

# Messiah

**Dame Jane Glover**, conductor  
**Lauren Snouffer**, soprano  
**Krisztina Szabó**, mezzo-soprano  
**Colin Ainsworth**, tenor  
**Joshua Hopkins**, baritone  
**Toronto Mendelssohn Choir**  
**Jean-Sébastien Vallée**, Artistic Director

.....  
**George Frideric Handel**  
*Messiah* (135 mins)  
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## Part One

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## Intermission

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## Part Two

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## Part Three

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For full text, see pages 14–17.

## Program

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Sunday,  
December 17, 2023  
3:00pm

Tuesday,  
December 19, 2023  
8:00pm

Wednesday,  
December 20, 2023  
8:00pm

Friday,  
December 22, 2023  
8:00pm

Saturday,  
December 23, 2023  
8:00pm

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*The December 19th performance is generously sponsored by the Estate of Ruth Miriam Bentley in memory of A.F. and Mae Lawson Bentley*

*Lauren Snouffer's appearance is generously supported by Esther McNeil*

*Krisztina Szabó's appearance is generously supported by Peter Levitt and Mai Why*

*Colin Ainsworth's appearance is generously supported by Karin Harrison*

*Joshua Hopkins' appearance is generously supported by Earlane Collins*

## How *Messiah* Came to Be (1741–1749)

**HANDEL'S CRITICS COULDN'T YET KNOW** that *Messiah* would be the work to launch him out of a mid-life crisis. After more than 30 years of success as England's favourite German composer of Italian opera, George Frideric Handel was considered to be of the past. His Italian operas, with their exotic castrati delivering virtuosic cadenzas, were playing to dwindling audiences. But rather than fading into well-earned retirement, the 56-year-old Handel rallied, composing a quiverful of works in the newly fashionable concerto grosso style, which sold like crazy. And he shifted his attention from opera to oratorio, composing the new work, *Messiah*, in the now legendary three-week period in September of 1741.

"Words are wanting to express the exquisite Delight it afforded to the admiring crowded Audience," reported *The Dublin Journal* (April 13–17, 1742). Handel's newest work was a smash hit at its première in Dublin's Fishamble Street Theatre in 1742—prompting civic fathers to make their much-quoted request that patrons leave their swords and hoop skirts at home. London audiences were of a different disposition altogether. Handel scheduled *Messiah* to end his annual season at Covent Garden in the spring of 1743. But before they had heard a note of the piece, fashionably

puritanical Londoners huffed and puffed back and forth in the newspapers about the idea of performing a work with such a sacred theme in a common house of entertainment:

"How can we sing the Lord's Song in a strange Land; but sure he would have thought it much stranger to have heard it sung in a Playhouse." (Philaethes, *The Universal Spectator and Weekly Journal*, March 19, 1743)



↑  
George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

Once they had heard it, local pundits conceded *Messiah* was, although inappropriate, a fine piece; but they grumbled anyway. Even Charles Jennens, Handel's librettist, couldn't grant his approval without slipping in a gripe:

"Tis after all, in the main, a fine Composition, notwithstanding some weak parts, which he was too idle & too obstinate to retouch, tho' I us'd great importunity to persuade him to

it." (Jennens, in a letter to his friend Edward Holdsworth, March 24, 1743)

The controversy and pressure to revise were too much for Handel, who was struck with a "Paralytick Disorder" and took some time off until summer. Handel rewrote and

massaged portions of *Messiah* over the years to suit the forces he had available at individual performances. The most lasting innovation associated with the 1743 performances of *Messiah* is the custom that has the audience stand during the “Hallelujah” chorus. The story is recorded in a letter, written 37 years after the fact, from one James Beattie to the Rev. Dr. Laing. One evening at Covent Garden, the audience was particularly caught up in the performance: “But when that chorus struck up, ‘For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth’, they were so transported that they all, together with the King (who happened to be present) started up, and remained standing till the chorus ended.” If this story is true, the King must have been keeping a low profile indeed, for his attendance appears in no other diaries, newspapers, or court records of the time.

By 1745, *Messiah* was beginning to live down London audiences’ initial prejudice against it, but it was not out of the woods yet. In fact, after that year’s performances, Handel withdrew the oratorio from public performance entirely for several years. It had not yet been published, as Handel was still revising the work, adding new choruses and arias while removing others, and the librettist Jennens was still sniping from the wings.

Finally, in 1749, the work reappeared, given new legitimacy by the composer’s performance of it at an annual fundraising concert for the local orphanage, the Foundling Hospital. From that time, and for as long as Handel lived, not a year went by without a performance of *Messiah* under his baton.

—Program note compiled and edited from various TSO contributors between 1993 and 1996.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF MESSIAH AT THE TSO

1. The TSO’s first performance of *Messiah* with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir dates back to the 1935/36 season and took place at the University of Toronto’s Convocation Hall. The full, unabridged version was first performed in December 1949.
2. The first recording of *Messiah* was for Beaver Records Limited in 1952 under Music Director Sir Ernest MacMillan and featured soprano Lois Marshall, contralto Mary Palmateer, tenor Jon Vickers, and bass James Milligan.
3. Audiences enjoyed *Messiah* singalongs for a number of years at Massey Hall, and would be seated in their respective vocal sections: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass.
4. In 1975, Conductor Laureate Sir Andrew Davis appeared under the guise of Handel, wearing the composer’s signature accessory—an enormous white wig.
5. Trumpeter Joseph Umbrico, who performed this oratorio more than 100 times with the TSO between 1957 and 1979, used to play the solo for “The trumpet shall sound” from the catwalk at Massey Hall.
6. In the 1980s, Principal Double Bass Thomas Monohan fainted during a *Messiah* performance—which did go on, but only after the fire department came to the rescue!
7. In addition to traditional holiday performances, the TSO has played selections from the *Messiah* to mark important events:
  - The TSO’s final performance at Massey Hall on June 4, 1982, concluded with the “Hallelujah” chorus.
  - In 1984, Sir Andrew Davis led the TSO in a number of excerpts, including that famed chorus, for Pope John Paul II at Nathan Phillips Square.
8. Over the years, TSO *Messiah* audiences have witnessed appearances by world-renowned artists including contralto Maureen Forrester, baritone Louis Quilico, conductor Roger Wagner, mezzo-soprano Catherine Robbin, soprano Kathleen Battle, bass Samuel Ramey, and soprano Nancy Argenta.
9. This year, nearly 175 musicians are required to perform this masterpiece, including: 1 conductor, 4 soloists, approximately 130 chorus singers, 18 violins, 6 violas, 4 cellos, 2 basses, 2 oboes, 1 bassoon, 2 trumpets, 1 timpani, 1 harpsichord, and 1 organ.

# Messiah

George Frideric Handel

Compiled by Charles Jennens from the *Authorised (King James) Version* of the Bible, published in 1611

## Part One

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### SINFONIA (OVERTURE)

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RECITATIVE  
ACCOMPAGNATO  
(accompanied)—  
TENOR

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplish'd, that her iniquity is pardon'd. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (*Isaiah 40:1–3*)

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AIR—TENOR

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain. (*Isaiah 40:4*)

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CHORUS

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (*Isaiah 40:5*)

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RECITATIVE—  
BARITONE

Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts: Yet once, a little while, and I will shake the heav'ns and the earth, the sea and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. (*Haggai 2:6–7*) The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, ev'n the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. (*Malachi 3:1*)

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AIR—  
MEZZO-SOPRANO

But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. (*Malachi 3:2*)

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CHORUS

And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. (*Malachi 3:3*)

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RECITATIVE—  
MEZZO-SOPRANO

Behold! A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, (*Isaiah 7:14*) And shall call His name Emmanuel: "God with us." (*Matthew 1:23*)

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AIR—MEZZO-  
SOPRANO AND  
CHORUS

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah: Behold your God! (*Isaiah 40:9*) Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. (*Isaiah 60:1*)

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RECITATIVE  
ACCOMPAGNATO—  
BARITONE

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. (*Isaiah 60:2–3*)

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**AIR—BARITONE**            The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. And they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. (*Isaiah 9:2*)

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**CHORUS**                    For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace! (*Isaiah 9:6*)

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**PIFA (PASTORAL SYMPHONY)**

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**RECITATIVE—  
SOPRANO**                    There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. (*Luke 2:8*)

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**RECITATIVE  
ACCOMPAGNATO—  
SOPRANO**                    And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone 'round about them, and they were sore afraid. (*Luke 2:9*)

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**RECITATIVE—  
SOPRANO**                    And the angel said unto them: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (*Luke 2: 10-11*)

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**RECITATIVE  
ACCOMPAGNATO—  
SOPRANO**                    And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heav'nly Host praising God, and saying: (*Luke 2:13*)

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**CHORUS**                    Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will toward men! (*Luke 2:14*)

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**AIR—SOPRANO**            Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. (*Zechariah 9:9-10*)

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**RECITATIVE—  
MEZZO-SOPRANO**            Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. (*Isaiah 35:5-6*)

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**DUET—SOPRANO/  
MEZZO-SOPRANO**            He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. (*Isaiah 40:11*) Come unto Him all ye that labour, come unto Him that are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (*Matthew 11:28-29*)

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**CHORUS**                    His yoke is easy, and his burthen is light. (*Matthew 11:30*)

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**Intermission**

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## Part Two

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<b>CHORUS</b>	Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. ( <i>John 1:29</i> )
<b>AIR— MEZZO-SOPRANO</b>	He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. ( <i>Isaiah 53: 3</i> )  He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off His hair: He hid not His face from shame and spitting. He was despised... da capo ( <i>Isaiah 50: 6</i> )
<b>CHORUS</b>	Surely, He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. ( <i>Isaiah 53:4–5</i> )  And with his stripes we are healed. ( <i>Isaiah 53:5</i> )  All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned ev'ry one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ( <i>Isaiah 53:6</i> )
<b>RECITATIVE ACCOMPAGNATO— TENOR</b>	All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn, they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying: ( <i>Psalms 22:7</i> )
<b>CHORUS</b>	He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him. ( <i>Psalms 22:8</i> )
<b>RECITATIVE ACCOMPAGNATO— TENOR</b>	Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort Him. ( <i>Psalms 69:20</i> )
<b>AIR—TENOR</b>	Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow. ( <i>Lamentations 1:12</i> )
<b>RECITATIVE ACCOMPAGNATO— TENOR</b>	He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgressions of Thy people was He stricken. ( <i>Isaiah 53:8</i> )
<b>AIR—TENOR</b>	But Thou didst not leave His soul in Hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. ( <i>Psalms 16:10</i> )
<b>CHORUS</b>	Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty in battle. The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. ( <i>Psalms 24:7–10</i> )
<b>AIR— MEZZO-SOPRANO</b>	Thou art gone up on high; Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even from Thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them. ( <i>Psalms 68: 18</i> )
<b>CHORUS</b>	The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the preachers. ( <i>Psalms 68: 11</i> )

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**AIR—SOPRANO** How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things. (*Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15*)

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**CHORUS** Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. (*Romans 10: 18; Psalm 19: 4*)

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**AIR—BARITONE** Why do the nations so furiously rage together, why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed. (*Psalm 2:1–2*)

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**CHORUS** Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. (*Psalm 2:3*)

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**RECITATIVE—TENOR** He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall have them in derision. (*Psalm 2:4*)

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**AIR—TENOR** Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (*Psalm 2:9*)

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**CHORUS** Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. (*Revelation 19:6*) The Kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. (*Revelation 11:15*) King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. (*Revelation 19:16*)

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## Part Three

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**AIR—SOPRANO** I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and tho' worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. (*Job 19:25–26*) For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. (*1 Corinthians 15:20*)

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**CHORUS** Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (*1 Corinthians 15:21–22*)

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**RECITATIVE  
ACCOMPAGNATO—  
BARITONE** Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be chang'd, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. (*1 Corinthians 15:51–52*)

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**AIR—BARITONE** The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be rais'd incorruptible, and we shall be chang'd. (*1 Corinthians 15:52*)

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**CHORUS** Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honour, glory and pow'r be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen. (*Revelation 5:9, 12–14*)

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### **Dame Jane Glover, conductor**

Dame Jane Glover made her TSO début in December 2005.

Acclaimed British conductor Dame Jane Glover (DBE, MA, DPhil, FRCM, Hon RAM)—named Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in the 2021 New Year Honours—has been Music of the Baroque’s Music Director since 2002. She made her professional début at the Wexford Festival Opera in 1975, conducting her own edition of Francesco Cavalli’s *L’Eritrea*. She joined Glyndebourne in 1979 and was Music Director of Glyndebourne Touring Opera from 1981 until 1985. She was Artistic Director of the London Mozart Players from 1984 to 1991, and has also held principal conductorships of both the Huddersfield and London Choral Societies. From 2009 until 2016, she was Director of Opera at the Royal Academy of Music, where she is now the Felix Mendelssohn Emerita Professor of Music. She was recently Visiting Professor of Opera at the University of Oxford, her alma mater.

In demand on the international opera stage, Jane Glover has appeared with numerous companies from The Metropolitan Opera and Royal Opera House, to the Royal Danish Opera and Teatro La Fenice.

Glover has conducted all the major symphony and chamber orchestras in Britain, as well as orchestras in Europe, the United States, Asia, and Australia. In recent seasons, she has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Minnesota Orchestras; the San Francisco, Houston, and Bamberg Symphonies; the St. Louis, Sydney, Cincinnati, and Toronto Symphony Orchestras; and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s. She has worked with the period-instrument orchestras Philharmonia Baroque and the Handel and Haydn Society. And she has made regular appearances at the BBC Proms.

A Mozart specialist, Glover has regularly conducted all of Mozart’s operas all over the world since she first performed them at Glyndebourne in the 1980s, and her core operatic repertoire also includes Monteverdi, Handel, and Britten. Glover’s discography includes a series of Mozart and Haydn symphonies with the London Mozart Players and recordings of Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Britten, and Walton with the London Philharmonic, the Royal Philharmonic, and the BBC Singers. She is the author of the critically-acclaimed books *Mozart’s Women* and *Handel in London*. She holds a personal professorship at the University of London, is a Fellow of the Royal College of Music, an Honorary Member of the Royal Academy of Music, and the holder of several honorary degrees. In 2020, she was given the Gamechanger Award by the Royal Philharmonic Society.



### **Lauren Snouffer, soprano**

These performances mark Lauren Snouffer’s TSO début.

Recognized for her unique artistic curiosity in world-class performances spanning the music of Claudio Monteverdi and Johann Adolph Hasse through to Missy Mazzoli and Sir George Benjamin, American Lauren Snouffer is celebrated as one of the most versatile and respected sopranos on the international stage.

Her operatic performances on leading international stages have fortified the soprano’s place as one of the eminent interpreters

of contemporary music; she created the title role in Stefan Wirth's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* with Opernhaus Zürich and portrayed the lead role in Hans Abrahamsen's *The Snow Queen* at Opéra national du Rhin. Snouffer's concert schedule has yielded marvellous results with many of the world's most distinguished conductors and orchestras, including performances with Franz Welser-Möst and The Cleveland Orchestra, Raphaël Pichon and the Handel and Haydn Society, Cristian Măcelaru and the Rotterdam Philharmonic, Krzysztof Urbanski and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Edo de Waart and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Markus Stenz and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Patrick Dupré Quigley and Seraphic Fire, and Marin Alsop and the Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo.

A GRAMMY® Award-nominated artist, Snouffer has established an impactful recording catalogue including Hasse's *Siroe* and Handel's *Ottone* with George Petrou for Decca Records, Gottschalk's *Requiem: For the Living* with Vladimir Lande on Navona Records, Grantham's *La canción desesperada* conducted by Craig Hella Johnson on Harmonia Mundi, and Feldman's *Rothko Chapel* with Steven Schick for ECM.

An alumna of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, Snouffer also graduated from Rice University and The Juilliard School.



### **Krisztina Szabó**, mezzo-soprano

Krisztina Szabó made her TSO début in January 2009.

Hungarian-Canadian mezzo-soprano Krisztina Szabó is highly sought-after in both North America and Europe as an artist of supreme musicianship and stagecraft. She is known for her interpretation of Baroque music as well as her promotion and performance of contemporary Canadian works.

Szabó has performed with San Francisco Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Stadttheater Klagenfurt, and Wexford Festival Opera.

In 2018, Szabó made her Royal Opera and Dutch National Opera débuts in George Benjamin's *Lessons in Love and Violence*, the recording of which received a GRAMMY® nomination for Best Opera Recording. Szabó's career has seen her on all the major opera and concert stages across Canada. She regularly performs with the Canadian Opera Company, Vancouver Opera, Tapestry Opera, Early Music Vancouver, and Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.

She has twice been nominated for a Dora Award in the category of Outstanding Performance by an Individual, and was in *Kopernikus* (Claude Vivier) with Toronto's Against the Grain Theatre, which won a Dora Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble. Her discography includes *New Jewish Music, Vol. 3* (Analekta), *Ana Sokolović: Sirens* (Naxos), and *Talisker Players: Where Words and Music Meet* (Centrediscs).

Digital projects include Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* (Judith) with Canadian Opera Company, Tafelmusik's *The Voice of Vivaldi*, Festival of the Sound's *Arias & Antics*, Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* with Vancouver Opera, *An Italian Baroque Festive Celebration* with Early Music Vancouver, recital performances for the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts and Behind the Keys with Vancouver Bach Choir, and Tapestry Opera's *S.O.S. Sketch Opera Singers*.

Szabó is Assistant Professor of Voice and Opera at the University of British Columbia School of Music.



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### Colin Ainsworth, tenor

Colin Ainsworth made his TSO début in October 2009.

Colin Ainsworth has been praised for his “exquisite control and emotional directness,” and has long distinguished himself internationally as a specialist, not only with his interpretations of the major Classical and Baroque tenor roles, but also by his performances in contemporary opera. Having travelled the world with his unique and expressive voice, Ainsworth has performed the title roles in *Orphée et Eurydice*, *Pygmalion*, *Roberto Devereux*, and *Albert Herring*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, Fenton in *Falstaff*, Tonio in *La fille du régiment*, Nadir in *Les pêcheurs de perles*, and Lysander in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

Also a prolific concert singer, Ainsworth has appeared with the Cincinnati Symphony, Montreal Symphony, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Pygmalion, Vancouver Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra of San Francisco, Jane Glover and Music of the Baroque in Chicago, the Mercury Chamber Orchestra in Houston, Les Violons du Roy in Montreal, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra in Toronto, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the Grand Philharmonic Choir. He has also appeared at the Lanaudière, Montreal Baroque, Elora, and Aldeburgh Connection festivals, and has toured throughout Germany. His vast concert and recital repertoire includes Bach’s Mass in B Minor and *St John Passion*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, Mozart’s Requiem, Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*, and Janáček’s *Diary of One Who Vanished*.



### Joshua Hopkins, baritone

Joshua Hopkins made his TSO début in January 2009.

Known as one of the finest singer-actors of his generation, JUNO Award-winning and GRAMMY®-nominated Canadian baritone Joshua Hopkins has been hailed by *Opera Today* as having “a glistening, malleable baritone of exceptional beauty, and the technique to exploit its full range of expressive possibilities from comic bluster to melting beauty.” Having established himself as a prominent leading artist throughout the United States and Canada, Hopkins appears regularly at The Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and Santa Fe Opera, among many others, and has performed under the baton of such renowned conductors as Sir Andrew Davis, Alan Gilbert, Marin Alsop, James Gaffigan, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Nicholas Carter, and Enrique Mazzola. His most personal work, *Songs for Murdered Sisters*, is a song cycle by composer Jake Heggie and author Margaret Atwood, conceived by Hopkins in remembrance of his sister, Nathalie Warmerdam. Following the critically acclaimed film and JUNO-nominated album releases, the chamber version of *Songs for Murdered Sisters* received its live world première with the composer at the piano at Houston’s Rothko Chapel in March 2022, in partnership with Houston Grand Opera. In 2023, Hopkins gave the live world première of the work’s orchestral version with Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra under the baton of Alexander Shelley in Ottawa, Toronto, and Kingston, and the European première of the cycle at the Trasimeno Music Festival in Perugia, Italy, with pianist Angela Hewitt.

# Toronto Mendelssohn Choir



## **Jean-Sébastien Vallée**, Artistic Director

Named as Artistic Director of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir (TMChoir) in May 2021 following an international search, Jean-Sébastien Vallée is a renowned Canadian-American conductor, scholar, and pedagogue known for his expertise in vocal, choral, and orchestral repertoires. With a career spanning over several decades, Vallée has conducted numerous ensembles across North America, Europe, and Asia, and has prepared choruses for some of the world's most prestigious orchestras including the Chicago and Toronto Symphony Orchestras, l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, and the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa. In addition to his artistic leadership of the TMChoir, he is Associate Professor of Music, Director of Choral Studies, and Coordinator of the Ensembles & Conducting Area at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University. His upcoming engagements include concerts at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest and concerts with l'Orchestre symphonique de Québec.

## **The Choir**

The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir made its TSO début in April 1935.

The TMChoir is proud to be one of Canada's oldest, largest, and best-known choral organizations. The choir presented its first concert on January 15, 1895, as part of Massey Hall's inaugural season, and has been a leader in choral music in Canada ever since, commissioning works by Canadian composers, and presenting world and Canadian premières. The choir also regularly performs and records with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. In May 2021, Jean-Sébastien Vallée was named as Artistic Director, only the eighth conductor in TMChoir's 128-year history.

Through its performances, educational programs, and community engagement, TMChoir aspires to introduce its audiences to choral masterworks from the past and present—making both renowned and lesser-known pieces available, accessible, and inspirational to all.

The TMChoir includes 24 professional singers and over 130 auditioned and experienced volunteer choristers. Auditions are held in the spring and fall to welcome new members. Our smaller professional ensemble, the Toronto Mendelssohn Singers (TMSingers), was created to deliver more intimate, nimble repertoire in a variety of non-traditional venues, traversing the line between concert and experience, and showcasing the individual expression of professional soloists.

## Toronto Mendelssohn Choir members

Jean-Sébastien Vallée, Artistic Director and Chorusmaster

Paul Genyk-Berezowsky, Assistant Chorusmaster

### SOPRANO

Catherine Alberti  
Tia Andriani  
Ann-Marie Barrett-Tandy  
Jocelyn Belfer  
Lesley Emma Bouza\*  
Louise Boyden  
Leslie Bradshaw  
Bree Callahan  
Hannah Carty  
Ada Chan  
Amy Chen  
Lauren Choi  
Kim Finkelstein  
Leslie Finlay  
Rebecca Fisher  
Shayna Follington  
Marina Galeano  
Kaveri Gandhi  
Rebecca Genge\*  
Alison Haines  
Pat M. Irwin  
Christine Kerr  
Jennifer (Ye Won) Kim  
Gabrysia Kowalik  
Alysha Ladha  
Elizabeth Lee  
Jisue Lee  
Nai Lee  
Alice Liu  
Claire Luc  
Jocelyne Lussier  
Marlene Lynds  
Sachiko Marshall  
Lindsay McIntyre\*  
Cathy Minnaar  
Olha Movsessian  
Michelle Murphy  
Emily Parker\*  
Michele Pearson  
Ariane Prescott  
Michelle Prunier  
Mary Ridgley  
Sylvia Romanowska  
Heather Rowe  
Jereney Shen  
Hannah Silverberg  
Jaclyn Siou  
Chong Tan  
Jennie Worden  
Sophya Yumakulov  
Paulina Zmak

### ALTO

Jane Agosta  
Marlo Alcock  
Renée Ardiente  
Julia Barber\*  
Frances Chan  
Eunseong Cho  
Rebecca Claborn\*  
Nina Coutinho  
Kristin Crawford  
Avis Devine  
Aдриenne Eastwood  
Kirsten Fielding\*  
Ruxandra Filip  
Gillian Grant  
Ann Griffin  
Simon Honeyman\*  
Joaquin Justo  
Rebecca Manga  
Ryan McDonald\*  
Heather McGrath  
Jennifer McGraw  
Bethany Jo Mikelait  
Susan E. Mumford  
Annie Odom  
Parnian Parvin  
Pamela Psarianos  
Yara Rubb  
Jan Szot  
Joscelyn Olivia Tan  
Jennifer Ujimoto  
Kiley Venables  
Patti Vipond  
Emma Willemsma  
Tarquin Wongkee  
Susan Worthington  
Jessica Wright\*  
Virginia Wright  
Yuyang Wu

### TENOR

Mitch Aldrich\*  
Rafael Avila  
Tom Bishop  
Sam Broverman  
Karel Cantelar Ramos  
Michael Clipperton  
Peter DeRoche  
Omar Flores  
John Gladwell  
Nicholas Gough\*  
Nathan Gritter\*  
Alejandro Guerrero  
Channing Huang  
Charles Im  
Justin Jalea\*  
Valdis Jevtejevs\*  
Clement Kam  
Benjamin Keast\*  
Hassan Khan  
Francis Lam  
Eric Lee  
Tim McPhail  
Daniel Meeks  
Nicholas Nicolaidis\*  
Neil Payne  
David Serber  
Peteris Spels  
Terrence Tsang  
Michael Vasmer  
Christopher Wenman

### BASS

Neil Aronoff\*  
Jeffrey Baker  
Hernan Botero  
David Chan  
Yoosik Choi  
Tony Churchill  
Peter Eratostene  
Steven Foster  
Paul Genyk-Berezowsky\*  
Andrew Gilchrist  
Kieran Kane\*  
Kai Leung\*  
Matt Lozinski  
Rocco Marciano  
Joseph McGowan IV  
Magnus Mee  
Frederick Mei  
David Peer  
Devyn Pope\*  
David B. Powell  
Milovan Prelevic  
Michael Qin  
Graham Robinson\*  
Seymour Stern  
Gavriel Rhys Swayze  
Karl Tomczak  
Chia-An (Victor) Tung  
Sean van Wyk  
Jonah Wall  
Albert Wong  
Isaiah Yankech  
Michael York\*  
David Yung\*  
Bruce Yungblut

\*TMSingers

