

The Washington Chorus opens its 56th season with its first-ever performance of Philip Glass's epic Symphony No. 5

Music Director Julian Wachner's final season shows him in his element, conducting a powerful contemporary work for chorus, full orchestra, five soloists, and Washington National Cathedral Girl Choristers, November 13 at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall.

To kick off the celebration of its 56th season – the final for Music Director Julian Wachner – **The Washington Chorus** will present Philip Glass's Symphony No. 5, "Requiem, Bardo, Nirmanakaya" in an evening not to be missed. This glorious, celestial-sounding work, originally commissioned as a millennium celebration for the Salzburg Festival, has not been heard in DC since 2001 and features a tour-de-force of musicians, including full chorus and orchestra, children's choir, and five vocal soloists – Davis Cushing (bass), Stephen Salters (baritone), John McVeigh (tenor), Katie Pracht (mezzo-soprano), and Heather Buck (soprano). The performance will take place on **Sunday, November 13, 2016 at 5pm** at the **Kennedy Center Concert Hall**. Ticket prices range from \$18-72; visit thewashingtonchorus.org to purchase, or call **202-342-6221** for more information.

Glass's fifth symphony is an epic and rarely-performed work of 101 minutes in length and 800 pages of score. The piece is divided into twelve sections and tells creation story through the world's great wisdom traditions. In his notes on the piece, Glass remarks, "We are looking at the moment of the millennium as a bridge between the past (Requiem), the present (Bardo), and culminating in Nirmanakaya (the future manifestation of enlightened activity)." A variety of texts originally in Greek, Hebrew, Sanskrit, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and indigenous languages are all presented in English in order to show the common threads between these disparate traditions. The symphony is appropriately celebratory in scale, and also serves as a "compendium of reflection on global transformation and evolution," according to Glass – the perfect tone for The Washington Chorus as it looks toward its future during a time of transition.

About the Artists

The Washington Chorus (TWC), now in its 56th season, is one of the foremost symphonic choruses in the nation. Noted for the superb artistry of its performances and recordings of the entire range of the choral repertoire, TWC is widely recognized as a cultural leader in the nation's capital. In June 2016, Chorus America, the national association for choruses, honored The Washington Chorus with the prestigious Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence.

TWC's commitment to the greater Washington community is evidenced by outstanding education and outreach programs, including the **Junior Washington Chorus** for teens ages 16 to 18; the **Side-by-Side high school program**; and TWC's **Outreach Singers** who bring music to underserved groups throughout the area. The Chorus is also known for innovative programs that focus on contemporary composers with award winning *New Music for a New Age* concerts and composers of earlier times with *The Essential concerts* of classic masters.

TWC is committed to the performance of contemporary music and was proud to receive Chorus America's 2011 ASCAP **Alice Parker Award**, recognizing a chorus programming significant, recently- composed music that expands the mission of the chorus and challenges the chorus' audience in a new way. Other awards include the **2000 Grammy Award for "Best Choral Performance"** for the live-performance recording of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*. Additional recordings include *Christmas with The Washington Chorus*, *Glorious Splendor*, *Sing Noel!*, and the Berlioz Requiem (Gothic Recordings); Dvorák's *Stabat Mater* and *Psalm 149* (Naxos International); Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* (nominated for a Grammy Award in 1988); and the Grammy Award-winning *Of Rage and Remembrance* by John Corigliano with the National Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Leonard Slatkin.

About Julian Wachner

Grammy-nominated conductor Julian Wachner has been the Music Director of The Washington Chorus since 2008. He is also the Director of Music and the Arts at New York's historic Trinity Wall Street. Immediate past season highlights include his San Francisco Opera debut conducting Handel's *Partenope*; Ellen Reid's *Winter's Child* with the Prototype Festival; Handel's Saul in a new staging by director James Darrah; Handel's *Messiah* at Lincoln Center; Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* at the Kennedy Center; Charles Ives' *Fourth Symphony* and Ginastera's *Turbæ ad Passionem Gregorionam* at Carnegie Hall; Bernard Rands' *Vincent*; and Luna Pearl Woolf's *The Pillar* for Opera America; and orchestral performances with The Jacksonville Symphony, Philharmonia Baroque, and NOVUS NY.

Wachner's recent recordings include the Grammy-nominated *Israel in Egypt*; the world premiere of Ralf Galwick's *Missa Gentæ Humanae*; the Complete Motets of J. S. Bach; and Elena Ruehr's *Averno* and *Gospel Chacha*. Last season also saw the release of a 3-CD set of Wachner's original orchestral works on the Naxos label; Paola Prestini's opera *Oceanic Verses* for VIA Recordings and Julia Wolfe's oratorio *Anthracite Fields* with the Bang on a Can All-Stars for Cantaloupe Records. In addition, Atma Classique recently released Wachner's acclaimed *Triptych for Organ and Orchestra* with L'Orchestre Metropolitain of Montreal.

His extensive catalogue of compositions have been variously described as "jazzy, energetic, and ingenious" (Boston Globe), having "splendor, dignity, outstanding tone combinations, sophisticated chromatic exploration...a rich backdrop, wavering between a glimmer and a tingle..." (La Scena Musicale), being "a compendium of surprises" (Washington Post), and as "bold and atmospheric", having "an imaginative flair for allusive text setting" and noted for "the silken complexities of his harmonies" (The New York Times.) For more information about Julian Wachner, visit www.julianwachner.com.

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