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AND FEDERICO CORTESE PRESENT:**

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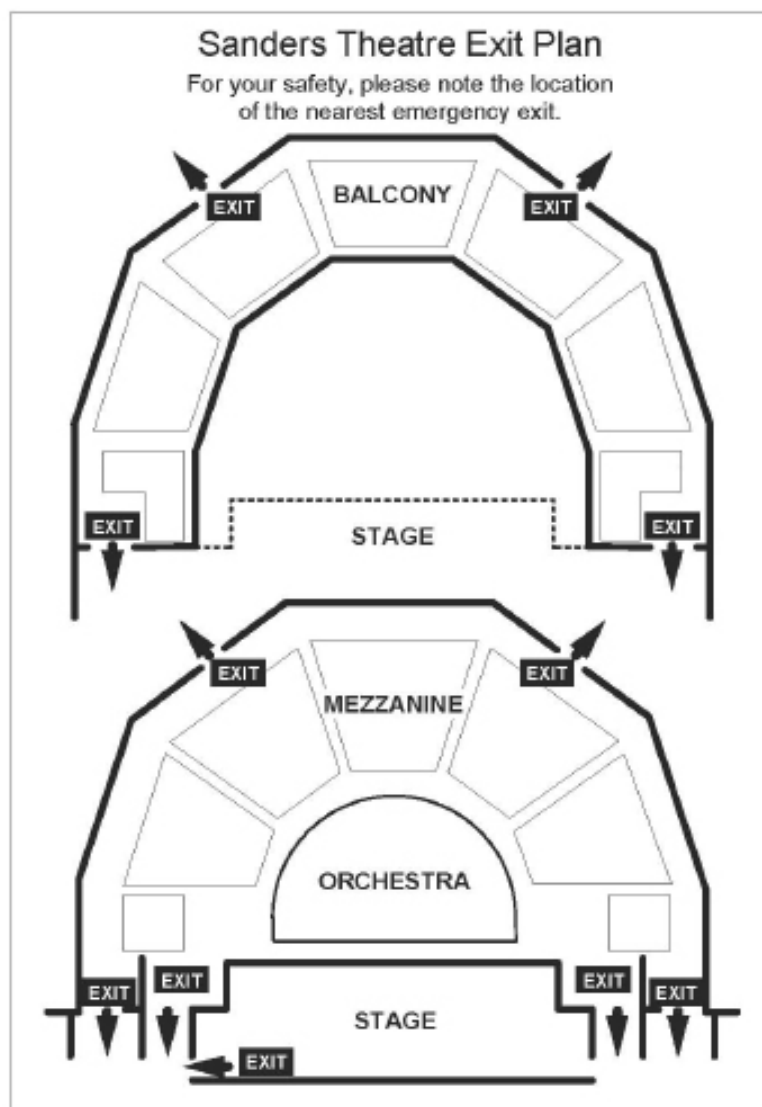


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# HISTORY OF THE HRO

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The Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra (HRO) is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States. It traces its history back to the night of March 6, 1808, when Joseph Eaton (class of 1810) and five other Harvard men formed the Pierian Sodality, taking its name from the Pierian Springs, where Greek immortals drank and found musical inspiration. (In contrast, the oldest professional orchestra – the New York Philharmonic – was founded only in 1842.)

In its early years, the Sodality was a student club not only for playing music, but also for consuming brandy and cigars, as well as the “serenading of young ladies.” In the 1830s, the Faculty of Harvard College publicly admonished the Sodality for a whole night serenading away from Cambridge. Administration censure was so great that in 1832 the Pierian Sodality was reduced to one man. Gradually, however, other members were elected, and the Sodality played on. According to a June 29, 1840 entry in the Sodality’s record book, the group’s late-night music-making antics earned them fame that “did wax exceedingly great, and did reach all the places round about Cambridge.”

Two decades later, the performing career of the Pierians began. In 1860, shortly after Harvard President James Walker made Harvard the first institution to add music as a regular subject of study in the curriculum, the Pierian Sodality was given permission to “hire a hall and give a public concert, on condition that no tickets be sold.” They began to give regular concerts, and even rehearsed to prepare for them.

Therefore, by the turn of the century, the Pierian Sodality could justly refer to itself as the Harvard University Orchestra. It had developed into a serious musical organization and become the largest college orchestra in America. The late thirties saw joint concerts with the Radcliffe Orches-

tra and in 1942, the Pierians suggested that the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra be formed. Since the Sodality’s membership was depleted during the years of World War II, and since the Radcliffe Orchestra lacked certain instruments, both groups benefitted from the merger. Thus the men and women of Harvard and Radcliffe united in their music-making efforts, and the HRO as it is today was born.

The orchestra was conducted by students until 1926, when the first professional conductor was hired by orchestra members. Most conductors remained for only a few years (with the exception of Malcolm Holmes, conductor from 1933-50), until on a recommendation from Leonard Bernstein, Dr. James Yannatos became conductor in 1964 and served as the music director for 45 years. Under his baton, HRO developed into a high-quality orchestra, and toured all over the country and the world. Following Dr. Yannatos’ retirement, Federico Cortese was appointed music director of HRO in 2009. He has continued its tradition of musical excellence, of performing with other Harvard musical organizations, such as the Holden Choirs, and of performance tours.

It is now over one century ago that HRO deemed itself ready for its first out-of-state tour. Beginning with a successful tour through New York State in 1908, HRO’s travels have featured such highlights such as performing at Washington DC’s National Theatre for First Ladies Mrs. Warren Harding and Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, gracing the stage of Carnegie Hall and, in 1978, placing third in the Fifth Annual International Festival of Student Orchestras. Since the 1980s, HRO has taken tours to the Soviet Union, Asia and Europe, Italy, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Israel, Jordan, Korea, the Philippines and most recently in 2017, Argentina.

# Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra

*210th Season, 2017-2018*

## VIOLIN I

Natalie Hodges '19

### **Co-Concertmaster**

NaYoung Yang '18

### **Co-Concertmaster**

Alexis Ross '20

Joanna Chung '18

Nice Yoo '20

Allison Pao '21

Eloise Hodges '21

Julia Riew '21

Lucy Li '21

Yooree Ha '20

Christine Hong

Jonathan Chu '21

Emily Spector '21

## VIOLIN II

Cecilia Yao '18

### **Principal**

Diana Wang '20

Allie Quan '21

Brandon Duffy '20

Ben Rhee '21

Clare Criscione '19

William Yao '21

John Lim '20

August Chen '20

Yi Lin Wang '21

Joyce Lu '21

Andrew Lee '21

## VIOLA

Martine Thomas '18

### **Principal**

Roger Cawdette\*

James Chater (Grad)

Frances Choi '21

Jonathan Karp (Grad)

William Lundell '21

Charlie Longtine (Grad)

Carter Nakamoto '21

Nivedita Ravi '21

Isabel Seguin\*

Tamara Shamir '21

## CELLO

Audrey Chen '18

### **Co-Principal**

Lev Mamuya '18

### **Co-Principal**

Patrick Barham '21

Emily Chung '21

Ethan Cobb '21

Danielle Davis '21

Spencer Kim '20

Raymond Lin '20

Sang-O Park '21

Jeanna Qiu '20

Grant Riew '19

Ila Shon '19

Nate Steele '21

Brian Zhao '19

## BASS

Frederick Metzger '18

### **Principal**

Christian Lin '20

Claire Murphy '21

Steve Tarsa (Grad)

Andrew Wilson\*

## FLUTE

Karissa Huang '21

Annie Wu '18

### **Piccolo**

Anya Zhang '20

### **Piccolo**

## OBOE

Annika McDermott-

Hinman '21

Mara Roth '19

## CLARINET

Erica Chang '19

### **E-flat Clarinet**

HyukJoo Hwang '19

Wesley Shin '21

Eric Zhou\*

### **Bass Clarinet**

## BASSOON

Steven Ekert '20

Eli Holmes '21

Reuben Stern '20

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## HORN

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Nikhil Suri

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### **Tuba**

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Grant Hoechst '18

Sam Markowitz '21

Matthias Pergams '19

Nicholas Pham '19

Dhilan Ramaprasad '21

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## HARP

Elizabeth Yeoh-Wang '20

\*guest performer

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# Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra

*210th Season, 2017-2018*

Federico Cortese, Conductor, Music Director  
Adrian Slywotsky, Teaching Fellow

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Saturday, February 24, 2018, 8:00 pm  
Sanders Theatre, Harvard University

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## Program

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Symphony No. 4, Op. 98

I. *Allegro no troppo*

II. *Andante moderato*

III. *Allegro giocoso*

IV. *Allegro energetico e passionato*

INTERMISSION

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

Overture to "Candide"

Conducted by Reuben Stern '20

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Piano Concerto No. 5, "Emperor", Op.

I. *Allegro*

II. *Adagio un poco mosso*

III. *Rondo: Allegro*

With Soloist George Li '18

# NOTES ON THE MUSIC

## Brahms - Symphony No. 4

Of the greatest composers, Brahms wrote his symphonies relatively late into his career: His first was completed when he was 43 after 21 years of work and rework. By comparison, at the same point in his life, Beethoven had already written every symphony except his ninth. Perhaps it is for this reason that Brahms's set of four symphonies is the most consistently excellent of all symphonic cycles ever composed—there is indeed not a single lackluster work, and each is mature, unique, and meticulously conceived and shows a composer ever more confident of his command of the symphonic archetype.

The musical scene of the late nineteenth century was dominated by a bitter conflict that pitted Brahms's belief that musical development should proceed as a logical continuation of its lineage against Wagner's philosophy that new music ought to shed its archaic heritage. By the 1880s, the battleground had begun to shake the very foundation of Western music for the previous 300 years—functional tonality, with Wagner's highly chromatic music in particular pushing ever-closer to atonality. Though Brahms's music had hardly fallen out of popular favor, he was without a doubt regarded as a conservative composer, and it was becoming clearer and clearer that his cherished musical heritage was losing ground against modernist innovations.

The Fourth Symphony in E minor epitomizes Brahms's drawing inspiration from the musical past and stands not only as the last of Brahms's symphonies but also as the last major symphony in a long Austro-German musical tradition. Whereas his first three

symphonies end with victory, joy, and redemption, this last symphony ends with a bleak, hopeless finality that heralds the end of this musical era. By far the most cerebral of the four, the symphony puzzled its first listeners, among whom was the fiercely conservative music critic Eduard Hanslick, who remarked after complete silence that he felt he had just been given "a beating by two incredibly intelligent people." Still, the symphony was received rapturously upon its premiere and has remained a staple of the repertoire ever since despite its elusiveness. Twelve years later, in 1897, a performance of this symphony would mark Brahms's final public appearance.

From its very first prolonged sigh, the symphony commands the most rapt attention and highest degree of mastery until its final thundering chord. The first movement towers in its depth of thematic development and traverses significant expressive ground, building to a terrifying plagal cadence in the minor mode, a feature rarely heard since the Renaissance. The slow movement continues Brahms's retrospection by presenting its theme in the medieval Phrygian mode. From there the movement is dreamy and colorful. Ablaze with vitality, the extroverted, confident scherzo is the symphony's lone expression of joy but foreshadows the severe finale at a critical juncture.



The finale rounds out Brahms's historical search in its formal structure, standing as the lone example of a symphonic chaconne in the standard repertoire. Using this seventeenth-century form of continuous variations on a chord progression, Brahms crafts a full-fledged sonata-form structure that begins with restrained passion, proceeds through moments of sublime reprieve, and hurtles toward its inevitable conclusion.

—Michael Cheng '19



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# NOTES ON THE MUSIC

## Bernstein - Overture to "Candide"

While Leonard Bernstein's tenure with the New York Philharmonic only lasted around a decade, his impact on our idea of American music was nascent from the start of his career, both as a conductor and composer. His Overture to "Candide" encapsulates both of these striking talents that hallmark a golden age in original repertory. The happy, singing melodies that glow with a certain vitality that's hard to place anywhere else have continued to captivate audiences long after it's larger, more complete operetta form first ceremoniously fell out of style two months after its debut on Broadway in 1956.

One can pick out the various plot points of Voltaire's 1759 novella, which the operetta the Overture represents as a whole is based off of, but the uninhibited festivity and lyricism of the fast moving piece tells all, regardless. As the cogs of what will become a light yet driving machine hit the ground running through a swiftly declared fanfare at the beginning, the sights are already set on the main priority of the Overture: to bring out the gay naivety of the aforementioned plot, tracing Candide's worldwide search for his lost love, Cunegonde.

The brisk marches directly superimposed with dancing, fanciful piccolo and flute runs and antics make for an almost comic opening sequence of the Overture, which then descends lushly into the full tutti string passages on the tails of running and interlocking woodwind quips, then blossoming into a larger, yet more filled out orchestral aria in the open and flourishing middle section of the piece. The cycle repeats itself once more, and the Overture comes to

its brisk, elevated end section.

Acting and moving along with this final part of the Overture is a moment every conductor looks back on Bernstein's performances to emulate: the ease of which he navigates a rhythmically disparate and tensely lithe texture, yet the ever remaining jollity still managing to prevail just as before. With the trumpets bringing the final soaring, circular melody into play, the Overture winds down by speeding up, and the audience is catapulted to a classic, well known ending befitting whatever the atmosphere of the moment may call for.

With the final note struck, listeners are left with the quintessential Bernstein experience, and are impressed again with the faculties that defined him as not only a standout conductor, but also as an authentic and treasured American composer. The Overture's ability to rouse, lift, and delight, hiding its inner complexities through an outward levity and buoyancy, leaves no questions at the final note's decisive pronouncement, but only the just as familiar thunderous applause.

—Tophér Colby '19

# Beethoven - Piano Concerto No. 5, “Emperor”

Never before and never since has another piano concerto rivaled the Emperor in its majesty, command, and grandeur. Composed in 1809 and 1810 in Vienna and premiered in 1811, the fifth and final piano concerto by Beethoven was immediately recognized for its revolutionary scope and has remained an audience favorite ever since. Though its nickname was neither coined nor sanctioned by Beethoven, a man true to the ideals of the Enlightenment, there is no doubt that this concerto reigns as the “emperor” among all piano concertos.

Already increasingly deaf, Beethoven began work on the concerto shortly before Napoleon’s invasion of Vienna in 1809 and composed much of it in his brother’s basement while seeking refuge from the loud bombardments of cannonfire. To mark this occasion, Beethoven annotated on the manuscript: “Ostreich loche Napoleon—May Austria destroy Napoleon.” Ironically enough, it was only a few years ago that Beethoven, inspired at the time by his selfless struggle against tyranny, almost dedicated the Eroica symphony to Napoleon. Both compositions are in E-flat major, the key of heroism for Beethoven, and though this concerto does not bear the name of heroism, the musical portrayal of a hero’s struggle and victory is undeniable.

The concerto opens with three commanding salutes from the orchestra embellished and extended by improvisatory flourishes from the piano, a break from the custom of a purely orchestral exposition before the soloist’s first entry. A twenty-minute musical odyssey then ensues, spanning everything from the intimate to the heaven-storming and

fully exploring the myriad possibilities of the movement’s thematic constituents. The movement’s rhythmic momentum is propelled by powerful figurations on the piano, and while its structure is largely conventional its contents are anything but: Toward the end, where a performer-supplied cadenza would have been expected, Beethoven defies this tradition and instead writes all material directly into the score. In the coda, the horns quietly join the piano with the smooth, noble second theme in a moment of absolute magic, and the music swells to a resolute, heroic pinnacle.

The slow movement is in the key of B major, of an unusual but not unprecedented relationship to E-flat major. Lyrical and introspective, the music flows effortlessly from beginning to end. Pastoral melodies in the orchestra alternate with the piano’s dreamy soliloquies. The movement ends with a single note held by the orchestra, which suddenly falls by a half-step in a moment of electrifying gravity. The piano then presages the finale, which follows without pause.

The finale, in sonata-rondo (ABACA-BA) form, in a sense marks the return of the hero. Beginning with an angular, syncopated theme, the movement is powerful and confident, and invigorating figurations from the piano again dominate the scene. While the movement is hardly short of the dramatic, the sense of intense struggle from the first movement has now become the grounded assurance of victory and soaring lilt of dance, perfectly rounding out this greatest and most elevated of concertos.

-Michael Cheng ‘19

# FEDERICO CORTESE

Conductor and Music Director, Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra



From the moment of his debut in September 1998, stepping in at short notice to conduct Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in place of an ailing Seiji Ozawa, Federico Cortese's work as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra was widely praised. Serving in that position from 1998-2003, Mr. Cortese led the BSO several times in Symphony Hall and at Tanglewood. His conducting of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at Symphony Hall was particularly heralded. Additionally, he has served as Music Director of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras since 1999 and is currently Music Director of the New England String Ensemble and Associate Conductor of the Asian Youth Orchestra. Other appointments have included Music Coordinator (in lieu of Music Director) and Associate Conductor of the Spoleto Festival in Italy, Assistant Conductor to Daniele Gatti at the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, and Assistant Conductor to Robert Spano at the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

Mr. Cortese has conducted operatic and symphonic engagements throughout the United States, Australia, and Europe. Recent engagements in the US include, among many others,

conducting the Dallas and Atlanta Symphony Orchestras, San Antonio and New World Symphonies, and the Louisville Orchestra; as well as many operatic productions including Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with the Boston Lyric Opera, Puccini's *La bohème* with Opera Theater of Saint Louis and at the Yale Opera program, and Andre Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* with the Washington National Opera. In Europe, his opera experience includes conducting productions of Verdi's *Il trovatore* in Parma, Italy as part of the Verdi Centennial Festival; Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Spoleto Festival in Italy; Niccolò Piccinni's *La bella verità* at the Teatro Comunale, Firenze, with the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino; and a new production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* with the Finnish National Opera in Helsinki. Recent successes include guest conducting Britain's Opera North, BBC-Scottish Symphony, Slovenian Philharmonic, Oslo and Zagreb Philharmonics, and Gottingen Symphony Orchestra, to name just a few.

In Australia, he has conducted the Sydney and Tasmanian Symphonies; Australian Youth, West Australia Symphony, and Queensland Orchestras; and a production of *Madama Butterfly* for Opera Australia in Melbourne.

Mr. Cortese studied composition and conducting at the Conservatorio di Santa Cecilia in Rome and at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. In addition, he has been a conducting fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. In 2009, he was appointed Senior Lecturer in the Harvard music department. In addition to music, Mr. Cortese studied literature, humanities, and law, earning a law degree from La Sapienza University in Rome.

# REUBEN STERN

## Student Conductor, Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra



Reuben Stern, a sophomore living in Dunster House, is the student conductor for HRO's 2017-2018 season. He is also serving as Music Director of the Bach Society Orchestra's this year. A lover of the liberal arts, Reuben is pursuing a degree in mathematics. As a bassoonist, Reuben currently performs with the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra. Previously, he has studied with Nancy Goeres, Janet Underhill, and Richard Ranti, and participated in masterclasses with William Short, George Sakakeeny, Suzanne Nelsen, and Whitney Crockett.

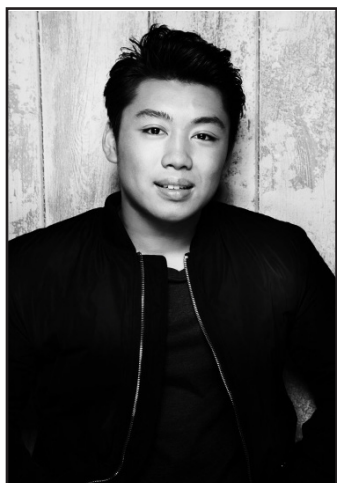
His chamber ensemble, the Kalliope Septet, performed at various venues throughout the Greater Boston area, including a public performance of the Beethoven Septet in Boston's South Station, and two performances at the Smith and Wollensky Steakhouse. Reuben played with the Boston Youth Symphony for four years, with notable performances on Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and Strauss *Ein Heldenleben*. Additionally, Reuben has spent two summers touring with the National Youth Orchestra of the USA, performing in Carnegie Hall, Disney Hall in Los

Angeles, Het Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and Smetana Hall in Prague, among others. With the National Youth Orchestra, Reuben worked under the direction of Maestros David Robertson, Christoph Eschenbach, and Valery Gergiev.

He was a runner-up in the Boston Civic Symphony and Boston Youth Symphony concerto competitions in 2015, a merit award winner at the 2015 National Young Arts Foundation competition, and a winner of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras Phillip J. Smith Award in 2016. Reuben was also named the WISE Foundation Emerging Artist of 2016.

# GEORGE LI

## Soloist



Praised by the Washington Post for combining “staggering technical prowess, a sense of command and depth of expression,” pianist George Li possesses brilliant virtuosity and effortless grace far beyond his years. He captured the Silver Medal at the 2015 International Tchaikovsky Competition and was the recipient of the 2016 Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Recent and upcoming concerto highlights include performances with Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony, Hamburg Philharmonic with Manfred Honeck, a tour of Asia with the London Symphony Orchestra and Giandrea Nosedà, St. Petersburg Philharmonic with Yuri Temirkanov, Philharmonia Orchestra with Long Yu, Oslo Philharmonic, Orchestre National de Lyon, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Malmö Symphony, Verbier Festival Orchestra, DSO Berlin, Seattle Symphony, Utah Symphony, Sydney Symphony and Frankfurt Radio Symphony. He frequently appears with Valery Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra,

including performances at the Paris Philharmonie, Luxemburg Philharmonie, New York’s Brooklyn Academy of Music, Graffenegg Festival and in various places throughout Russia.

Recital highlights include Carnegie Hall, Davies Hall in San Francisco, the Mariinsky Theatre, Munich’s Gasteig, the Louvre, Seoul Arts Center, Tokyo’s Asahi Hall and Musashino Hall, NCPA Beijing, Ravinia Festival, Lanaudiere Festival, Edinburgh Festival and Montreaux Festival.

An active chamber musician, George has performed chamber music with James Ehnes, Noah Bendix-Balgley, Benjamin Beilman, Kian Soltani, Pablo Ferrandez and Daniel Lozakovich.

George is an exclusive Warner Classics recording artist, with his debut album releasing in October 2017 which was recorded live from the Mariinsky.

George Li gave his first public performance at Boston’s Steinway Hall at the age of ten and in 2011, performed for President Obama at the White House in an evening honoring Chancellor Angela Merkel. Among George’s many prizes, he was the First Prize winner of the 2010 Young Concert Artists International Auditions and a recipient of the 2012 Gilmore Young Artist Award. George is currently in the Harvard University / New England Conservatory joint program, studying with Wha Kyung Byun.

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# Upcoming Concerts of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra

*210th Season, 2017-2018*

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Sanders Theatre, Harvard University

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Friday, April 20: Visitas Concert

Mahler - Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection"  
Ft. the Harvard Choruses

