

## Joseph Young, Lara Downes, & Florence Price's Piano Concerto

CONCERT DEEP DIVE

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## The Music

#### JULIA PERRY'S A SHORT PIECE FOR ORCHESTRA

Notes by TŌN percussionist Petra Elek



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#### The Composer

Julia Perry's musical interest and talent was obvious from very early in her childhood. After multiple achievements growing up studying voice, piano, and violin, she was offered scholarships to attend the Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. During her college years, she studied composition and conducting while she continued her studies in voice, piano, and violin. After college, she took classes at Juilliard and studied voice at the Curtis Institute until 1951. During

this period she became acquainted with the Italian composer Piero Bellugi, who introduced her to his teacher, Luigi Dallapiccola, Because of the influence of these prestigious composers, she moved to Italy to continue working with Dallapiccola, at the conclusion of a successful summer at Tanglewood. After one of her most wellknown pieces, Stabat Mater, was performed in Italy, Germany, Austria, and the United States, she decided to take a break from studying with Dallapiccola in order to learn from Nadia Boulanger at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau. It was during Perry's second year in Italy that the premiere of A Short Piece for Orchestra took place, and it quickly became one of her most-performed pieces. For the following years she traveled back and forth between the U.S. and Italy, and received multiple Guggenheim fellowships. Once she finally settled down in the States, she became a teacher. Both as a composer and a teacher she combined European classical and neoclassical training with her African-American heritage. As a consequence of underlying health problems, she suffered a stroke in 1970, which left her right side completely paralyzed and made her unable to speak. Even though she tried to have her work

published, it was almost impossible to read her handwriting after the stroke, which ended up causing her work to either get lost after her death, or only be available in manuscript form.

#### The Music

Julia Perry wrote A Short Piece for Orchestra in 1952, and revised it twice before settling on its final version. After an energetic and prominent opening, we soon find ourselves in a lyrical slow section. The composition is clearly divided into five contrasting parts in which the opening thunderlike material comes back three times. In the first melodic section the theme is first played by the flute, then the oboe, the clarinet, and the horn. After an abrupt and short central section, the flute, violin, and oboe take over, leading us into the final recall of the vigorous opening. The short piece is full of contrasts and sound effects that make the work really exciting.

## FLORENCE PRICE'S PIANO CONCERTO

Notes by TŌN clarinetist Olivia Hamilton



#### The Composer

As the first Black woman to have a composition performed by a major American orchestra, Florence Beatrice Price created a musical legacy that was tied to her training in the European classical tradition and Black American spirituals. A Black woman who lived primarily in the

Jim Crow south, Price had to struggle with many facets of her identity that were deemed unacceptable to the people in her hometown of Little Rock, Arkansas. However, this did not stop her from having her Symphony No. 1 premiered by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1933 on a concert entitled "The Negro in Music." This premiere pushed Price to put composition at the forefront of her musical legacy, along with being accomplished on the piano and organ.

#### A Musical Reconstruction

The Piano Concerto in One Movement was one of many works by Price that disappeared for decades. The loss and mishandling of her compositions due to her identity is abhorrent, proving that the proper care and attention was not given to music which deserved to be treated like the music of her peers. During America's recent racial awakening, many orchestras and institutions have found an interest in her music again. In 2011, Trevor Weston, a Black American composer, reconstructed the Piano Concerto in One Movement from a few instrumental parts and a manuscript written for two pianos. An orchestral manuscript later turned up at an auction in 2019.

#### The Music

This work features three distinct sections, although it is performed in one movement. It begins with a nostalgic passage between the woodwinds and brass. This transitions into an illustrious introduction in the piano, using its full range and featuring chromatic leading in a flurry of notes until it arpeggiates to a transition back to the orchestra. The second distinct section begins with a singing passage in the strings before it makes room for an oboe solo that will eventually expand and flow within the piano harmonies. This section makes use of the consecutive sixth and first scale degree in a major key,

which is often heard in Black American spirituals. The third section transitions with an accelerando and the passing off of wind solos. This dance section is an example of a juba, which is a dance brought to America by enslaved people from the Kingdom of Kongo (present day Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Gabon) characterized by stomping, slapping, and patting. This dance was used when rhythmic instruments were stolen to stop enslaved people from communicating.

## RACHMANINOFF'S SYMPHONY NO. 3

Notes by TŌN violist Batmyagmar Erdenebat



#### A Gifted Student

Well before becoming one of the most admired pianists of the early 20th century, Rachmaninoff emerged as a gifted composition student who impressed his teachers. He had an extraordinary gift for memorization and completed his opera *Aleko* in just 4 weeks. So why did it take him almost three decades after finishing his Second Symphony to compose his Third?

#### A Lost Confidence

In 1897, Rachmaninoff lost his confidence in composing after the disastrous premiere of his First Symphony in St. Petersburg under the baton of Alexander Glazunov, who was said to be drunk on the stage. Yet Rachmaninoff recovered after three months of hypnotherapy with Nikolay Dahl, and in 1901 began composing his Second Piano Concerto, which he dedicated to Dahl. Following its success, he was able to balance performance and composition so well that he completed his Symphony No. 2, the symphonic poem The Isle of the Dead, and his Third Piano Concerto all during the first decade of the 20th Century, while living in Dresden. During the catastrophic Russian Revolution and First World War, he managed to survive and finally emigrated to the U.S., where Rachmaninoff had an intense performance schedule and little time for composition. From the end of WWI until 1931 he had not composed much, except to complete his Piano Concerto No. 4. Indeed, he felt out of touch with the modern techniques of composition, and wrote in the late 1930s, "The new kind of music seems to come not from the heart but from the head. It may be that they compose in the spirit of the times; but it may be, too, that the spirit of the times does not inspire expression in music."

#### The Music

Back in Europe in 1936, Rachmaninoff completed his Third Symphony, which was inspired by one of his most celebrated piano works, Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini. The symphony premiered with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski in November of the same year, but never achieved the fame of his previous work. The Philadelphia Orchestra recorded it in 1939 under Rachmaninoff's baton. Rachmaninoff regarded his final symphony fondly. We hear the motif enter at the start of the first of three movements. It later dominates the second half of the finale. The first movement has two contrasting themes: sorrow and nostalgia expressed by the woodwinds; and a gracious, romantic melody presented by the cellos. Within the second movement, a combination of adagio

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and scherzo creates two inner movements. The calming theme is introduced by solo horn and followed by solo violin. The scherzo then takes its turn with the strings to create a theatrical atmosphere. The lively

finale radiates the energy of Russian dance music. Finally, a lush melodic theme brings us back to high romanticism with a grand conclusion.

## The Artists

JOSEPH YOUNG conductor



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Joseph Young is Music Director of the Berkeley Symphony, Artistic Director of Ensembles for the Peabody Conservatory, and Resident Conductor of the National Youth Orchestra–USA at Carnegie Hall. In recent years, he has made appearances with the Saint Louis Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Colorado Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Bamberger Symphoniker, New World Symphony, Spoleto Festival Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música, and the Orquesta Sinfonica y Coro de RTVE (Madrid), among others in the U.S. and Europe.

In his most recent role, Mr. Young served as the Assistant Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony, where he conducted more than 50 concerts per season. He also served as the Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, where he was the driving force behind the ensemble's artistic growth. Previous appointments have included Resident Conductor of the Phoenix Symphony, and the League of American Orchestras Conducting Fellow with the Buffalo Philharmonic and Baltimore Symphony.

Mr. Young is a recipient of the 2015 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award for young conductors, an award he also won in 2008 and 2014. In 2013, he was a semi-finalist in the Gustav Mahler International Conducting Competition (Bamberg, Germany). In 2011, he was one of six conductors featured in the League of American Orchestras' prestigious Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview

Mr. Young completed graduate studies with Gustav Meier and Markand Thakar at the Peabody Conservatory in 2009, earning an artist's diploma in conducting. He has been mentored by many world-renowned conductors, including Jorma Panula, Robert Spano, and Marin Alsop, with whom he continues to maintain a close relationship.

#### LARA DOWNES piano



Max Barrett

Pianist Lara Downes is a Billboard chart-topping recording artist, a producer, curator, activist, and arts advocate. She has performed on major stages including the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Boston Symphony Hall, the Ravinia Festival, Tanglewood, and Washington Performing Arts, and in clubs and intimate venues including Joe's Pub, National Sawdust, Yoshi's, and Le Poisson Rouge.

Ms. Downes' series of recordings includes Florence Price: Plano Discoveries, a collection of world-premiere recordings of recently discovered piano works by the groundbreaking African American

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composer, and Some of These Davs. comprising freedom songs and spirituals that reflect on social justice, progress, and equality. Her Sony Masterworks recording Holes in the Sky, a celebration of the contributions of phenomenal women to the past, present, and future of American music, was released in March 2019, debuting at the top of the Billboard charts. Her recording For Love Of You marks her concerto recording debut, and celebrates the 200th birthday of the pianist and composer Clara Schumann. Her Sony Classical debut release For Lenny debuted in the Billboard Top 20 and was awarded the 2017 Classical Recording Foundation Award, and America Again was selected by NPR as one of "10 Albums that Saved 2016."

Ms. Downes enjoys creative collaborations with a range of leading artists, including folk icon Judy Collins, pianist Simone Dinnerstein, former U.S. Poet Laureate Rita Dove, multi-instrumentalist/composer/singer Rhiannon Giddens, writer Adam Gopnik, baritone Thomas Hampson, and cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Her close partnerships with prominent composers span genres and generations, with premieres and commissions coming from Michael Abels, Clarice Assad, John Corigliano, Jennifer Higdon, Paola Prestini, Stephen Schwartz, and many others.

Ms. Downes is the creator and curator of

Rising Sun Music, a monthly recording series that sheds light on the music and stories of Black composers over the past 200 years, featuring a wide range of leading instrumentalists and vocalists (including Ms. Downes). She is host of AMPLIFY with Lara Downes, a video series for NPR Music now in its second season, that engages visionary Black musicians and artists in important topics confronting them today; and an evening host and Resident Artist at KDFC. She serves as the inaugural Artist Citizen in Residence for the Manhattan School of Music, as well as a Fellow of the Loghaven Artist Residency. Her work has been supported by the Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts. the Sphinx Organization, the Classical Recording Foundation Award, the University of California Innovator of the Year Award, and the Center for Cultural Innovation. among others.

Ms. Downes' fierce commitment to activism and advocacy has her working with organizations including the ACLU, Feeding America, the Lower Eastside Girls Club, the Sphinx Organization, and Watts Learning Center. She is an Artist Ambassador for Headcount, a non-partisan organization that uses the power of music to register voters and promote participation in democracy.

More info at LaraDownes.com.

#### THE ORCHESTRA NOW



vid DeNee

The Orchestra Now ( $T\bar{O}N$ ) is a group of vibrant young musicians from across the globe who are making orchestral music relevant to 21st-century audiences by sharing their unique personal insights in a welcoming environment. Hand-picked from the world's leading conservatories—including the Yale School of Music, Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Royal Academy of Music, and the Eastman School of Music—the members of  $T\bar{O}N$  are enlightening curious minds by giving on-stage introductions and demonstrations, writing concert notes from the musicians' perspective, and having one-on-one discussions with patrons during intermissions.

Conductor, educator, and music historian Leon Botstein, whom *The New York Times* said "draws rich, expressive playing from the orchestra," founded TŌN in 2015 as a graduate program at Bard College, where he is also president. TŌN offers both a three-year master's degree in Curatorial, Critical, and Performance Studies and a two-year advanced certificate in Orchestra Studies. The orchestra's home base is the Frank Gehry-designed Fisher Center at Bard, where it performs multiple concerts each season and takes part in the annual Bard Music Festival. It also performs regularly at the finest venues in New York, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and others across NYC and beyond. *HuffPost*, who has called TŌN's performances "dramatic and intense," praises these concerts as "an opportunity to see talented musicians early in their careers."

The orchestra has performed with many distinguished guest conductors and soloists, including Leonard Slatkin, Neeme Järvi, Gil Shaham, Fabio Luisi, Vadim Repin, Hans Graf, Peter Serkin, Gerard Schwarz, Tan Dun, and JoAnn Falletta. Recordings featuring The Orchestra Now include two albums of piano concertos with Piers Lane on Hyperion Records, and a Sorel Classics concert recording of pianist Anna Shelest performing works by Anton Rubinstein with TŌN and conductor Neeme Järvi. Buried Alive with baritone Michael Nagy, released on Bridge Records in August 2020, includes the first recording in almost 60 years—and only the second recording ever—of Othmar Schoeck's song-cycle Lebendig begraben. Recent releases include an album of piano concertos with Orion Weiss on Bridge Records, and the soundtrack to the motion picture Forte. Recordings of TŌN's live concerts from the Fisher Center can be heard on Classical WMHT-FM and WWFM The Classical Network, and are featured regularly on Performance Today, broadcast nationwide.

Explore upcoming concerts, see what our musicians have to say, and find more information on the academic program at ton.bard.edu.

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#### Leon Botstein Music Director

#### Violin I

Nicole Oswald Concertmaster Aubrey Holmes Yeseul Park Yi-Ting Kuo Zhen Liu Adam Jeffreys Linda Duan Sabrina Parry

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Sarit Dubin Principal Zongheng Zhang Misty Drake Tin Yan Lee\*

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Lucas Goodman
Principal
Batmyagmar
Erdenebat
Hyunjung Song
Leonardo Vásquez
Chacón

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Principal<sup>2</sup>,

Alto Trumpet<sup>3</sup>

Maggie Tsan-Jung

Wei Principal<sup>3</sup>

#### Trombone

Ian Striedter
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#### Cello

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Aidan Phipps

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William Safford

#### Horn

Emily Buehler TŌN '21

#### Timpani

Miles Salerni

#### **Percussion**

Taylor Lents Parker Olson

#### Piano/Celeste

Ji Hea Hwang

- <sup>1</sup>Perry <sup>2</sup>Price
- <sup>3</sup> Rachmaninoff
- \* not performing in this concert

#### HYUNJUNG SONG viola



@@hyunjung5406

Hyunjung will talk briefly about Julia Perry's A Short Piece for Orchestra on stage before the performance.

Hometown: Seoul, Korea

Alma mater: Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, M.M., Graduate Performance Diploma

Appearances: York Symphony Orchestra, substitute; Aspen Music Festival, 2015, 2017; Festival Napa Valley Blackburn Music Academy, 2018; American Institute of Musical Studies. Graz. Austria. 2019

What is your earliest memory of classical music? When I was about 9 years old, I remember playing violin with a large group of other kids at a Suzuki violin academy.

When did you realize you wanted to pursue music as a career? I used to play music as a hobby. When my music teacher suggested I should consider becoming a professional musician, the idea got me really excited and kept me up at nights. After a week, I somehow knew I wanted to become a musician.

What is your favorite piece of music, and why do you love it? J.S. Bach's *Schafe können sicher weiden*. Listening to this piece calms me and makes me happy.

What has been your favorite experience as a musician? When I was a college student, my friends and I together made an ensemble entirely made of violists.

We organized concerts, and they were successful and popular.

What is some advice you would give to your younger self? Do more scale practice, and do technique exercises please.

**Favorite non-classical musician or band:** Lauv, Norah Jones, Bruno Major

#### MAGGIETSAN-JUNG WEI trumpet



@maggieweimaggie

Maggie will talk briefly about Florence Price's Piano Concerto on stage before the performance.

Home country: Taiwan

Alma maters: San Francisco Conservatory of Music, M.M., 2020; Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, National University of Singapore, B.M., 2018

Awards/Competitions: Third Place, 2019 National Trumpet Competition, small ensemble; Finalist, 2017 Jeju International Brass Competition

What is your earliest memory of classical music? For as long as I can remember, because my godmother is a piano teacher, I have been listening to classical music. My parents also love classical music, especially Beethoven's symphonies and Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D as played by Sarah Chang with the London Symphony Orchestra. They always played classical music at home or in carrides, and I feel that classical music was a really big part of my life growing up.

Members of TŌN can be identified by their distinctive blue attire.

What is your favorite piece of music, and why do you love it? I do not really have a favorite piece of music, it changes over time. However, *The Rite of Spring* by Igor Stravinsky has been my favorite for a while. I really love the colorful and mysterious harmony with the rich and complex rhythm throughout the whole piece. Also, I love how Stravinsky composed this piece in a time when people had not had this kind of "new music experience" yet.

What is some advice you would give to your younger self? PRACTICE MORE! But also enjoy life more! Just focus on what you need to do, one thing at a time, you will get past everything eventually.

If you could play another instrument, what would it be? Percussion. I think it is really cool for them to be able to play so many different instruments and I love seeing them switch places and instruments during the concert.

Piece of advice for a young classical musician: Pursuing music as a career might feel dark and alone in your path sometimes, but believe me, we will all see the light in the end!

#### JJ SILVEY oboe



JJ will talk briefly about Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 3 on stage before the performance.

Hometown: Walkerton, IN

Alma mater: Mannes College of Music, M.M.; Indiana University, B.M., B.S.

Awards/competitions: Co-winner, 2014 Jacqueline Avent Concerto Competition, Sewanee Summer Music Festival

Appearances: Montclair Orchestra, 2019-20; Aspen Music Festival, 2019; Chautauqua Institution, 2017; National Music Festival, 2017; Eastern Music Festival, 2015; Sewanee Summer Music Festival, 2014

What is your earliest memory of classical music? I remember going with my family to an outdoor summer concert of the Indianapolis Symphony and being completely awestruck to learn what an orchestra sounded like up close. It was an amazing experience, and I left with the urge to learn everything I could about the different instruments and the kinds of sounds they made.

What inspired you to apply to TŌN? It seemed like an incredible opportunity not only to make music with exciting players, but to hone my ability to speak, write, and communicate about the music I love to play. I also wanted to gain experience with public engagement, outreach, and project creation, all of which are incredibly important skills for musicians to possess today.

What do you think orchestra concerts should look like in the 21st Century? I think that, above all, 21st-century audiences should feel invited into a personal experience each time they attend a concert. The atmosphere should be open and welcoming, and there should be nothing standing in the way of the audience's ability to feel that the music belongs to them.

What is some advice you would give to your younger self? Study and become familiar with as many of a composer's works as you can! Just knowing the major pieces won't give you the context necessary to create a meaningful interpretation.

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Leon Botstein Music Director
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Conductor and Academic
Director
Jindong Cai Associate
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Zachary Schwartzman
Resident Conductor
Andrés Rivas GCP '17
Assistant Conductor
Erica Kiesewetter Professor
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Bridget Kibbey Director of
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Matt Walley TŌN '19 Program Coordinator, Admissions Counselor, and Guest Artist Relations

#### **Concert Crew**

Marlan Barry Audio Producer
and Recording Engineer
Skillman Music Audio and
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Supervisor
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Supervisor
Lex Morton Audio Supervisor

Stephen Dean Orchestra

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Marketing Manager
Garrett Sager HRA '23 Digital
Archive Associate
Elyse Lichtenthal House
Manager

David Bánóczi-Ruof '22 Lead Assistant House Manager Ash Fitzgerald '24 Assistant House Manager Maya Miggins '23 Assistant House Manager Paulina Swierczek VAP '19 Audience and Member Services Assistant Manager Erik Long Box Office Supervisor Jardena Gertler-Jaffe VAP '21 Box Office Supervisor

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\* Equity & Inclusion working group team leader

#### BARD MUSIC FESTIVAL

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Irene Zedlacher

#### **Artistic Directors**

Leon Botstein Christopher H. Gibbs

#### **Associate Director**

Raissa St. Pierre

#### Scholar in Residence 2022

Philip Ross Bullock

## **Program Committee** 2022

Byron Adams Leon Botstein Philip Ross Bullock Christopher H. Gibbs Richard Wilson Irene Zedlacher

#### **Director of Choruses**

James Bagwell

#### **Vocal Casting**

Joshua Winograde

#### Producer, Staged Concerts

**Nunally Kersh** 

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## **About Bard College**

#### FISHER CENTER AT BARD

The Fisher Center develops, produces, and presents performing arts across disciplines through new productions and context-rich programs that challenge and inspire. As a premier professional performing arts center and a hub for research and education, the Fisher Center supports artists, students, and audiences in the development and examination of artistic ideas, offering perspectives from the past and present as well as visions of the future. The Fisher Center demonstrates Bard's commitment to the performing arts as a cultural and educational necessity. Home is the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, designed by Frank Gehry and located on the campus of Bard College in New York's Hudson Valley. The Fisher Center offers outstanding programs to many communities, including the students and faculty of Bard College, and audiences in the Hudson Valley, New York City, across the country, and around the world. Building on a 162-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate institution, Bard is committed to enriching culture, public life, and democratic discourse by training tomorrow's thought leaders.

#### ABOUT BARD COLLEGE

Founded in 1860, Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, is an independent, residential, coeducational college offering a four-year BA program in the liberal arts and sciences and a five-year BA/BS degree in economics and finance. The Bard College Conservatory of Music offers a five-year program in which students pursue a dual degree—a BM and a BA in a field other than music. Bard offers MM degrees in conjunction with the Conservatory and The Orchestra Now, and at Longy School of Music of Bard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Bard and its affiliated institutions also grant the following degrees: AA at Bard Early Colleges, public schools with campuses in New York City, Baltimore, Cleveland, New Orleans, Washington, D.C., and Newark, New Jersey, and at three Bard Microcolleges; AA and BA at Bard College at Simon's Rock in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, and through the Bard Prison Initiative at six correctional institutions in New York State; MA in curatorial studies, MS and MA in economic theory and policy, MEd in environmental education, and MS in environmental policy and in climate science and policy at the Annandale campus; MFA at multiple campuses; MBA in sustainability in New York City; and MA, MPhil, and PhD in the decorative arts, design history, and material culture at the Bard Graduate Center in Manhattan. Internationally, Bard confers BA and MAT degrees at Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem and American University of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan; and BA degrees at Bard College Berlin: A Liberal Arts University. Bard offers nearly 50 academic programs in four divisions. Total enrollment for Bard College and its affiliates is approximately 6,000 students. The undergraduate College has an enrollment of about 1,800 and a student-to-faculty ratio of 10:1. Bard's acquisition of the Montgomery Place estate brings the size of the campus to nearly 1,000 acres.

For more information about Bard College, visit bard.edu.

## **Upcoming TŌN Events**

# New Voices from the 1930s

MAY 7 & 8
SATURDAY at 8 PM | SUNDAY AT 2 PM
at the Fisher Center at Bard
MAY 12
THURSDAY at 7 PM
at Carnegie Hall

Leon Botstein conductor Gilles Vonsattel piano Deborah Nansteel mezzo-soprano Frank Corliss piano

William Grant Still Dismal Swamp
Carlos Chávez Piano Concerto
Witold Lutosławski Symphonic
Variations
Karl Amadeus Hartmann
Symphony No. 1, Essay for a Requiem

#### Liszt & Bartók

MAY 22 SUNDAY AT 4 PM at Peter Norton Symphony Space in NYC

Zachary Schwartzman conductor

Emmerich Kálmán Gräfin Mariza Overture Liszt Les Préludes Zoltán Kodály Dances of Galánta Bartók Concerto for Orchestra

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