE SUMMER, STAGING ADVISOR

English supertitles by Sonya Friedman, © 2014 Sonya Friedman, assigned to Miriam Lewin
SuperTitle System courtesy of DIGITAL TECH SERVICES, LLC, Portsmouth, VA
Casey Smith, supertitles technician
Ruth DeSarno, supertitles caller

BANK OF AMERICA AND TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY LIMITED ARE PROUD TO SPONSOR THE BSO’S 2018-19 SEASON.

These concerts will end about 10:10.

Concertmaster Malcolm Lowe performs on a Stradivarius violin, known as the “Lafont,” generously donated to the Boston Symphony Orchestra by the O’Block Family.

First associate concertmaster Tamara Smirnova performs on a 1754 J.B. Guadagnini violin, the “ex-Zazofsky,” and James Cooke performs on a 1778 Nicolò Gagliano violin, both generously donated to the orchestra by Michael L. Nieland, M.D., in loving memory of Mischa Nieland, a member of the cello section from 1943 to 1988.

Steinway & Sons Pianos, selected exclusively for Symphony Hall.

The BSO’s Steinway & Sons pianos were purchased through a generous gift from Gabriella and Leo Beranek. Special thanks to Fairmont Copley Plaza, Delta Air Lines, and Commonwealth Worldwide Executive
Lili first entered the competition in 1912 but had to withdraw due to illness. From the moment she enrolled at the Conservatoire, Li

The System and the chronic inter

pered by lifelong illness, after a severe case of bronchial pneumonia as a toddler left her with a weakened immune

Nadia to classes at the Conservatoire de Paris, where she also officially enrolled in 1912. Yet her gifts were tem-

French Impressionist tradition. Her talent was nurtured by a musical upbringing: she was surrounded by her family's

Boulanger’s work stands on its own merits for its depth of expression and as a uniqu

THE SCORE OF “D’UN SOIR TRISTE” calls for an orchestra of two flutes, two oboes and English horn, two clarinet

Lili Boulanger was born in Paris, France, on August 21, 1893, and died in Mézy-au-Seine, France, on March

15, 1918. Along with “D’un Matin printemps” (“Of a spring morning”), “D’un Soir triste” (“Of a sad evening”) was

one of the last works written in her own hand (see below); both were begun in the spring of 1917 and were largely

finished by January 1918. A piano trio version of “D’un Soir triste” was premiered on February 8, 1919. The date of

the orchestral version’s premiere is unknown (see also below). The score used in this week’s BSO performances is

an edition by C.F. Nieweg.

Debussy conceived his three Nocturnes as “Three Twilight Pieces” for orchestra in the early 1890s, but eventually

borrowed the term “Nocturnes” from the American Impressionist artist James McNeill Whistler. Debussy finished

the score in 1899, and the Nocturnes were first heard as a complete set in 1901. The titles of the three movements

are keys to their character. In Nuages (“Clouds”), slow-moving, non-traditional harmonic patterns create a world of

amorphous colors and shades. The colors pop and burst in Debussy’s depiction of a festive holiday in Fêtes, and for

Sirènes the composer evokes the strange, lush world under the sea. The sirens of the title are represented by a

wordless women’s chorus, an innovative touch by o

l of the most radical composers in history.

Robert Kirzinger

Lili Boulanger

“D’un Soir triste”

LILI BOULANGER was born in Paris, France, on August 21, 1893, and died in Mézy-au-Seine, France, on March

15, 1918. Along with “D’un Matin printemps” (“Of a spring morning”), “D’un Soir triste” (“Of a sad evening”) was

one of the last works written in her own hand (see below); both were begun in the spring of 1917 and were largely

finished by January 1918. A piano trio version of “D’un Soir triste” was premiered on February 8, 1919. The date of

the orchestral version’s premiere is unknown (see also below). The score used in this week’s BSO performances is

an edition by C.F. Nieweg.

THE SCORE OF “D’UN SOIR TRISTE” calls for an orchestra of two flutes, two oboes and English horn, two clarinet

Lili Boulanger’s name is perhaps most associated today with the Prix de Rome: in 1913, at age nineteen, she became

the first female composer to win this prestigious award. She is often referred to as the younger sister of Nadia Boulanger, who, with her legacy as a teacher of several major 20th-century composers, is the more famous of the two siblings. Even when considered apart from her groundbreaking accomplishment and her famous sister, however, Lili Boulanger’s work stands on its own merits for its depth of expression and as a unique voice emerging from the

French Impressionist tradition. Her talent was nurtured by a musical upbringing: she was surrounded by her family’s

artistic circle of friends, which included Charles Gounod and Gabriel Fauré, and as a young child she accompanied

Nadia to classes at the Conservatoire de Paris, where she also officially enrolled in 1912. Yet her gifts were tem-

pered by lifelong illness, after a severe case of bronchial pneumonia as a toddler left her with a weakened immune

system and the chronic intestinal tuberculosis that would eventually lead to her early death. That someone so young

produced music of such maturity and emotional range suggests what might have been had her life not ended so soon.

From the moment she enrolled at the Conservatoire, Lili committed herself to winning the Prix de Rome in spite of

her setbacks. Her father Ernest Boulanger had won this award in 1835, and Nadia had taken second place in 1908.

Lili first entered the competition in 1912 but had to withdraw due to illness. The following year she tried again, and
ACHILLE-CLAUDE DEBUSSY was born at St. Germain-en-Laye, France, on August 22, 1862, and died in Paris.
on March 25, 1918. His three Nocturnes, which went through an extended genesis described below, were composed during the 1890s, reaching more or less their present form between 1897 and 1899. Debussy later made substantial revisions in the orchestration, particularly in “Fêtes” and “Sirènes”; the work is now performed according to the revised score, which was published posthumously in 1930. “Nuages” and “Fêtes” were first performed at the Concerts Lamoureux in Paris on December 9, 1900, Camille Chavillard conducting. The same performers premiered the complete set of three pieces on October 27, 1901.

“NUAGES” (“Clouds”) is scored for two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, timpani, harp, and strings. “FÊTES” (“Festivals”) is scored for three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets in F, three trombones, tuba, two harps, timpani, cymbals, snare drum, and strings. “SIRÈNES” (“Sirens”) is scored for three flutes, oboe, English horn, two clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets in F, two harps, wordless female chorus, and strings.

The first performance of the Prélude à l’Après-midi d’un faune in 1894 had made Debussy instantly famous. By the date of that performance he had already embarked on his next major orchestral work, the Nocturnes, which, with Pelléas et Mélisande, were to occupy his attention for the rest of the 1890s. It seems that the Nocturnes went through at least two early versions before resulting in the music we know today, although Debussy’s manuscripts for the earlier versions—if they were ever written out—no longer exist. As early as 1892, when Debussy was planning a tour of the United States (which never took place), he wrote to his patron Prince Poniatowski that the work he was planning to introduce during the tour, Trois Scènes au crépuscule (“Three Scenes at Twilight”), was “almost finished, that is to say that the orchestration is entirely laid out and it is simply a question of writing out the score.” This work was based on the poem “Scènes au crépuscule” by Debussy’s friend Henri de Régnier, a close associate of Mallarmé. Since the music of this version does not survive at all, it is impossible to compare it to the final work, but it is worth noting that one of the poems involved the imagery of flutes and trumpets that might have inspired Fêtes, and a reference to a female choir might have motivated the inclusion of the wordless women’s voices in Sirènes.

Be that as it may, the first appearance of the actual title Nocturnes in Debussy’s work comes in a letter written late in 1894 to the great Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, to whom the composer wrote: “I am working on three Nocturnes for violin and orchestra that are intended for you. The first is scored for strings; the second for three flutes, four horns, three trumpets, and two harps; the third is a combination of both these groups. This is, in fact, an experiment in the various arrangements that can be made with a single color—like the study of gray in painting.”

Debussy greatly admired a series of paintings entitled “Nocturnes” by the American artist Whistler, and the musical title could well have been suggested by that connection. Moreover, the composer’s reference to “the study of gray in painting” recalls Whistler’s most famous work, known popularly as “Whistler’s Mother,” but called by the artist “Arrangement in Black and Gray.” He was also familiar with the work of other Impressionists—Gauguin, Renoir, Pissarro, and Sisley—and he was especially fond of Turner.

Two years later Debussy again wrote to Ysaÿe, requesting that he defer the performance of the Nocturnes until he could give it in Brussels. This would suggest not only that a full score for the violin-and-orchestra version existed at that time, but also that Ysaÿe had seen it, though no one else has ever managed to put hands on the manuscript. If such a score does exist, its rediscovery would be a wonderful contribution to our knowledge of Debussy’s musical thought. In any case, between 1897 and 1899 Debussy completely recast the work into its present form. Debussy’s comment likening his music to “the study of gray” fits best with Nuages (“Clouds”), one of his most personal musical expressions. The subdued orchestral colors and dynamics (mostly piano and pianissimo, with only two forte passages, each lasting only a measure or two) hold the music within carefully prescribed limits. The sparse opening gesture in clarinets and bassoons—alternating open fifths with thirds—grows and intensifies in the divided string parts, while the English horn solo interpolates a chromatic figure that outlines a diminished fifth. This English horn figure keeps reappearing, virtually without change, like a solid object around which the clouds float and swirl. Debussy himself wrote a program for the movement in which he said, “Nuages renders the unchanging aspect of the sky and the slow, solemn motion of the clouds, fading away in gray tones lightly tinged with white.”

The clouds have dispersed for the second movement, Fêtes (“Festivals”). Debussy is supposed to have said that he was inspired by the merrymaking in the Bois de Boulogne, although the brilliant processions through Paris at the time of the Franco-Russian alliance, signed in 1896, probably played a part in the final conception of the music, with its fanfares heard softly in the distance, growing to splendid display, and then fading away as the music again dissolves into silence.

Debussy’s fascination with the sea constantly resurfaces in his music, from the third Nocturne, called Sirènes (“Sirens”), to certain passages in Pelléas et Mélisande, and culminating in the great sea symphony, La Mer. Sirènes is music of iridescent color, of decoration without themes in the normal sense, of fluid rhythmic interplay. Literary inspiration may have come either from a poem of Henri de Régnier (L’Homme et la sirène) or from one of Swinburne (Nocturne); both poems deal with mermaids and the effects of their love on mortals. The instrumental use of the women’s chorus, singing wordlessly, evokes the song of these sirens from the ocean’s depths.
GIACOMO PUCCINI was born in Lucca, Italy, on December 22, 1858, and died in Brussels, Belgium, on November 29, 1924. “Suor Angelica” is the second part of the operatic triptych “Il trittico,” comprised of three one-act operas: “Il tabarro,” “Suor Angelica,” and “Gianni Schicchi.” “Il trittico” had its premiere at the Metropolitan Opera in New York on December 14, 1918, with Roberto Moranzoni conducting. The libretto of “Suor Angelica” is by Giacomo Puccini. The setting is a convent at the end of the 17th century. Banished to live in a convent after having an illegitimate child, Sister Angelica has not heard from her family in seven years. As the sisters go about their daily business, the bell tolls, announcing a visitor. It is Angelica’s aunt, the Princess. Rejecting Angelica’s gestures of affection, she explains that, when Angelica’s parents died, she was made guardian of both Angelica and her younger sister. The sister is to be married, and the Princess demands that Angelica sign her share of the inheritance over to her. Crushed by her aunt’s cruelty, Angelica asks about her little son. The Princess coldly tells her that he died two years earlier. The devastated Angelica signs the document, and the Princess leaves. Angelica grieves that her child died without his mother by his side. She brews a poison, but realizes only after she drinks it that suicide is a mortal sin. Desperately praying for forgiveness, she dies with a vision of her son welcoming her into heaven.

A Brief Synopsis of “Suor Angelica”

The ORCHESTRA FOR “SUOR ANGELICA” includes piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, timpani, triangle, cymbals, bass drum, glockenspiel, celesta, harp, bronze bell (campanella di bronzo), and strings, plus, offstage, piccolo, two pianos, organ, three trumpets, bells, cymbals, and tavolette (wooden planks hit by wooden hammers).

Puccini’s operas, in particular, feature both French and German elements (he was once called “Wagner’s best pupil”) as well as Italian ones. This all-encompassing international style made him a target for critics, who relentlessly accused him of not being Italian enough. Despite the unkind press, Puccini achieved great success in his lifetime and died a very wealthy man. His operas, though relatively few in number, command a disproportionate share of the repertory in opera houses throughout the world. Following his death from complications of radiation treatment for throat cancer (he was a lifelong smoker), his remains were originally interred in the Toscanini family tomb in Milan, but then moved in 1926 to a chapel in the villa on his Tuscan estate at Torre del Lago (near Viareggio in the province of Lucca).
Suor Angelica (“Sister Angelica”) is the centerpiece of Puccini’s trio of one-act operas, Il trittico (“The triptych”): Il tabarro (“The cloak”), Suor Angelica, and Gianni Schicchi. Il trittico premiered at the Metropolitan Opera on December 14, 1918, conducted by Roberto Moranzoni. Soprano Geraldine Farrar sang the role of Angelica and contralto Flora Perini sang the role of the Principessa. The opera, which takes place in a convent, calls for an all-female cast with an offstage mixed chorus and a non-singing role for a male child. The orchestra for Suor Angelica seems at first glance overly large for such an intimate work. Its main function is to support the action through thematic exposition and development. Much of the scoring is chamber-like, with many special effects, some heard only once or twice. After the premiere of La fanciulla del West in 1910, Puccini, as usual, grasped for a new project, rapidly reading through texts and dismissing them. He ultimately settled on La rondine (1915), but an in-between trip to the theater bore fruit for the next project: in Paris, he saw Didier Gold’s one-act play, La Houppelande (“The Cloak”), and was immediately taken with it. Puccini had not tried his hand at a one-act opera since he had lost the Sonzogno competition in 1883 with Le vili (the 1888 winner was Mascagni’s Cavalleria rusticana). Nonetheless, on February 9, 1913, he wrote an enthusiastic letter to Luigi Illica (of the libretto-writing team of Giacosa and Illica):

The subject is apache in all its meanings and even without the almost Grand Guignol. But that doesn’t matter. It pleases me and strikes me as highly effective. But this red stain [emphasis added] needs something different to contrast with it, and it is this that I’m looking for: something that will be somewhat elevated, and give me an opportunity to write music that will take wing.

La Houppelande thus became Il tabarro: a jealous husband strangles his wife’s lover, hides the corpse under his coat, and then shoves his wife’s face in it. Curtain. A “chaser” was surely in order.

Librettist/playwright Gioacchino Forzano already had the perfect antidote, a scenario with an all-female cast set in a convent. Puccini understood well the sonorities of the church; he also had a sister who was a nun and willing to advise him. Another factor that may have been reassuring was the scenario’s near mirror-image similarity to a previously successful work, Massenet’s Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame (1902), subtitled “A Miracle in Three Acts,” which had an all-female cast and a redemption scene. (Puccini had already followed Massenet’s Manon with Manon Lescant.) To close the evening in the tradition of the happy ending, Forzano suggested a comedy around the con artist-rogue Gianni Schicchi (mentioned in Dante’s Inferno). The audience would gasp in horror, weep in despair, and laugh in delight.

The libretto of Suor Angelica is divided into seven titled scenes: The Prayer, The Penance, Recreation, The Return from the Quest, The Princess, The Grace, and The Miracle. The large-scale structure of the work is, however, twofold: Offstage chimes and muted strings introduce a series of short tableaux depicting convent life. The mood shifts radically with the arrival of the Zia Principessa, whose harsh condemnation of Angelica and devastating news about her son ignites the beginning of the end. Their conversation is confidential, but also suffocating and oppressive. Puccini intended the pace to be glacial, but passionate. In a letter of October 11, 1918, to his publisher Tito Ricordi, Puccini included a lengthy account of the Principessa’s entrance, emphasizing the slow deliberation of her gait and icy cold demeanor. She raises her voice only to exhort Angelica to repent and relinquish any claim on the family estate so that her sister can marry.

Puccini cast the Principessa as a contralto, a voice type outside his norm; there is no comparable role anywhere else in his oeuvre. The dark vocal sonority and backstairs exchange are paralleled in the orchestra, beginning with the Principessa’s sinister C-sharp-minor “ritornello,” as Puccini called it, which is heard before she is seen. In voce cupa (covered voice; somberly) she establishes her position of power in a series of phrases that are initially chant-like and calculated to be distant, expressionless, and appropriately hushed. The quiet is pierced by Angelica’s cries in reaction to the news of her son’s death. The orchestra takes over as she signs the document and the Principessa leaves without another word.

Angelica, now alone, collapses into the aria “Senza mamma,” the most well-known piece of the opera, and its last sustained vocal segment. What follows is a “dumb scene” supported by offstage instruments, including two pianos, organ, trumpets, fanfares, bells, and cymbals. Angelica gathers herbs for a poison, recoils in fear of damnation, and begs for deliverance; the drama moves quickly from despair to suicide, from contrition to redemption. An offstage chorus sings “Salve Maria” as Angelica envisions the Virgin and her son in the glow of heavenly light. Puccini erases all sin (and chromaticism) with a turn to C major, which dissolves slowly and softly into the ether.

Many critics at the premiere saw beauty and nobility in Suor Angelica, but for others the extended sequence from “Senza mamma” to the end was a descent into hopeless sentimentality. James Huneker of the New York Times was particularly nasty, calling the opera “mock turtle mysticism,” and the vision scene “an illuminated Christmas card.” Accusations that the music was superficial, insincere, or saccharine surely hurt Puccini, who loved Suor Angelica dearly. In the end, it is futile to resist. Puccini knew just which buttons to push: Suor Angelica breaks our hearts.

The best course of action is surrender.

Helen M. Greenwald

HELEN M. GREENWALD is chair of the department of music history at New England Conservatory and editor of the
To Read and Hear More...

Good sources in which to read about Lili Boulanger include Léonie Rosenstiel’s The Life and Works of Lili Boulanger (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1978); Caroline Potter’s Nadia and Lili Boulanger (Routledge, 2006); and the chapter “Fighting in Frills’: Women and the Prix de Rome in French Cultural Politics,” by Annegret Fauser, in Women’s Voices Across Musical Worlds by Jane A. Bernstein (Northeastern University Press, 2004). It was also Annegret Fauser who provided the entry on Lili Boulanger in the 2001 New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians.

For recordings of D’un Soir triste, conductor JoAnn Falletta’s with the Women’s Philharmonic (Koch International Classics) uses an engraving that was one of the sources consulted for the score being used this week by the BSO. There is also a BBC Philharmonic recording with Yan Pascal Tortelier conducting (Chandos) and one by the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg with Mark Stringer (Timpani).

Pamela Feo

Edward Lockspeiser’s Debussy: His Life and Mind, in two volumes, is the standard study of the composer (Macmillan). Roger Nichols’s The life of Debussy is in the useful series “Musical lives” (Cambridge paperback). Also from Nichols is Debussy Remembered, a 2003 anthology drawing upon recollections from various friends, colleagues, and acquaintances of the composer (Amadeus Press). Victor Lederer’s Debussy: the Quiet Revolutionary, a close look at the composer’s musical style and output, is accompanied by a CD that is specifically referenced in Lederer’s discussion of the music (also Amadeus Press). Still important for its wealth of contemporary documentation is Léon Vallas’s Claude Debussy: His Life and Works, translated from the French by Maire and Grace O’Brien and published originally in 1933 (Dover paperback). Also useful are David Cox’s Debussy Orchestral Music in the series of BBC Music Guides (University of Washington paperback), Marcel Dietschy’s La Passion de Claude Debussy, edited and translated—as A Portrait of Claude Debussy—by William Ashbrook and Margaret G. Cobb (Oxford), and two collections of essays: Debussy and his World, edited by Jane F. Fulcher (Princeton University paperback), and The Cambridge Companion to Debussy, edited by Simon Trezise and Jonathan Cross (Cambridge University Press).

The Boston Symphony Orchestra recorded Debussy’s Nocturnes with Pierre Monteux in 1955 (RCA), with Claudio Abbado in 1970 (Deutsche Grammophon), and with Colin Davis in 1982 (Philips). Charles Munch recorded Nuages and Fêtes with the BSO in 1962 (RCA). Other recordings include Pierre Boulez’s with the Cleveland Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon), Stéphane Denève’s with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (Chandos), Charles Dutoit’s with the Montreal Symphony (Decca), Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos’s with the London Symphony Orchestra (Musical Concepts), Carlo Maria Giulini’s with the Philharmonia Orchestra (EMI), Bernard Haitink’s with the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam (Philips), Jean Martinon’s with the ORTF National Orchestra (EMI), and François-Xavier Roth’s with his period-instrument ensemble Les Siècles (Harmonia Mundi).

There are three good biographies of Puccini: Puccini: A Biography by Mary Jane Phillips-Matz (Northeastern University Press); Julian Budden’s Puccini: His Life and Works in the “Master Musicians” series (Oxford University Press), and the standard older biography, Mosco Carner’s Puccini: A Critical Biography (Knopf). There are also two good choices for detailed consideration of the Puccini operas: William Ashbrook’s The Operas of Puccini, with a foreword by Roger Parker (Cornell), and Charles Osborne’s The Complete Operas of Puccini (Da Capo). The article on Puccini in the 2001 Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians is by Gabriella Biagi Ravenni and Michele Girardi, expanding upon the 1980 entry by Gabriella Biagi Ravenni and Mosco Carner.

Andris Nelsons has recorded Suor Angelica with Kristine Opolais in the title role, with the Cologne West German Radio Orchestra and Chorus (Orfeo). The 1997 recording of Puccini’s complete Il trittico led by conductor Antonio Pappano includes a very fine Suor Angelica featuring Cristina Gallardo-Domás in the title role, Bernadette Manca di Nissa as La Zia Principessa, Felicity Palmer as the Abbess, and Dorothea Röschmann as Sister Genovieffa, with the Philharmonia Orchestra (originally EMI, now Warner Classics). A very fine, inexpensive, single-disc Suor Angelica features Miriam Gauci as Angelica, Lucienne Van Denek as La Zia Principessa, and Michaela Karadjian as the Abbess, with Alexander Rahbari conducting the BRTN Philharmonic Orchestra of Brussels (once available on Discover International). A much older, at one time standard-recommendation Il trittico led by Lorin Maazel has Renata Scotto as Sister Angelica with the New Philharmonia Orchestra (originally CBS Masterworks). An equally important, even older recording of Suor Angelica, from 1957 with Tullio Serafin conducting, features Victoria de los Angeles in the title role and Fedora Barbieri as La Zia Principessa (originally EMI, now Warner Classics). An historic 1981 Met telecast of Puccini’s Il trittico led by James Levine features Renata Scotto as Angelica, as well as in the lead soprano roles of Il tabarro and Gianni Schicchi (Metropolitan Opera, one of numerous DVDs issued by the Met to celebrate Levine’s 40th anniversary with the company).

Marc Mandel
Guest Artists

Kristine Opolais (Sister Angelica)

One of today’s most sought-after sopranos on the international scene, Kristine Opolais appears regularly at the Metropolitan Opera, Wiener Staatsoper, Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, Bayerische Staatsoper, Teatro alla Scala, Opernhäus Zürich, and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, working with such conductors as Barenboim, Pappano, Rattle, Elder, Harding, Nelsons, Luisi, Petrenko, and Bychkov. Ms. Opolais is known for notable collaborations with the Metropolitan Opera, her performances being frequently broadcast in HD worldwide. In autumn 2018 she returned to the Met in the title role of Suor Angelica, a role she has recorded for the Orfeo label. Previously she starred at the Metropolitan Opera in the title role of Mary Zimmerman’s 2017 production of Rusalka, garnering the highest critical praise. Ms. Opolais maintains a strong relationship with the Met since her 2013 debut there as Magda in La rondine. In April 2014 she made Met history, when, within eighteen hours, she made house debuts in two roles, giving an acclaimed, scheduled performance as Cio-Cio San, then stepping in as Mimi for a matinee performance of La bohème the very next day—a performance broadcast to cinemas worldwide. In the 2018-19 season Ms. Opolais continues her collaboration with the Royal Opera House, returning to Covent Garden in the title role of Tosca. Previously in London she has appeared in the Puccini roles of Manon Lescaut in Jonathan Kent’s 2014 production, as Cio-Cio San, and as Florida Tosca. She also returned to the Wiener Staatsoper for performances of Tosca. Continuing her association with the Bayerische Staatsoper, which began with her 2010 debut as Rusalka in Martin Kušej’s production, she has appeared there as Manon Lescaut, Cio-Cio San, Tatiana in Eugene Onegin, and Margherita in Mefistofele. Recent concert, festival, and recital appearances include performances at the Salzburg Festival, BBC Proms, George Enescu Festival, Tanglewood, the Musikverein, Concertgebouw, and Carnegie Hall, to name a few. Other recent concert engagements have taken her to the Berlin Philharmonic, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, and Filarmónica della Scala. Her most recent recording, released in spring 2018, is the DVD “Dvořák: From the New World,” which features her singing Czech songs and arias with Gewandhausorchester Leipzig conducted by Andris Nelsons. Kristine Opolais made her BSO debut in July 2013 at Tanglewood with Verdi’s Requiem; her first Symphony Hall appearance was in September 2014, as a soloist in Andris Nelsons’ inaugural concert as the BSO’s music director, a performance subsequently telecast in the PBS series “Great Performances.” She has since appeared with the BSO on numerous occasions, among them European tour performances in May 2016 of music by Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky; concert appearances at Tanglewood in the title roles of Tosca, Act II, and Aida, Acts I and II; her most recent subscription appearances, as soloist in Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 14 in February 2018; and her most recent Tanglewood appearance, as Mimi in La bohème in a complete concert performance of that opera in July 2018.

Violeta Urmana (The Princess)

Born in Lithuania, Violeta Urmana is one of the most highly sought-after sopranos of dramatic German and Italian repertoire. At the very beginning of her career, Violeta Urmana made a name for herself worldwide as a highly acclaimed Kundry in Parsifal and as Eboli in Don Carlo. She also sang Azucena, Amneris, Didon, Santuzza, Fides, Leonor de Guzman, Judith, Laura, Adriano Colonna, Fricka, and other roles at all of the world’s major opera houses. In the years 2001 and 2002 she made her BSO debut in July 2013 at Tanglewood with Verdi’s Requiem; her first Symphony Hall appearance was in September 2014, as a soloist in Andris Nelsons’ inaugural concert as the BSO’s music director, a performance subsequently telecast in the PBS series “Great Performances.” She has since appeared with the BSO on numerous occasions, among them European tour performances in May 2016 of music by Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky; concert appearances at Tanglewood in the title roles of Tosca, Act II, and Aida, Acts I and II; her most recent subscription appearances, as soloist in Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 14 in February 2018; and her most recent Tanglewood appearance, as Mimi in La bohème in a complete concert performance of that opera in July 2018.
Fatma Said (Sister Genovieffa)

Soprano Fatma Said makes her Boston Symphony debut in this week’s performances of Suor Angelica. When she was fourteen years old, Ms. Said took her first singing lesson with soprano Neveen Allouba, embarking on a musical journey that would take her from her home in Cairo, a city with only a limited opera scene, to Milan’s Teatro alla Scala and selection as one of BBC Radio 3’s New Generation Artists in 2016, among many other accomplishments and honors. After receiving her bachelor of music from the Hanns Eissler School of Music in Berlin in 2013, she was awarded a scholarship to study at the Accademia del Teatro alla Scala in Milan, becoming the first Egyptian soprano to perform on that iconic stage. During her time at the academy, she sang Pamina in a critically acclaimed production of Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte directed by Peter Stein and conducted by Ádám Fischer. The production was broadcast by ARTE and has since been released on DVD. Ms. Said has participated extensively in concerts, recitals, and festivals in major concert halls and opera houses across the world. Her roles on stage include Nannetta (Falstaff), Clorinda (children’s version of La Cenerentola), La Pastourelle (L’Enfant et les sortilèges), Berta (Il barbiere di Siviglia), 1st Ecologist (contemporary opera CO2), Fennichton (Bataclan), and L’Amour (Orphée et Eurydice) at the Teatro alla Scala in the season 2017–18, a Shechter/Fulljames production that has also been released on DVD. Recent engagements include the recording of Mahler’s Eighth Symphony with Ádám Fischer and the Tonhalle Düsseldorf, radio broadcast recordings with the BBC Symphony and the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, recitals at the Manial Palace Festival and at Wigmore Hall in London, and her debut with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at Birmingham Symphony Hall. Earlier this season, she took part in Mozart Week in Salzburg, singing the main role Tharsis in T.H.A.M.O.S., a new production of Mozart’s Thamos, King of Egypt, conducted by Alondra de la Parra and directed by La Fura dels Baus. Future engagements include a radio recording with the Bavarian Rundfunk, a tour in France with Louis Langrée and the Orchestre de les Champs-Élysées singing Ravel’s Shéhérazade, and recitals at the Dresden Chamber Music Festival, Leeds Music Festival, KunstKlang Festival, Perth Concert Hall, and more.

Dana Beth Miller (The Abbess)

Making her BSO debut this week, Dana Beth Miller is rapidly establishing herself as one of today’s most promising and exciting dramatic mezzo-sopranos. She has been engaged by leading opera houses around the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Deutsche Oper Berlin, San Francisco Opera, Washington National Opera, Grand Théâtre Genève, New York City Opera, Seattle Opera, Dallas Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, and Cincinnati Opera, among many others. During the 2018-19 season, Ms. Miller joins the Metropolitan Opera for their acclaimed Ring production to cover the role of Grimgerde in Die Walküre and returns to Boston Lyric Opera as Offred’s Mother in The Handmaid’s Tale. In recent seasons, her many roles have included Santuzza in Cavalleria rusticana with New Orleans Opera, Amneris in a new production of Aida with English National Opera, Erda in Das Rheingold with Arizona Opera, Dame Quickly in Falstaff with Opera Colorado, Margret in the David McVicar production of Wozzeck with the Grand Théâtre de Genève, and Ulrica in Un ballo in maschera with Florida Grand Opera, to name a few. She was also the mezzo-soprano soloist in Verdi’s Requiem with the Oregon Symphony. Ms. Miller won first place in both the 2006 Classical Singer National Vocal Competition and the 2004 Jensen Foundation Voice Competition, second prize and the Leonie Rysanek Award at the 2006 Elardo International Opera Competition, third place in the 2003 Opera Index Career Grant Competition, the 2003 Loren L. Zachary National Vocal Competition, and the 2004 Eleanor Lieber Awards, and was a finalist in the 2005 and 2006 Richard Tucker Career Grant Competition. She also won first place in the National Opera Association Competition, received career development grants from both the Dallas Opera and the San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program, and has won several district and regional awards in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Ms. Miller holds a bachelor’s degree in vocal performance from the University of North Texas College of Music.

MaryAnn McCormick (The Monitor)

Internationally acclaimed mezzo-soprano MaryAnn McCormick’s operatic credits include Isabella in L’italiana in Algeri at La Scala in Milan, Azucena in Il trovatore at the Teatro Regio di Torino, the title role of Carmen at the Teatro dell’Opera di Roma, Maddalena in Rigoletto under Daniele Gatti at the Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Gluck’s Alceste under Bruno Bartoletti at the Teatro Regio di Parma, and the First Maid in Elektra with Christoph von Dohnányi at the Opéra National de Paris. Ms. McCormick is a recipient of the Grammy award for Best Opera Recording (2012) for her participation in Wagner’s Ring cycle with the Metropolitan Opera singing Grimgerde in Die Walküre for the premiere of the Robert Lepage production, a role she also sang in a 2013 concert performance of Act III at Tanglewood, her only previous appearance with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. She makes her BSO subscription series debut this week. Ms. McCormick’s most recent operatic engagements include performances as Marcellina in Le nozze di Figaro, Enrichetta in I puritani, Frugola in Il tabarro, and Wowkle in La fanciulla del West, all with the Metropolitan Opera. As a recitalist and chamber musician, Ms. McCormick’s notable performances include recitals in New York’s Morgan Library for the George London Foundation, Boston’s Jordan
Hall with Robert Spano, the Châtelet in Paris, and Tokyo’s Suntory Hall and Philadelphia’s Academy of Music accompanied by Wolfgang Sawallisch. She has recorded with the Emerson String Quartet on the Grammy-nominated Deutsche Grammophon recording “Webern: Works for String Quartet”; Orchestre National de France in the role of Tigrane in Puccini’s Edgar; and the New York Philharmonic under Kurt Masur in Debussy’s Le Martyre de Saint-Sebastien. She is also featured singing in the Miramax film The Talented Mr. Ripley. In 2015 Ms. McCormick was honored to join the voice faculty of New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.

Lorelei Ensemble
Beth Willer, Artistic Director

Boston’s Lorelei Ensemble is recognized nationally for its bold and inventive programs that champion the extraordinary flexibility and virtuosity of the human voice. An all-professional vocal ensemble, Lorelei comprises nine women whose expertise ranges from early to contemporary repertoire, and whose independent careers as soloists and ensemble singers across the globe lend to the group’s rich and diverse vocal palette. Under the direction of founder and artistic director Beth Willer, Lorelei has established a remarkable and inspiring artistic vision, curating culturally relevant and artistically audacious programs that stretch and challenge the expectations of artists and audiences alike. Lorelei has commissioned and premiered more than fifty new works since its founding in 2007, including works by David Lang, George Benjamin, Kati Agócs, Lisa Bielawa, Kareem Roustom, Jessica Meyer, Sungji Hong, Reiko Yamada, Peter Gilbert, Scott Ordway, and John Supko. Driven by its mission to advance and elevate women’s vocal ensembles and to enrich the repertoire through forward-thinking and co-creative collaboration, Lorelei is committed to bringing works to life that point toward a “new normal” for vocal artists, and women in music. Based in Boston, Lorelei is a committed member of the local arts scene. Collaborators include the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, A Far Cry, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and Odyssey Opera. In addition to its work in and around Boston, Lorelei maintains a national touring schedule, performing on numerous concert series and at venues and institutions across the country. Appearances include performances at Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Tanglewood’s Festival of Contemporary Music, Trinity Wall Street, Five Boroughs Music Festival, Orway Center for Performing Arts, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, Chamber Music Columbus, Duke Performances, Schubert Club of St. Paul, and the Louisville Chamber Music Series. Educational residencies are an important and integral part of Lorelei’s work at home and on the road, including work with young artists at Harvard University, Bucknell University, Yale University, Duke University, University of Iowa, Luther College, Vassar College, Macalester College, Pittsburg State University, Mount Holyoke College, Connecticut College, Hillsdale College, Keene State College, Pennsylvania Girlschoir, Connecticut Children’s Chorus, and Providence Children’s Chorus. Lorelei’s only previous Boston Symphony appearances were in George Benjamin’s Dream of the Song in February 2017, followed by a repeat performance at New York’s Carnegie Hall the following month. The previous summer, Lorelei had participated in the American premiere of that work with Stefan Asbury conducting the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra.

James Burton, BSO Choral Director and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

The Tanglewood Festival Chorus joins the BSO this season for performances of Mahler’s Symphony No. 2 (October 25-30), Bach’s Christmas Oratorio (November 29-December 1), Puccini’s Suor Angelica (February 21 and 22), and Dvořák’s Stabat Mater (February 28-March 2) all under Andris Nelsons, and Estévez’s Cantata Criolla (April 11-13) with guest conductor Gustavo Dudamel. Also in October, the TFC performed Maija Einfelde’s Lux aeterna with James Burton, BSO Choral Director and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, making his subscription-series conducting debut. Originally formed under the joint sponsorship of Boston University and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the all-volunteer Tanglewood Festival Chorus was established in 1970 by its founding conductor, the late John Oliver, who stepped down from his leadership position with the TFC at the end of the 2015
Tanglewood season. In February 2017, following appearances as guest chorus conductor at Symphony Hall and Tanglewood, and having prepared the chorus for that month’s BSO performances of Bach’s B minor Mass led by Andris Nelsons, James Burton was named the new Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, also being appointed to the newly created position of BSO Choral Director. Mr. Burton occupies the Alan J. and Suzanne W. Dworsky Chair on the Boston Symphony Orchestra roster.

Though first established for performances at the BSO’s summer home, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus was soon playing a major role in the BSO’s subscription season as well as BSO concerts at Carnegie Hall; the ensemble now performs year-round with the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops. It has performed with the BSO on tour in Hong Kong and Japan, and on two European tours, also giving a cappella concerts of its own on those two occasions. The TFC made its debut in April 1970 at Symphony Hall, in a BSO performance of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with Leonard Bernstein conducting. Its first recording with the orchestra, Berlioz’s La Damnation de Faust with Seiji Ozawa, received a Grammy nomination for Best Choral Performance of 1975. The TFC has since made dozens of recordings with the BSO and Boston Pops, with Seiji Ozawa, Bernard Haitink, James Levine, Leonard Bernstein, Sir Colin Davis, Keith Lockhart, and John Williams. In August 2011, with John Oliver conducting and soloist Stephanie Blythe, the TFC gave the world premiere of Alan Smith’s An Unknown Sphere for mezzo-soprano and chorus, commissioned by the BSO for the ensemble’s 40th anniversary. Its most recent recordings on BSO Classics, all drawn from live performances, include a disc of a cappella music marking the TFC’s 40th anniversary; Ravel’s complete Daphnis et Chloi (a 2009 Grammy-winner for Best Orchestral Performance), Brahms’s German Requiem, and William Bolcom’s Eighth Symphony for chorus and orchestra (a BSO 125th Anniversary Commission). On July 4, 2018, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus joined Keith Lockhart for the “Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular” on the Charles River Esplanade.

Besides their work with the BSO, TFC members have also performed with Zubin Mehta and the Israel Philharmonic and in a Saito Kinen Festival production of Britten’s Peter Grimes under Seiji Ozawa in Japan. The ensemble had the honor of singing at Sen. Edward Kennedy’s funeral; has performed with the Boston Pops for the Boston Red Sox and Boston Celtics; and can be heard on the soundtracks of Clint Eastwood’s Mystic River, John Sayles’s Silver City, and Steven Spielberg’s Saving Private Ryan. TFC members regularly commute from the greater Boston area and beyond to sing with the chorus in Boston and at Tanglewood. For more information about the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and upcoming auditions, please visit www.bso.org/tfc.

Boston Symphony Children’s Choir
James Burton, Conductor

The Boston Symphony Children’s Choir, and Andris Nelsons for a July 2018 concert performance of Puccini’s La bohème at Tanglewood. The choir performed Mahler’s Symphony No. 3 at Tanglewood that August, and also gave its own solo performance as part of Tanglewood’s “Summer Sundays” presentations. The Boston Symphony Children’s Choir made its Boston Pops debut this winter in Holiday Pops concerts at Symphony Hall. The choir’s schedule this season has included a performance in the BSO’s start-of-season Symphony Gala, and continues with this week’s BSO concert performances of Puccini’s Suor Angelica and Britten’s Friday Afternoons for children’s chorus and orchestra. After holding auditions for nearly 200 children in the fall of 2017, sixty-five singers from grades 5-9 were selected by BSO Choral Director James Burton to participate in the BSO’s January 2018 performances under Andris Nelsons of Mahler’s Symphony No. 3. Following the success of that project, the Boston Symphony Children’s Choir (BSCC) was officially announced as a permanent ensemble of the BSO. Many of the BSCC’s members had previously sung in school and church choirs. Some who sang in Mahler’s Third Symphony enjoyed their first choral experience on that occasion, and some enjoyed their first operatic experience in last summer’s performance of La bohème. If you know a young person who would be interested in joining the choir, please visit bso.org/bssc for information about auditions.

James Burton

James Burton was appointed Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and to the newly created position of BSO Choral Director, in February 2017. He made his BSO subscription-series conducting debut in October 2018, leading the Tanglewood Festival Chorus in Maija Einfelde’s Lux aeterna. Born in London, Mr. Burton holds a master’s degree in orchestral conducting from the Peabody Conservatory, where he studied with Frederik Prausnitz and Gustav Meier. He began his training at the Choir of Westminster Abbey, where he became head chorister, and was a choral scholar at St. John’s College, Cambridge. He has conducted concerts with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Hallé, the Orchestra of Scottish Opera, Royal Northern Sinfonia, BBC Concert Orchestra, and Manchester Camerata. He made his debut with the Boston Pops in December 2017 and returns to the Pops podium this coming December. He is a regular guest of the Orquestra Sinfónica Nacional de Mexico and returns this season to lead performances of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 in the
Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. Opera credits include performances at English National Opera, English Touring Opera, Garsington Opera, and the Prague Summer Nights Festival, and he has served on the music staff of the Metropolitan Opera and Opéra de Paris. Mr. Burton’s extensive choral conducting has included guest invitations with professional choirs including the Gabrieli Consort, the Choir of the Enlightenment, Wroclaw Philharmonic, and the BBC Singers, with whom he performed in the inaugural season of Dubai’s Opera House in 2017. From 2002 to 2009 he served as choral director at the Hallé Orchestra, where he was music director of the Hallé Choir and founding conductor of the Hallé Youth Choir, winning the Gramophone Choral Award in 2009. He was music director of Schola Cantorum of Oxford from 2002 to 2017. Mr. Burton is well known for his inspirational work with young musicians. In 2017 he was director of the National Youth Choir of Japan; he has recently conducted the Princeton University Glee Club, Yale Schola Cantorum, and University of Kentucky Symphony. In 2018 he founded the Boston Symphony Children’s Choir. Mr. Burton has given conducting master classes at the Royal Academy of Music in London and at the Tanglewood Music Center, and founded a scholarship for young conductors at Oxford. His growing composition portfolio includes works for commissioners including the National Portrait Gallery in London, the 2010 World Equestrian Games, the Choir of St. John’s College, Cambridge, and the Exon Festival, where he was composer-in-residence in 2015. In July 2019, Mr. Burton will conduct the Boston Symphony Children’s Choir and Boston Symphony Orchestra in the world premiere of his The Lost Words, as part of next summer’s gala Tanglewood on Parade concert. He is currently working on a major new piece commissioned by the Hallé Orchestra. His works are published by Edition Peters. As BSO Choral Director and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, James Burton occupies the Alan J. and Suzanne W. Dworsky chair, endowed in perpetuity.

Tanglewood Festival Chorus
James Burton, BSO Choral Director and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus
John Oliver (1939-2018), Founder
(Puccini Suor Angelica, February 21 and 23, 2019)

In the following list, § denotes membership of 40 years or more, * denotes membership of 35-39 years, and # denotes membership of 25-34 years.

**SOPRANOS**
Michele Bergonzi # • Emily Cotten • Emilia DiCola • Mary A.V. Feldman * • Alyssa Hensel
Donna Kim # • Greta Koning • Stephanie M. Riley • Dana R. Sullivan • Nora Anne Watson • Susan Glazer Yospin • Meghan Renee Zuver

**MEZZO-SOPRANOS**
Debra Swartz Foote • Susan L. Kendall • Yoo-Kyung Kim • Sarah Labrie • Tracy Elissa Nadolny • Brittany Walker • Karen Thomas Wilcox

**TENORS**
Quincy Cason • John Cunningham • Keith Erskine • David J. Heid • Peter Pulsifer • Miguel A. Rodriguez

**BASSES**
Matthew Buono • Jay S. Gregory # • Timothy Lanagan # • Stephen Tinkham • Samuel Truesdel • Alex Weir • Andrew S. Wilkins

Boston Symphony Children’s Choir
James Burton, Conductor
(Puccini Suor Angelica, February 21 and 23, 2019)

Nolan An • Shira Argov • Daniel Avgichew • Chloe Baril • Jacob Choi • Katie Connolly • Orly Diaz • Gita Drummond • Jaime Durodola • Elliot Elkin • Hannah Erickson • Olivia Fang • Maddie Genis • Emily Genis • Samuel Haber • Marguerite Haddad • Margaret King • Emily Kuang • Annie Kurdzionak • Evan Larivie • Meghan Laurence • Hannah Laurence • Claire Lee • Amy Li • Sophie Li • Isabella Luo • Alexandra Mahajan • Taban Malihi • Navaa Malihi • Jamie Markey • Cora McAllister • Victoria Miele • Catherine Minihane • Marta Nilsson • Lucy Norman • Alma Orgad • Suhyun Park • Sophia Peng • Henrick Rabinovitz • Sanford Reynolds • Joshua Robins • Victorie Sang • Ulrika Skoog • Mark Snevik • Matvey Soykin • Vyom Srivastava • Ellie Strano • Elisabeth van Reijendam • Marissa Emmie Williams • Luke Wong • Anna Woodward
Julia Carey, Rehearsal Pianist
Brett Hodgdon, Rehearsal Pianist
Ian Watson, Rehearsal Pianist
Jennifer Dilzell, Chorus Manager
Micah Brightwell, Assistant Chorus Manager