HANDEL & STRAUSS

Leon Botstein conductor

Sunday, November 1, 2020
Performance #158 Season 6, Concert 6
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Rehearsals and performances adhere to the strict guidelines set by the CDC, with daily health checks, the wearing of masks throughout, and musicians placed at a safe social distance. Musicians sharing a music stand also share a home.

Orchestra materials for Revueltas' *Cuauhnáhuac* are a loan, courtesy of UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico). We would like to extend our gratitude to Dr. Roberto Kolb Neuhaus, who made this loan possible.
# Concert Quick Guide

**LEON BOTSTEIN** *conductor*

## Concert Timeline

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### Brief remarks by Emily Buehler horn

**GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL**

- **Born**: 2/23/1685 in Halle, Brandenburg-Prussia (now Germany)
- **Died**: 4/14/1759 at age 74 in London

**WATER MUSIC SUITE NO. 1**

- Overture—Allegro (fast) **3 min**
- Adagio e staccato (slow & separated) **2 min**
- Allegro (fast) **2 min**
- Andante (moderately slow) **5 min**
  - Minuet **3 min**
  - Minuet **3 min**
- Bourée—Hornpipe **2 min**
- Bourée **3 min**

- **Written**: ca. 1717–36
- **Premiered**: 7/17/1717 on the River Thames in London

### Brief remarks by Viktor Tóth clarinet

**ARNOLD SCHOENBERG**

- **Born**: 9/13/1874 in Vienna
- **Died**: 7/13/1951 at age 76 in Los Angeles

**CHAMBER SYMPHONY NO. 1**

- **Written**: 1906, at age 31
- **Premiered**: 2/8/1907 in Vienna by the Rosé Quartet and a Vienna Philharmonic wind ensemble; Schoenberg conductor

### Brief remarks by Kaden Henderson bass

**SILVESTRE REVUELTAS**

- **Born**: 12/3/1899 in Santiago Papasquiaro, Mexico
- **Died**: 1/1/1940 at age 40 in Mexico City

**CUAUHNÁHUAC**

- **Written**: 1931, at age 31
- **Full Orchestra Version Premiered**: 6/2/1933 by the Orquesta Sinfónica de México; Revueltas conductor

### Brief remarks by Sarah Schoeffler cello

**RICHARD STRAUSS**

- **Born**: 6/11/1864 in Munich
- **Died**: 9/8/1949 at age 85 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

**METAMORPHOSEN**

- **Written**: 1945, at age 80
- **Premiered**: 1/25/1946 by the Collegium Musicum Zürich; Paul Sacher conductor

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*All timings are approximate. Composer artwork by Khoa Doan.*
THE MUSIC
GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL’S WATER MUSIC SUITE NO. 1
Notes by TŌN oboist Shawn Hutchison

Composed in 1717, *Water Music* by Georg Frederic Handel is a collection of three suites for orchestra. The work’s title is derived from the original intended purpose of the music, namely to provide musical entertainment for King George I in a grand and opulent fashion by performing from the decks of barges on the River Thames.

Opening with a stylized and energetic French overture, the first Suite in F Major features an assortment of Baroque dance forms (such as the minuet, bourrée, and hornpipe) transmuted from their original functions into lively concert music. These forms were a key element in the compositional language of the late Baroque, and were employed broadly and with great success by composers such as J.S. Bach, G.P. Telemann, and G. F. Handel.

As an oboist, it is a particular joy to perform, as the second movement features a prominent oboe solo. This provides a wonderful opportunity for creative invention, as the solo line itself is sparsely notated so that the oboist may provide personal ornamentation in the rhetorical style. This creative license can be further utilized throughout the work in the form of altering articulation, dynamics, and even the instrumentation on subsequent repeated sections. These characteristics instill a recurring freshness and novelty to each interpretation of the work, lending it to repeated listenings and performances. While still performed outdoors on occasion, the collected suites have since migrated into the concert hall, and are frequently programmed to the enjoyment of audiences and musicians alike.
At the age of 31, Arnold Schoenberg began sketching two works for reduced orchestra called Kammersymphonies in a conscious effort to establish his own musical personality. While on vacation in Bavaria in July 1906, he etched the final markings into one of these compositions and declared, “Now I know how I have to compose.” Although in hindsight we know that his most famous musical characteristics were yet to develop, the Chamber Symphony No. 1 is a landmark at a distinctly pivotal moment in the history of classical music. Schoenberg would soon be known for a seeming departure from tradition, but his journey stemmed from a desire to refine and enhance what already was. In this piece there are only 15 players on the stage, but the expressive range and intensity still sounds remarkably like a full orchestra.

This Kammersymphonie is written as one continuous movement roughly 20 minutes in length, with elements of a full symphony strung together. Schoenberg himself indicated that there are five connected movement-like sections within: Exposition, Scherzo, Development, Adagio, and Reprise. After a brief and pleasant introduction, the piece jumps into action with a call from the French horn. This rising sequence of notes will return in many instruments throughout the piece, so be sure to listen for this iconic “motto” that the horn launches.

As a clarinetist, I am struck by how extreme the emotions are in this piece. At times my part requires incredibly quiet and delicate playing, while at other times I must be “shrill” and almost jazzy. There are luscious, resonant melodies next to march-like drives forward. No time is wasted dwelling on any one idea because another is just around the corner. It seems that Schoenberg’s students were also captivated by this Op. 9 and wished for it to be available in other forms. Alban Berg arranged it for two pianos, and Anton Webern wrote two different quintet arrangements. Schoenberg himself paired it with a four-hands piano version and later expanded it to full orchestra, cataloged as Op. 9b.

While the pandemic does not currently allow us to sit in the exact arrangement requested by the composer, I nonetheless hope that you enjoy our performance of Schoenberg’s Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major.
Silvestre Revueltas’ Cuauhnáhuac is a fascinating fusion of pre-Colombian Mexican musical traditions with European modernism. A renowned violinist, conductor, teacher and composer, Revueltas was one of the most significant Mexican musicians of the 20th century. He composed Cuauhnáhuac in 1931 at the age of 31 while working as the assistant conductor of Mexico’s National Symphony Orchestra. Today, you will hear the first version of Cuauhnáhuac, which was written for strings alone. Revueltas later composed two more versions of the piece, culminating with his conducting the National Symphony in the final version’s 1933 premiere.

Cuauhnáhuac was the pre-Columbian name of the Mexican city of Cuernavaca before the Spanish conquistadors of the 16th century. In the aboriginal Nahuatl language (an Aztecan dialect still spoken today by 1.7 million people in central Mexico), Cuauhnahuac means “near the forest.”

Despite the title’s clear reference to the age of the Aztecs, the piece does not clearly fit within one musical tradition. Written during a turning point in Mexican society following the Mexican Revolution (1910–20), artists emphasized “Indigenism,” or a search for ethnic and nationalistic roots. In the two decades before composing Cuauhnáhuac, composers such as Revueltas idealized the pre-Colombian era and incorporated elements of it into their work. It should be noted that most, if not all, of these elements were fictitious, since no one actually knew what Aztec music sounded like. In the final version of Cuauhnáhuac, for example, one hears the indigenous influence with Revueltas incorporating the huehuetl (Indian drum) as a means of “nationalist propaganda.”

By the time Cuauhnáhuac was composed in 1931, however, populism was more fashionable than Indigenism. Due to this cultural shift, Revueltas is less obvious with his use of Indigenism in Cuauhnáhuac than in earlier works. Instead of basing the piece entirely on pre-Colombian musical elements, Revueltas uniquely blends these techniques with those of European modernists Claude Debussy and Igor Stravinsky to create a distinctly modern Mexican sound.
As Allied bombs rained down on the final days of Nazi rule, eighty-year-old German composer Richard Strauss completed *Metamorphosen* for 23 Solo Strings. *Metamorphosen* is Strauss’ profound and moving effort to understand the incomprehensible death and destruction surrounding him and to somehow through his composition forge a bridge to a better future for the German people—and the world.

Strauss was a witness to the greatest atrocities in human history, and the context in which he constructed *Metamorphosen* is critical for an understanding of the work. Strauss began the Nazi era cooperating with and accepting prominent musical positions under the Nazi regime. By the end, he had fallen out of favor with those in power due to his efforts (which did not always work) to use his high-profile connections to save Jewish extended family members from being murdered in the Holocaust.

On March 12, 1945, American bombers destroyed the Vienna Opera House—the day before Strauss began scoring his final version of the piece. On April 12, Strauss completed the piece—the same day hundreds of prominent Nazis attended a final performance by the Berlin Philharmonic of music from Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung*, following which members of the Hitler youth distributed cyanide capsules so that the audience could commit suicide. Accordingly, Strauss composed *Metamorphosen* as he witnessed firsthand the final demise of the Nazi regime. Upon completion of *Metamorphosen*, Strauss wrote in his diary:

“The most terrible period of human history is at an end, the twelve year reign of bestiality, ignorance and anti-culture under the greatest criminals, during which Germany’s 2,000 years of cultural evolution met its doom.”

Strauss saw Germanic civilization, which he strove to represent artistically, in terrifying ruins. He perceived that the world was on the brink of dramatic change. With *Metamorphosen* (which means “Transformation”), Strauss sought to convey the meaning of how World War II had dramatically transformed humanity.

The piece is constructed in a unique format for 23 solo strings: Each of us on stage has a part that is special and unique from all the others. The parts blend together to form an overwhelmingly rich and thick texture. All performers from all 23 parts are given moments where they stand out to be heard as individuals.

The manner in which Strauss constructed the piece is relevant to the meaning as a memorial for the victims of World War II. The pain and suffering is felt differently by each individual, and also felt collectively by everyone in the entire world.
THE ARTISTS
Leon Botstein brings a renowned career as both a conductor and educator to his role as music director of The Orchestra Now. He has been music director of the American Symphony Orchestra since 1992, artistic codirector of Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival since their creation, and president of Bard College since 1975. He was the music director of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra from 2003–11, and is now conductor laureate. In 2018 he assumed artistic directorship of Campus Grafenegg and Grafenegg Academy in Austria. Mr. Botstein is also a frequent guest conductor with orchestras around the globe, has made numerous recordings, and is a prolific author and music historian. He is the editor of the prestigious *The Musical Quarterly*, and has received many honors for his contributions to music.

More info online at leonbotstein.com.
The Orchestra Now (TŌN) 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 Juilliard School, Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Royal Conservatory of Brussels, and the Curtis Institute of Music—the members of TŌN 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 they perform multiple concerts each season and take part in the annual Bard Music Festival. They also perform 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 Neeme Järvi, Vadim Repin, Fabio Luisi, Peter Serkin, Hans Graf, Gerard Schwarz, Tan Dun, Zuill Bailey, 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. Upcoming releases include an album of piano concertos with Orion Weiss on Bridge Records. 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. In 2019, the orchestra’s performance with Vadim Repin was live-streamed on The Violin Channel.

Explore upcoming concerts, see what our musicians have to say, and more at theorchestranow.org. For more information on the academic program, visit bard.edu/theorchnow.
Leon Botstein Music Director

Violin I
Xinran Li Concertmaster
Stuart McDonald
Yurie Mitsuhashi
Weiqiao Wu
Gaia Mariani Ramsdell

Violin II
Dillon Robb Principal
Bram Margoles
Esther Goldy Roestan
Tin Yan Lee
Jacques Gadway
Misty Drake*
Adam Jeffreys*
Yi-Ting Kuo*
Yada Lee*
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Shaina Pan*
Sabrina Parry*
Gergő Krisztián Tóth*
Yinglin Zhou*

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Lucas Button Principal
Sara Page
Kelly Knox
Eva Roebuck
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Contrabassoon
Carl Gardner TŌN ’20

Harpsichord
Renée Louprette

* not performing in this concert

¹ Handel
² Schoenberg
³ Revueltas
⁴ Strauss

All Violin II players play Violin I in the last piece.

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

Emily will talk briefly about Handel's *Water Music* Suite No. 1 before the performance.

**Hometown:** North Wales, PA

**Alma maters:** Eastman School of Music, B.M. Horn Performance/Music Education; Pennsylvania State University, M.M. Horn Performance

**Awards/competitions:** Performer's Certificate, Eastman School of Music; Teaching Assistantship, Pennsylvania State University; 1st Prize, 2017 Southeast Horn Workshop Low Horn Audition; 2nd Place, 2017 Southeast Horn Workshop Concerto Competition

**What is your earliest memory of classical music?** The cornerstone moment that I remember most clearly was being called down to conduct *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* at a Pops concert when I was a child!

**What do you think orchestra concerts should look like in the 21st Century?** Orchestra concerts should look like a lot of things: audience participation, understanding, and involvement. Orchestra concerts should not be one-sided.

**Which composer do you feel you connect with the most?** It may be because I am a horn player, but I love R. Strauss and Mahler.

**What has been your favorite experience as a musician?** My favorite experience has been playing in a brass quintet on outreach concerts. I love the intimacy of playing with a small ensemble, and the music is fun and rewarding.

**What is some advice you would give to your younger self?** Listen more. Listen to more music, listen to more educators, and listen to more recordings of yourself. Don't be afraid to not sound your best . . . that's what learning sounds like.

**Which three people, dead or alive, would you like to have dinner with and why?** (1) My great grandfather: he played trumpet in the Philadelphia Orchestra in the '20s, and I have so many questions for him. (2) Verne Reynolds: I've heard so many things about him and learned so much from his books. (3) Britten: He wrote incredible music in a variety of different genres. I love his style and use of the horn.

**Piece of advice for a young classical musician:** Play more scales than you want. More importantly, listen to all kinds of music!!!
Viktor will talk briefly about Schoenberg’s Chamber Symphony No. 1 before the performance.

**Hometown:** Szank, Hungary

**Alma maters:** István Vántus Conservatory of Music; Bard College Conservatory of Music, B.M. in Clarinet Performance and B.A. in Italian Studies, Advanced Performance Studies 2016–18

**Awards/Competitions:** Winner, 2016 Bard Conservatory Concerto Competition; 2012–16 Bitó Scholarship for studies at Bard College Conservatory of Music; 2010 Vántus Award, István Vántus Conservatory of Music

**Appearances:** The Orchestra Now with Tan Dun at Jazz at Lincoln Center, soloist, 2019; Bard College Community Orchestra with Erica Kiesewetter at the Fisher Center at Bard, soloist, 2019; The Orchestra Now with Leon Botstein at the Fisher Center at Bard, soloist, 2016; Arad State Philharmonic, Arad, Romania, soloist, 2009; The Orchestra Now San Francisco Tour, 2019; Bard College Conservatory Orchestra Cuba Tour, 2016, performances in Cienfuegos, Santa Clara, and Havana; Bard College Conservatory Orchestra European Tour, 2014, performances in Warsaw, Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Budapest, Bratislava, Wien, Prague, and Berlin; Budapest Festival Orchestra, David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center; Zoltán Kodály World Youth Orchestra, Debrecen, Hungary

**Festivals:** Bard Music Festival; Young Musicians’ International Summer Academy, Debrecen, Hungary; International Music Festival of Balassagyarmat, Balassagyarmat, Hungary

**How did you hear about TÖN? What inspired you to apply?** I heard a lot about the program from my friends, two Hungarians who were in the orchestra at that time. I also went to their debut concert at the Fisher Center at Bard in 2015. I remember the vibrant and vivid atmosphere that this young orchestra created playing Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 11. Their energy was incredibly captivating and I knew this was something I would gladly be a part of, so I auditioned and here I am!

**What is some advice you would give to your younger self?** Be patient and know that everything happens for a reason (both success and rejection). Your time will come! Do not worry about the things that you cannot control at all.

**Favorite non-classical musician or band:** Snarky Puppy

**Piece of advice for a young classical musician:** Be patient while you practice and do not give up your own personality, even if people want you to.
KADEN HENDERSON
bass

Kaden will talk briefly about Silvestre Revueltas’ Cuauhnáhuac before the performance.

Hometown: New Albany, IN

Alma maters: Indiana University, Yale University

Appearances: Aspen Music Festival Fellow, 2013, 2015–16; Crested Butte Music Festival Fellow, 2018; Chelsea Music Festival Principal Bass 2018–19

When did you realize you wanted to pursue music as a career? I realized I wanted to pursue an orchestral career after playing Beethoven’s 5th Symphony at a music festival when I was in middle school. It was the first time I realized how important the role of the double bass is in the orchestra and I’ve been absolutely obsessed ever since.

What is your favorite piece of music, and why do you love it? It’s too difficult to choose just one so I’ll say it’s a four-way tie between Strauss’ Also sprach Zarathustra, Schubert’s String Quintet in C Major, Radiohead’s In Rainbows, and Steve Reich’s Music for 18 Musicians.

What has been your favorite experience as a musician? Playing a rock show with the band My Morning Jacket to a sold-out, hometown crowd of 15,000+ in Louisville, Kentucky. They were my favorite band at the time and the rush of playing in front of that many people is something I’ll never forget.

Favorite non-classical musician or band: Radiohead, Run the Jewels, Nicolas Jaar, and lately I’ve been listening to a lot of King Gizzard and the Lizard Wizard.

If you could play another instrument, what would it be? I’d play the piccolo but I’d insist on flying with it in a double bass flight case.

Tell us something about yourself that might surprise us: I used to (very poorly) play keytar in a band.

Piece of advice for a young classical musician: Never stop wanting to get better and just be honest with yourself. A lot of musicians allow their egos to get in the way of their pursuit of knowledge and progress. Being honest with ourselves and staying open to new ideas and techniques is how we get better! If you play, practice, and perform music for the right reasons, you will be surprised with where it can take you!
SARAH SCHOEFFLER  
cello

Sarah will talk briefly about R. Strauss’ *Metamorphosen* before the performance.

**Hometown:** Cleveland Heights, OH

**Alma mater:** Mannes College of Music, B.M. & M.M.

**Appearances:** Arezzo Opera Festival, Italy, 2017–18; Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival, 2014–15; Meadowmount School of Music, 2012–13; Bowdoin International Music Festival, 2011; Indiana University Summer String Academy, 2009–12

What is your earliest memory of classical music? I come from a family of musicians, and my earliest memory of classical music is listening to my mom practicing Schumann’s *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15. To this day hearing *Kinderszenen* reminds me of being a little kid again and it is one of my favorite pieces of classical music!

Who is your biggest inspiration? Pablo Casals. Finding his recording of the Bach Suites prompted me to begin studying cello! In addition, Casals was not only an incredible cellist, he was an ardent supporter of democracy and human rights and chose exile over compromising his values.

What has been your favorite experience as a musician? It was incredibly exciting to perform with my piano trio at Carnegie Hall in 2016. Another one of my favorite memories is performing excerpts from Kaija Saariaho’s opera *L’Amour de loin*—Kaija herself was at all the rehearsals, and the performance was with Metropolitan Opera soprano Susanna Phillips!

Favorite non-classical musician or band: Beyoncé, hands down. Her versatility as an artist never fails to amaze me.

Which three people, dead or alive, would you like to have dinner with and why? Pablo Casals, because of what an inspiration he is to me as a cellist. Steven Isserlis, because he seems to have such a holistic sense of what it means to be a musician. And finally, the author Haruki Murakami, because I’d love to ask him about the meaning behind some of the symbolism he uses throughout his writing.

Tell us something about yourself that might surprise us: I used to train guide dog puppies for Guiding Eyes for the Blind! I trained a Labrador Retriever for a year and a half who then went on to serve as a guide dog for six years.

Piece of advice for a young classical musician: Pursue interests outside of music . . . be a well-rounded artist!
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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 160-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.

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