

IN MEMORY OF  
JAMES YANNATOS

**TUESDAY**

**DEC 6**

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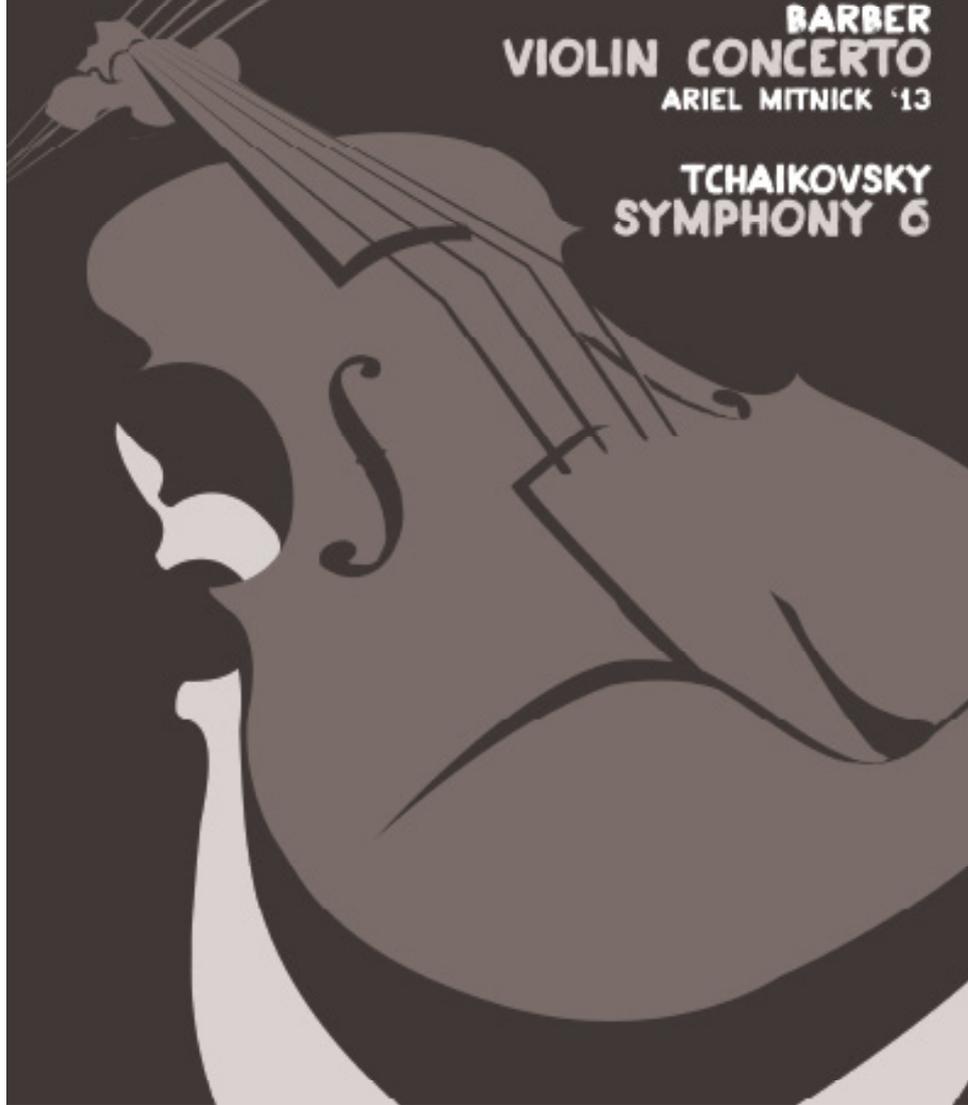
*harvard  
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**TCHAIKOVSKY  
SYMPHONY 6**



the harvard university

# bach society orchestra

saturday, october 8, 2011 | lowell lecture hall, 8:30 pm

Mozart      Ballet Music from "Idomeneo"  
Rautavaara      Cantus Arcticus for tape and orchestra  
Beethoven      Symphony No. 8 in F Major

*Jesse Wong '12,  
music director*

sunday, december 4, 2011 | sanders theatre, 3 pm

Hindemith      Overture to "Amora and Psyche"  
Brahms      Schicksalslied for choir and orchestra  
*with the Harvard University Choir*

Schumann      Symphony No. 2 in C Major  
Stravinsky      "Pulcinella" Suite

saturday, march 24, 2012 | paine hall, 8pm

Debussy      Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun  
Dvorak      Serenade for Winds  
T.B.D.      Composition Competition Winner  
Bartok      Divertimento for Strings

friday, april 20, 2012 | paine hall, 8pm

T.B.D.      Music Director-Elect Piece  
Schubert      Symphony No. 8 in B minor, "unfinished"  
T.B.D.      Concerto Competition Winner



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# HISTORY OF THE HRO

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 six Harvard men first formed the Pierian Sodality, an organization dedicated to the consumption of brandy and cigars, as well as to the serenading of young ladies. Its midnight expeditions were not confined to Cambridge, but rather extended to Watertown, Brookline, Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, and Boston – in short, wherever dwelt celebrated belles. Among the Sodality's other activities included the serenading of Harvard College President John Kirkland in 1819. 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."

The early Pierians had so much spirit that in the 1830s, the Faculty of Harvard College publicly admonished the Sodality for absenting themselves from Cambridge for a whole night, serenading. Administration censure was so great, in fact, that in 1832 the Pierian Sodality was reduced to one man: Henry Gassett '34. According to a March 29, 1943 issue of *Time* magazine, Gassett held meetings with himself in his chair, paid himself dues regularly, played his flute in solitude and finally persuaded another flautist to join in duets. It seemed the Sodality was in danger of disappearing. Gradually, however, other members were elected, and the Sodality played on. The Sodality not only persisted, but also profoundly influenced the development of music in Cambridge and Boston over the next fifty years. In 1837, Sodality alumni formed the Harvard Musical Association with an aim to foster music at the college. The Harvard Glee Club and the Boston Symphony Orchestra both owe their existence to the early Pierians.

As a musical organization, the Pierians were also interested in performance. 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." Thus began the performing career of the Pierians. They began to give regular concerts, and

rehearsed to prepare for them. Eventually, the orchestra's performances garnered enough attention to be reported in *The New York Times*, which wrote in 1891, "The Pierian Sodality is especially strong this year... containing some of the best musical talent of the university."

By the turn of the century, the Pierian Sodality could at last justly refer to itself as the Harvard University Orchestra. It had grown into a serious musical organization and had become the largest college orchestra in America. It deemed itself ready for its first out-of-state tour, the Centennial Tour of 1908. This took the Orchestra through New York state, and was so successful that other tours quickly followed. In 1921, the Sodality toured New York City, Providence, and even played in Washington DC's National Theatre for First Ladies Mrs. Warren Harding and Mrs. Calvin Coolidge. The orchestra gradually built an international reputation and played for many distinguished audiences in the country.

It was not until November 1936 that members of the Pierian Sodality finally condescended to assist the Radcliffe Orchestra in some of its larger concerts. Joint concerts became more frequent in the late thirties, 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 benefited 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.

It is said that around 1950, HRO stopped making history and started making music with a degree of seriousness never before seen at the university. The Orchestra continued to improve in quality and reputation as it took tours to Mexico (1962), Washington, DC (1966), and Canada (1972). It performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall and, in 1978, placed third in the Fifth Annual International Festival of Student Orchestras. The 1980s and 1990s saw tours to the Soviet Union (1984), Asia (1985 and 1988), Europe (1992), and Italy (1996). Most recently, HRO conducted successful tours of Brazil in 2000, Canada in 2004, South Korea in 2008, and Cuba in 2011.

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# Upcoming Concerts

**Saturday, March 3rd, 2012**

Puccini – *Tosca*, Acts 2 & 3

**Saturday, April 28th, 2012**

Brahms – Violin Concerto\*

Debussy – *Iberia*

Ravel – *Daphnis et Chloé* Suite \*\*

\*Julia Glenn '12, Winner of the James Yannatos

Concerto Competition

\*\*In collaboration with the Harvard Holden Choirs

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James Yannatos  
1929—2011  
Conductor of the HRO from 1964—2009

Please join us for a memorial celebration of  
Dr. Y's life on Saturday, December 10, 2011  
at 3:00 PM in Sanders Theatre.

HARVARD-RADCLIFFE ORCHESTRA  
—— 204th Season, 2011-2012 ——



FEDERICO CORTESE, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Tuesday, December 6, 2011, 8:00 P.M.  
Sanders Theatre, Harvard University

*Program*

In Memory of James Yannatos

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Violin Concerto, op. 14 (1939)

*Ariel Mitnick '13, Violin \**

~ Intermission ~

Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Symphony No. 6 in B minor, op. 74 ("Pathétique") (1893)

- I. Adagio—Allegro non troppo
- II. Allegro con grazia
- III. Allegro molto vivace
- IV. Adagio lamentoso

\* Winner of the 2011 James Yannatos Concerto Competition



# F E D E R I C O C O R T E S E

*Conductor*



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 André 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 Göttingen 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.

# ARIEL MITNICK

## *Violin*



Twenty-year-old violinist Ariel Mitnick has received critical acclaim for her "spirit, skill and poise to spare." She began playing violin at the age of four

and is currently under the tutelage of Donald Weilerstein at the New England Conservatory.

Last summer Ariel won the Music Academy of the West Concerto Competition and subsequently performed with the Academy Festival Orchestra under the baton of Daniel Hege. Ariel has also won several other concerto competitions, resulting in performances with the Sound Symphony Orchestra, Yonkers Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Manhattan School of Music Preparatory Division Symphony Orchestra. In addition, she was the winner of the Bronx Arts Ensemble and David Froelich competitions, the alternate in the Juilliard Pre-College Concerto Competition, and a semi-finalist at the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition. Ariel has also performed with the Westchester Philharmonic under the baton of Paul Lustig Dunkel.

Ariel's solo appearances include performances at the Honorands Dinner at Harvard, Harvard Faculty Club, Music Festival of the Hamptons, Catskill Mountain Music Festival, a

Ground Zero site memorial concert, and the Snug Harbor International Music Festival, as well as on WAMC and WKDB Radio. Over the summers, she has studied at Music Academy of the West, Greenwood Music Camp, and the Perlman Music Program.

An avid chamber musician, Ariel has performed in a Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center concert and in the Focus! Festival at the Juilliard School. While at Juilliard Pre-College, she collaborated extensively with the percussion department. Ariel's orchestral endeavors include participating in a live webcast performance with the Manhattan School of Music's Chamber Sinfonia under the direction of Pinchas Zukerman, and serving as concertmaster of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, the Perlman Music Program Orchestra, and the Juilliard Pre-College Symphony.

While attending the Juilliard School Pre-College Division, Ariel studied with Shirley Givens. She studied previously with Grigory Kalinovsky and Isaac Malkin at the Manhattan School of Music. Ariel has participated in master classes with Pinchas Zukerman, Robert Mann, Joel Krosnick, Peter Salaff, David Geber, Jonathan Feldman, Kyoko Takezawa, the Takács Quartet, and the Chiara String Quartet.

Ariel lives in Yonkers, New York and is a junior in the Harvard/New England Conservatory BA/MM program.

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# NOTES ON THE MUSIC

## *Barber - Violin Concerto*

Samuel Barber (1910-1981) was a 20th-century American composer. After graduating from the Curtis Institute of Music in 1934—recently founded at the time—he rose to a career of spectacular success. Unlike some composers, his music was both popular and well-loved during his lifetime. He twice won the Pulitzer Prize (for his opera *Vanessa* in 1958, then again for his Piano Concerto in 1962), along with many other honors; he also represented the United States at a number of international music festivals and artist conventions. He completed his Violin Concerto late in 1939, and saw its official premiere a few months into 1941.

The first movement is characteristic of Barber's relatively traditional style, sometimes referred to as "neo-romantic" or "conservative" at the time. It begins with a simple, diatonic proclamation in the violin. This statement constitutes much of the primary thematic material, along with a snappy march in the woodwinds, and an animated passage of graceful, staccato arpeggios, rising and falling in the violin. As Barber develops these materials, he merges elements of each into one another—the snappy pulse of the woodwinds is warped into an intense chromatic line in the violin, while a gesture from the opening violin phrase is isolated

and repeated in a sequence to make a yearning string passage, seeming never to resolve. The energy of this development reaches a climax with an orchestral recapitulation of the violin's original proclamation. A brief violin cadenza and coda bring the movement to its end—making, all in all, a modern yet straightforward take on classical sonata form.

This grounding in past traditions is not surprising, as Barber's teacher at Curtis was Rosario Scalerò; he placed heavy emphasis on counterpoint, 19th-century harmony, and classical forms. Scalerò's own teacher, in fact, was Eusebius Mandyczewski, one of Brahms' closest friends and colleagues. Throughout his life, Barber took this heavy romantic lineage and filtered it through an American directness and economy of means to create a stunning and thoroughly unique musical language.

The second movement is one of luscious beauty, characteristic of Barber's expansive lyricism. While the first movement opens with an extended statement from the soloist, the main theme here is presented through a luxurious oboe solo. Barber cycles this theme through different instrumentations and orchestrations, developing it slowly. When the soloist enters, curiously, Barber does not give us

# NOTES ON THE MUSIC



## *Barber - Violin Concerto*

the grandiose restatement of the theme that we expect. Instead, after a moment of warmth, the violin line leaps into angst and melancholy. Ultimately, though, this makes our eventual return to the opening melody, finally stated by the violin, even more exquisitely satisfying.

Indeed, this lyrical, singing, melodic language of the second movement is present throughout nearly all of Barber's work. His melodies have a strong vocal orientation, a major factor in the simple beauty of his music. This is reflected in his personal roots; his aunt was a contralto with the Metropolitan Opera, and always provided support for her young nephew. Barber himself had a brief career as a vocalist, performing on the NBC Music Guild Series, and even winning a contract for a weekly song broadcast at the age of 24.

The last movement, the shortest of the three, is a virtuosic showcase for soloist and orchestra alike. The main material is a running line of triplets—a maniacal, waltzing perpetual motion—that sputters between two opposing tonalities. The opening is edgy and aggressive, but Barber soon restates the same idea as a lighter, bubbly scherzo. This subtle shifting between different keys and tonal languages, a kind of constant flickering, is another hallmark of Barber's

composition that gives such a fresh, individualized sound to traditional tonal materials. Violin virtuosity and syncopated punctuations from the orchestra, almost reminiscent of Stravinsky, drive the piece to an exciting close.

The concerto was funded by a commission from the Philadelphia-based businessman Samuel Fels. The logistics of its completion and subsequent performance were fraught with turbulence. Iso Briselli (the intended soloist and a classmate of Barber's) received the work just weeks before the concert, due to the war, and thought it had both structural weaknesses and firmly un-violinistic passages—as did his teacher. It is unclear exactly what transpired, but Barber's concerto was left to be premiered instead by violinist Herbert Baumele with Fritz Reiner and the Curtis Institute Symphony a few months later. This caught the attention of the Philadelphia Orchestra director, Eugene Ormandy, who premiered it officially in February of 1941 with Albert Spalding on violin. It has since become a staple of the violin repertoire, and one of the most frequently performed works from the 20th century.

—Zachary Sheets '13



# NOTES ON THE MUSIC

## *Tchaikovsky - Symphony No. 6*

Nine days after the premiere of his sixth and final symphony, Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky died. Knowing that as we do, looking back at his work and his unhappy life from the future, it can become easy to hear his "Pathétique" Symphony as a grand suicide note or premonition of death. The Symphony does not exactly belie these notions. It is a tragic piece, opening with an *Adagio* introduction and closing with an *Adagio* movement, an unusual arc for a symphony. The triumph over struggle and despair comes one movement too soon, and the anguished final movement reveals that no real triumph has been won.

There are those who argue that Tchaikovsky's death was a suicide, encouraged by the fact that his cause of death is still somewhat uncertain. They often look to the depiction of death in the final moments of the Sixth Symphony as proof that the unhappy composer was planning to die. The more likely truth, however, is somewhat less romantic. Tchaikovsky's brother writes that he died from cholera, contracted from unboiled water—an accident that could happen to anyone in those times. There is a danger of trying to read too many autobiographical details into his work.

That is not to say that the Symphony did not have a deeply

personal significance to the composer. Tchaikovsky originally entitled it the "Program" Symphony. Program music is used to refer to music that represents a non-musical idea or narration (Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* being one of the first and most well-known examples). Tchaikovsky famously wrote to his nephew that there did exist a program to the Symphony, but in the same letter, said he would never reveal to anyone what it was. Ultimately, because of this refusal to share the hidden program, the composer decided against calling it the "Program" Symphony. It was his brother who came up with the subtitle "*pathétique*," meaning full of pathos or suffering emotion. When composing the Symphony, Tchaikovsky wrote in a letter that "this program is saturated with subjective feeling, and often . . . while composing it in my mind, I shed many tears." And in another letter he stated, "Without exaggeration, I have put my whole soul into this work."

The first movement opens in the lowest registers of the orchestra, as a mournful melody in the bassoon emerges out of an open fifth in the string basses. In a faster reincarnation, this melody becomes the first theme of the movement. The movement progresses in a traditional sonata form, complete with a *cantabile*

# NOTES ON THE MUSIC

## Tchaikovsky - Symphony No. 6



or “singing” second theme, to be played “with tenderness.” After a stormy development and a dark recapitulation of the first theme, the longing and beauty of the second theme returns, and it is with this that the turbulent first movement ends.

The second movement begins simply enough, and it takes a moment to realize that this graceful waltz is in the awkward and unusual meter of five beats to the bar, instead of the standard three. Tchaikovsky certainly manages to eliminate any traces of awkwardness, but after the struggling first movement, there is a sense that the meter is indicative of some deeper concern. It is the trio of this movement where the despair returns. The middle section is marked *fleBILE*, “feeble,” and the orchestra’s dynamic drops to *piano*. A falling, labored melody is heard over the unceasing and unchanging repetition of quarter notes in the basses, bassoon, and timpani, an off-centered 5/4 heartbeat. The waltz returns, but the feebleness and sickness lie close to the surface beneath its *grazia*. The trio’s melody and heartbeat quarter-notes return in the coda, interjected in the final measures with truncated strains of the waltz trying vainly to return.

The grand march of the third movement feels like triumph; but

coming after the subtle ending of the waltz, it is unclear over what. In fact, the third movement sounds like the finale, complete with brass flourishes and cymbal crashes, and ends triple *forte* for the whole orchestra—the kind of exciting ending that makes you want to jump up and cheer. It is only when the fourth movement begins that one realizes the third movement’s victory was premature; this is the real ending, and it bears only tragedy.

The fourth movement is marked *lamentoso*, “lamenting.” To end a symphony with a slow movement was innovative, and it is clear that Tchaikovsky did not make this decision lightly. The last movement, after much anguish and desperation, ends with the entire orchestra fading away, until only the cellos and basses are left, marked quadruple *piano*. The uneven triplet figure that is introduced halfway through the movement is the final figure to be heard, in the basses. It becomes clear by the end that this is the heartbeat from the waltz returned and transformed, now uneven and labored in its rhythm. It continues to grow quieter until even the sickly heartbeat has faded away into silence.

—Miriam Fogel ‘12

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Chopin - Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Kendrick Tam '12, piano)  
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Shostakovich - Symphony No. 5

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Beethoven - Symphony No. 3

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*The Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the David Chang Memorial Fund. This fund was established in 1991 by the Chang Family to support the rental and purchase of music. The David Chang Memorial Fund c/o Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, Paine Music Building, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138.*

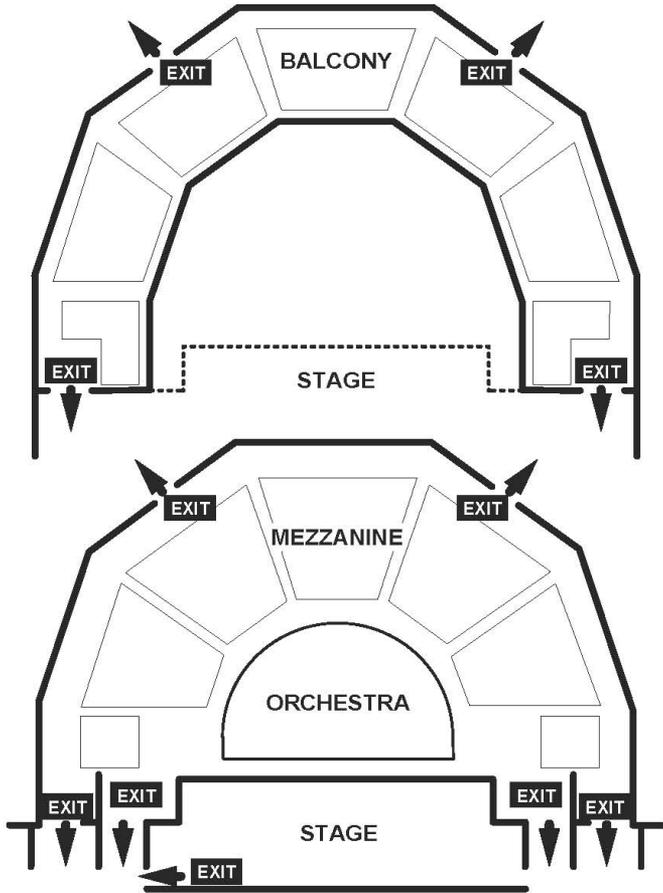
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