

The

**GRANT PARK
MUSIC FESTIVAL**

and the

**CHICAGO
CHILDREN'S CHOIR**

are proud to host the

2018

CHORUS AMERICA

CONFERENCE

June 20-23

Chorus America is the advocacy, research,
and leadership development organization
that advances the choral field.

Special thanks to Joyce Saxon, Chorus America Welcome Reception Sponsor



GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

Carlos Kalmar Artistic Director and Principal Conductor

Christopher Bell Chorus Director



Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Friday, June 22, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Jay Pritzker Pavilion

BERNSTEIN, BRAHMS AND A WORLD PREMIERE

Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus

Carlos Kalmar Conductor

Christopher Bell Chorus Director

Ian Brown Soloist, June 20 performance

Bryce Abend Soloist, June 22 performance

Johannes Brahms

Gesang der Parzen, Op. 89

Olivier Messiaen

O Sacrum Convivium

Leonard Bernstein

Chichester Psalms

Psalm 108, vs. 2 (Maestoso ma energico)—Psalm 100 (Allegro molto)

Psalm 23 (Andante con moto, ma tranquillo)—Psalm 2, vs. 1-4

(Allegro feroce)—Meno come prima

Prelude (Sostenuto molto)—Psalm 131 (Peacefully flowing)—

Psalm 133, vs. 1 (Lento possibile)

INTERMISSION

Ēriks Ešenvalds

The Pleiades

Prologue: Sunset Song

Nanuk the Bear (Inuit myth)

Pawnee Song to the Pleiades

Seven Dancers (Native American myth)

Seven Sisters of the Sky (Nez Perce myth)

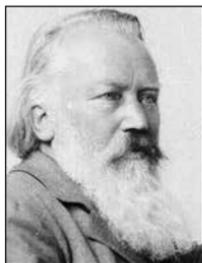
Epilogue: Sunrise Call

This is a world premiere, commissioned by the Grant Park Music Festival.

This concert is presented with generous support from
American Accents Series Sponsor AbelsonTaylor

IAN BROWN, Boy Soprano (June 20), has sung with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Music of the Baroque and DuPage Chorale. He has been a featured soloist at churches and worship conferences and is a member of the Touring Chorus of Anima-Young Singers of Greater Chicago. Ian is also an enthusiastic Boy Scout and fitness buff.

BRYCE ABEND, Boy Soprano (June 22), lives in Wheaton with his family and is currently home-schooled. He has studied piano, cello and voice and is a member of Anima-Young Singers of Greater Chicago. Bryce's love of singing began when he was very little, singing along with the radio in the car. This summer he is attending Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, majoring in musical theater. He wishes to thank his family for encouraging him in all of his musical pursuits.



Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
***GESANG DER PARZEN* (“SONG OF THE FATES”), OP. 89 (1882)**

Scored for: piccolo, flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, strings and chorus

Performance time: 14 minutes

First Grant Park Orchestra performance: July 15, 1966;
Irwin Hoffman, conductor

Brahms had an interest in the literature and legends of ancient classical civilization all his life. Among his choral works are three whose texts are based directly on classical subjects: *Schicksalslied* (“*Song of Destiny*”), *Nänie* (“*Dirge*”) and *Gesang der Parzen* (“*Song of the Fates*”). Based on Goethe’s poem *Iphigenie*, the theme of this last work, like that of the *Schicksalslied*, deals with the dichotomy of the gods’ power and the frailty of mankind. The words called from Brahms music that is largely of “an iron implacability, sunless and armor-plated,” in the words of Richard Specht. Brahms chose, however, to ameliorate his generally stern setting with some strains of a comforting nature, thereby softening the overall harshness of effect.

Es fürchte die Götter
Das Menschengeschlecht!
Sie halten die Herrschaft
In ewigen Händen,
Und können sie brauchen
Wie’s ihnen gefällt.

In fear of the gods
all mankind shall walk!
They hold the dominion
in hands everlasting,
and even as they will it,
their power they can wield.

Der fürchte sie doppelt,
Den je sie erheben!
Auf Klippen und Wolken
Sind Stühle bereitet
Um goldene Tische.

That man fear him doubly,
whom they have exalted!
On cliffs and clouds
are places ready
round golden tables.

Erhebet ein Zwist sich, ,
So stürzen die Gäste,
Geschmäht und geschändet,

If there be dissension,
the guests forth are hurled,
with wrathful reviling,

In nächtliche Tiefen,
Und harren vergebens,
Im Finstern gebunden,
Gerechten Gerichtes.

to blackness abysmal,
and vainly they wait there,
in thralldom and darkness,
for judgment with justice.

Sie aber, sie bleiben
In ewigen Festen
An goldenen Tischen.
Sie schreiten vom Berge
Zu Bergen hinüber:
Aus Schlünden der Tiefe
Dampft ihnen der Athem
Erstickter Titanen,
Gleich Opfergerüchen,
Ein leichtes Gewölke.

But they dwell for ever
mid festal rejoicing
at golden tables.
From mountain to mountain
serene they go striding:
From Tartarus' deep
mounts toward them the breath
of the Titans they smothered,
like reek from the altar,
a light vapor floating.

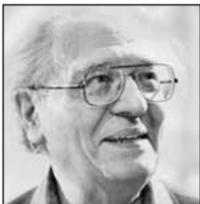
Es wenden die Herrscher
Ihr segnendes Auge
Von ganzen Geschlechtern,
Und meiden, im Enkel
Die ehemals geliebten,
Still redenden Züge
Des Ahnherrn zu sehn.

The rulers above
turn their countenance
gracious from whole generations,
unwilling to see,
in grandchild, once beloved,
quietly eloquent features
of his ancestor.

So sangen die Parzen;
Es horcht der Verbannte
In nächtlichen Höhlen,
Der Alte, die Lieder,
Denkt Kinder und Enkel
Und schüttelt das Haupt.

So chanted the sisters;
In deeps full of darkness,
sits lone the old exile,
and harks to their singing,
He thinks of his children
and slow shakes his head!

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Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)
***O SACRUM CONVIVIUM* (“O SACRED FEAST”)** (1937)

Scored for: unaccompanied chorus

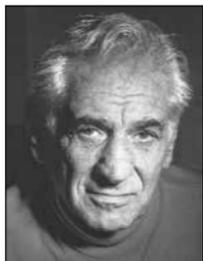
Performance time: 6 minutes

Grant Park Music Festival premiere

Though Olivier Messiaen was one of the 20th century's most important composers of organ music for the Catholic service—63 pieces, more than seven hours of music—*O Sacrum Convivium* (“*O Sacred Feast*”) is his only vocal work specifically for the church. It was composed early in 1937, when he was organist at the Trinité. *O Sacrum Convivium* is an antiphon associated with the *Magnificat* at the second Vespers service of the feast of Corpus Christi, observed on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, i.e., eight-and-a-half weeks after Easter; the text is attributed to the 13th-century Italian theologian and philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas. Messiaen's setting is hushed and reverent, rising to an expressive peak only when the text refers to “future glory.”

O sacrum convivium,
in quo Christus sumitur:
recoliter memoria passionis ejus,
mens impletur gratia
et futurae gloriae
nobis pignus datur, alleluia.

O sacred feast,
in which Christ is received:
the memory of his Passion is renewed,
the soul is filled with grace,
and a pledge of future glory
is given to us, alleluia.



Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)
CHICHESTER PSALMS (1965)

Scored for: solo boy soprano, three trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion, two harps, strings and chorus.

Performance time: 16 minutes

First Grant Park Orchestra performance: July 6, 1992;
Geoffrey Simon, conductor

The *Chichester Psalms* was commissioned by the Very Rev. Walter Hussey, Dean of Chichester Cathedral, for the 1965 Southern Cathedrals Festival, in which the musicians of Chichester have participated with those of the neighboring cathedrals of Salisbury and Winchester since 1959. The mood of the *Chichester Psalms* is humble and serene, unlike the powerful but despairing nature of Bernstein's "Kaddish" Symphony of 1963, composed shortly before this work. Both use traditional texts sung in Hebrew, but the message of the *Psalms* is one of man's closeness to God rather than the one of frustration and anger and shaken faith engendered by God's inexplicable acts as portrayed by the "Kaddish." It is indicative that the composer chose the 23rd Psalm ("The Lord Is My Shepherd") for the second movement, the heart of the *Chichester Psalms*.

The first movement opens with a broad chorale ("Awake, psaltery and harp!") that is transformed, in quick tempo, to open and close the dance-like main body of this movement; it reappears at the beginning and end of the finale. The touching simplicity that begins the second movement recalls the pastoral song of David, the young shepherd. Suddenly, threatening music interrupts the text, "Why do the nations rage?" The quiet song reappears in the high voices. The finale begins with an instrumental prelude based on the stern chorale that opened the work. The chorus intones a gently swaying theme on the text, "Lord, Lord, My heart is not haughty." *Chichester Psalms* concludes with yet another adaptation of the recurring chorale.

Psalm 108, verse 2:

Urah, hanevel, v'chinator!
A-irah shahar!

Psalm 100, entire:

Hariu l'Adonai kol haarets.

I.

Awake, psaltery and harp!
I will rouse the dawn!

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord
all ye lands.

Iv'du et Adonai b'simcha.
Bo-u l'fanav bir'nanah.

D'u ki Adonai Hu Elohim.
Hu asanu, v'lo anahnu.

Amo v'tson mar'ito.

Bo-u sh'arav b'todah,

Hatseirotav bit'hilah,
Hodu lo, bar'chu sh'mo.

Ki tov Adonai, l'olam has'do,

V'ad dor vador emunato.

Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before His presence
with singing.

Know ye that the Lord, He is God.
It is He that hath made us,
and not we ourselves.

We are His people and the sheep
of His pasture.

Enter into His gates
with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise,
Be thankful unto Him, and bless
His name.

For the Lord is good, His mercy
is everlasting,
And His truth endureth
to all generations.

II.

Psalm 23, entire:

Adonai ro-i, lo ehsar.

Bin'ot deshe yarbitseini,

Al mei m'nuhot y'nahaleini,
Naf'shi y'shovev,
Yan'heini b'ma'aglei tsedek,

L'ma'an sh'mo.

Gam ki eilech
B'gei tsalmavet,

Lo ira ra,

Ki Atah imadi.

Shiv't'cha umishan'techa
Hemah y'nahamuni.

Ta'aroch l'fanai shulchan.

Neged tsor'rai,

Dishanta vashemen roshi
Cosi r'vayah.

Ach tov vahesed

Yird'funi kol y'mei hayai,

V'shav'ti b'veit Adonai

L'orech yamim.

The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down
in green pastures,
He leadeth me beside the still waters,
He restoreth my soul,
He leadeth me in the paths
of righteousness,

For His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk
Through the valley of the shadow
of death,

I will fear no evil,
For Thou art with me.

Thy rod and Thy staff
They comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me.

In the presence of mine enemies,
Thou anointed my head with oil,
My cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy
Shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house
of the Lord

Forever.

Psalm 2, verses 1-4:

Lamah rag'shu goyim
Ul'umim yeh'gu rik?

Why do the nations rage,
And the people imagine a vain thing?

Yit'yats'vu malchei erets,
V'roznim nos'du yahad,
Al Adonai v'al m'shiho.

N'natkah et mos'roteimo,

V'nashlichah mimenu avoteimo.
Yoshev bashamayim
Yis'hak, Adonai
Yil'ag lamo!

The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together
Against the Lord and against
His anointed.

Saying, let us break their bonds
asunder,

And cast away their cords from us.
He that sitteth in the heavens
Shall laugh, and the Lord
Shall have them in derision!

III.

Psalm 131, entire:

Adonai, Adonai,
Lo gavah libi,
V'lo ramu einai,
V'lo hilachti
Big'dolot uv'niflaot
Mimeni.
Im lo shiviti
V'domam'ti,
Naf'shi k'gamul alei imo,

Kagamul alai naf'shi.
Yahel Yis'rael el Adonai
Me'atah v'ad olam.

Lord, Lord,
My heart is not haughty,
Nor mine eyes lofty,
Neither do I exercise myself
In great matters or in things
Too wonderful for me.
Surely I have calmed
And quieted myself,
As a child that is weaned
of his mother,
My soul is even as a weaned child.
Let Israel hope in the Lord
From henceforth and forever.

Psalm 133, verse 1:

Hineh mah tov,
Umah nayim,
Shevet ahim
Gam yahad.

Behold how good,
And how pleasant it is,
For brethren to dwell
Together in unity.



Ēriks Ešņvalds (born in 1977)

THE PLEIADES (2018)

Scored for: triple woodwinds, four horns, three trumpets,
three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, strings
and chorus.

Performance time: 28 minutes

World Premiere

Commissioned by the Grant Park Music Festival

Ēriks Ešņvalds, one of his generation's leading choral composers, was born in 1977 in the rural Latvia town of Priekule, 30 miles east of the Baltic coast and 120 miles west of the capital, Riga, where he earned his baccalaureate at the Latvian Baptist Theological Seminary and his master's degree in

composition at the Latvian Academy of Music; he has also participated in master classes with Richard Danielpour, Michael Finnissy, Klaus Huber, Philippe Manoury and Jonathan Harvey. Ešenvalds was a member of the State Choir Latvija from 2002 to 2011, after which he served as a Fellow Commoner in Creative Arts at Trinity College, University of Cambridge, for two years before joining the faculty of the Latvian Academy of Music. He is also known as a gifted lecturer, conductor and mentor.

FROM THE COMPOSER

I am inspired by nature's beauty, and many of my compositions tell stories about it. The aurora borealis, sea, sky, volcanoes and stars have all been featured in my music, with myths and legends from around the world providing wonderful stories and texts. The Pleiades star cluster has triggered the imagination of people for centuries and gave me an excellent subject. Clearly visible to the naked eye, the Pleiades can be seen in almost every part of the world at some time during the year. Important as a practical navigational marker in ancient times, especially for sailors, the seven brightest stars have a huge significance when it comes to cultural identity. They have been described as the Seven Sisters of Greek mythology, daughters of Atlas and Pleione. They are mentioned in the Bible and revered in Hindu mythology as Kartika, the mothers of the war god Skanda. In the Hawaiian language, they are Na hiku o Makali'i, the Seven Little Eyes, and in Maori are known as Matariki and thought of as a mother and six daughters. In a Polynesian legend, the stars were created from a single star smashed by the god Tane, angry at its bright boastfulness.

The celestial appearance and disappearance of the Pleiades is still seen as a calendar marker. For the Zuni of New Mexico, the Pleiades are known as the Seed Stars because their springtime disappearance starts the planting season. Similarly, their appearance to the south African Xhosa means it is time to begin working the soil. The Khoikhoi of southwest Africa call them Khuseti, the Rain Stars, because their appearance brings the rainy season. This time-marking was also used by Bronze Age Europeans, for whom the Pleiades were associated with mourning; the Celts saw the stars as the entrance to the Otherworld.

In my piece, I have set stories from the cultural heritage of the first native American Pawnee, who call the Pleiades 'Chakaa,' as well as the Zuni people. Another Native American myth tells the story of seven dancer boys spinning right off the earth. I found a love story from the South American Nez Perce tribe explaining how one of the seven stars is forever less bright; for the Inuit, the stars are the result of a pack of dogs chasing a bear and falling off the edge of the world. Like so many people before me, I have been inspired to write a musical story. I am certain I will not be the last.

—Ēriks Ešenvalds

Prologue: Sunset Song

(based on a Zuni tune with the following lyrics by Alfred, Lord Tennyson)

*Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.*

Nanuk the Bear (Inuit myth)

Nanuk the Bear was attacked by a pack of large, fierce dogs. He tried to escape by running away over the ice, but the dogs followed close behind. For many hours the dogs chased Nanuk and he could not lose them. Eventually, they had come to the very edge of the world, but neither Nanuk or the dogs noticed. Suddenly they all fell off the edge into the sky, where they all turned into stars, the Pleiades.

Pawnee Song to the Pleiades (translated by Alice C. Fletcher, 1838-1923)

They come to us, they rise, behold!
Over the marge [edge] of Mother Earth
Into Father Sky, they rise, they rise
Chakaa [the Pawnee name for the Pleiades], the silent brethren!
Ah, 'tis a blessed thing to behold them yonder,
More blessed yet for us to mount with them,
To shine together each in his place as they!
They come to us, they rise,
We come to them, we rise,
We as Chakaa mount on high!
Behold them coming, climbing,
And we as they,
Brethren in unity together.

Seven Dancers (Native American myth, from the *Book of Woodcraft* by Ernest Thompson Seton [1860-1946])

Once there were seven little Indian boys, who used to take their bowl of succotash each night and eat their suppers together on a mound outside the village. Six were about the same size; one was smaller than the rest, but he had a sweet voice and knew many songs, so after supper the others would dance around the mound to his singing, and he marked time on his drum. When the frosty days of autumn were ending, and winter threatened to stop the nightly party, they said, "Let us have a grand feast and dance for the last time on the mound."

So the boys assembled at the mound. The little singer said: "I shall sing you a new song that will lighten your hearts." First, he made each of them fasten on his head a little torch of birch bark, then he sat down in the middle and thumped away at his little drum and sang: *Ki yi yi yah Ki yi yi yah*. And faster. *Ki yi yi yah Ki yi yi yah*. And faster still, till now they were spinning round. Then: *Ki yi yi yah Ki yi yi yah Whoooooop*.

They were fairly whirling now, and, as the singer gave this last whoop of the last dance on the mound, they and he went dancing over the treetops into the sky; light of heart and heels and head, they went, and their parents rushed out in time to see them go, but too late to stop them. (And now you may see them every clear autumn night as winter draws near; you may see the little torches sparkling as they dance, the six around the little one in the middle. Of course, you can't hear his song, or even his drum, but you must remember he is a long way off now.)

Seven Sisters of the Sky
(Nez Perce myth)

In the sky were seven sister stars, each with a different name. Each one loved something in nature and kept her love a secret. She did not tell her sisters. They thought that if one of them should tell her troubles to the others, she would either die or disappear from the sky. One of the sisters was called Eyes-in-Different-Colors. She loved a man on the earth, and she kept on loving him even after his death. She told her sisters about her love, and they laughed at her for loving a mortal. But as time passed, she became more and more sorrowful, and gradually her eyes became dim. So she took the veil from off the sky and covered her face with it. The veil hid her face from her sisters and from the world below. (That is why people can see only six stars in the cluster of Pleiades.)

Epilogue: Sunrise Call
(a Zuni tune)

Brightly dawns the Sun.
Brightly dawns the light.

