

# WashU Symphony Orchestra and Choirs

Darwin Aquino, symphony orchestra  
conductor-in-residence  
John McDonald, conductor of choirs  
Sandra Geary, collaborative pianist

Tuesday, April 22, 2025 - 7:30 P.M.  
E. Desmond Lee Concert Hall, 560 Music Center



**WashU** Arts & Sciences

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Music

# Program

*In the Steppes of Central Asia* (1880)

Alexander Borodin  
(1833 - 1887)

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35 (1878)  
I. *Allegro moderato - Moderato assai*

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky  
(1840 - 1893)

Charles McGrath, violin  
(Winner of the Friends of Music Concerto Competition)

## INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 1 "A Sea Symphony" (1903-1909)  
I. *A Song for All Seas, All Ships*

Ralph Vaughan Williams  
(1878 - 1958)

Sarah Price, soprano  
Benjamin Worley, baritone

*American Salute* (1943)

Morton Gould  
(1913 - 1996)

Thank you to Friends of Music for sponsoring the  
annual Friends of Music Concerto and Aria Competition



Violinist **Charles McGrath**, winner of the Friends of Music Concerto Competition, is a senior from St. Louis, majoring in environmental policy and minoring in history and geospatial science. He started playing the violin at five years old, and currently studies with Kyle Lombard. Charles is a member of the WashU chamber music program as well as the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. Before attending WashU, he studied with Siri Geenen, Amy Appold, and Brennan Sweet. Aside from the violin, Charles studies satellite imagery in the WashU Radar Lab. He also likes to listen to classical music, play tennis, and go hiking.



Soprano **Sarah Price** is a powerful lyrical interpreter of opera, concert works, and the cabaret stage. Winner of the St. Louis Metropolitan Opera Auditions and the St. Louis Artist Presentation Society Competition, Ms. Price has performed operatic and concert repertoire throughout the U.S., Italy, Austria, and Germany. Operatic roles to her credit include the title role in Puccini's *Tosca*, Liu in *Turandot*, Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Hannah in *The Merry Widow*, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*, Countess Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Micaela in *Carmen*, among others. In addition to her operatic work, Ms. Price is

a section leader in the St. Louis Symphony Chorus. She has also been a member of and frequent soloist with the St. Louis Chamber Chorus and can be heard on several solo tracks on their CD *American Declarations*, recorded by Regent Records. On the cabaret stage, Ms. Price has performed shows at the Kranzberg Art Center, The Bistro, and The Sheldon Concert Hall, produced by St. Louis Cabaret. In demand as an educator as well as a performer, she serves on the voice faculty of Washington University in St. Louis and maintains an active voice studio in St. Peters, where she lives with her husband, composer Scott Price.



**Benjamin Worley** is a St. Louis-based multi-faceted musician. Benjamin holds a graduate degree in vocal performance and is completing his thesis for a second graduate degree in musicology from the University of Missouri, where he also holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in anthropology and vocal performance. He has performed locally with Union Avenue Opera and with internationally accredited Sarasota Opera as an apprentice artist for their Diamond 60th Anniversary season in 2019. While in Sarasota, Benjamin performed scenes from

Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*, Verdi's *La forza del destino*, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, and covered the role of Gran Sacerdote di Belo in their mainstage production of *Nabucco* by Verdi. In June 2017, he performed the role of Dr. Grenvil in the Missouri Symphony Society's production of Verdi's *La Traviata* while simultaneously music directing for Maplewood Barn Community Theater's production of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. He has sung roles with Show-Me Opera at Mizzou, including the title role in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, Simone in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, and Reverend Hale in Ward's *The Crucible*. Not only an accomplished singer, Benjamin was published in the September/October 2018 issue of *Journal of Singing*, the periodical published in affiliation with NATS, for his paper "Harry Lawrence Freeman: Pioneering the African-American Grand Opera."

## Director of Choirs



Known for his charismatic energy and musical versatility, Dominican conductor and composer **Darwin Aquino** has built a fast-rising career across the United States, Europe, and Latin America. Recognized for his smart and stylish conducting, Darwin regularly leads critically acclaimed performances of symphonic music, opera, operetta, ballet, new music, choral works, and Latin American music, worldwide.

Recently, he was appointed conductor for the New Works Collective with Opera Theater of Saint Louis, where he led its first six world premieres to great success and earned a reputation for being a champion of new music. Currently, he is in his fourth season as Artistic & Music Director of the St. Louis Philharmonic Orchestra, where "Aquino has done yeoman's work to highlight the contributions of Latin American composers, to the delight of the St. Louis community and beyond" (*KDHX*), and his seventh season as Conductor-in-Residence for the Washington University Symphony Orchestra.

The 24/25 season will see Darwin's conducting debut with Opera Southwest (L. Boccherini *Clementina*) and the National Symphony Orchestra of Panama at the Alfredo De Saint Malo Festival; plus engagements as a guest conductor with the Interlochen Center for the Arts, the World Chess Hall of Fame, and the Chamber Music Society of St. Louis. He will also join Opera Theater of Saint Louis, collaborating on productions of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Giulio Cesare*, and *Center Stage*. As a composer, he has been commissioned by the Lux Nova Duo in Germany for the world premiere of a new work for guitar, piano, accordion, and chamber ensemble for the Dialogues V Festival, in Madrid, Hamburg, and Berlin. Other commissions include the Arizona State University (*Responsabilidad* for bass clarinet solo) and a new flute duo for Laurel Zuckel and Christine Ganglehoff. Recent performances of his music include the San Francisco Civic Symphony, Latin American Music Festival in Venezuela, University of Michigan, Orquesta Sinfonica de Heredia in Costa Rica, and Illinois Modern Ensemble at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, among others.

The past several seasons have seen Darwin as a guest conductor for the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Mainz and the Saarländisches Staatsorchester, in Germany, where he led special New Years concerts and sold out performances of Latin American symphonic music, including his own orchestral works (*YOAmnicana & Congofonía*). Other recent notable engagements include the Florida Grand Opera (*Il Matrimonio Segreto* - with his own Spanish translation), Missouri Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Opera (*Porgy and Bess*), the Ashland Symphony Orchestra in Ohio (where he conducted the world premiere of his orchestral piece *Lunga Pandemia*), Il Volo Concert Tours, the Caribbean Lyric Festival, St. Louis Ballet, National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica, Chicago Summer Opera, Filarmónica Boca del Rio in Mexico, Orchestra of the Americas, Chamber Project St. Louis, the Young Composer Competition at Webster University, and the Missouri Festival for the Arts.

## Director of Choirs



**Dr. John McDonald** is the Director of Choir and Vocal Studies at Washington University in St. Louis, conductor of Cantus, the St. Louis Children's Choirs tenor-bass ensemble, and artistic director and founder of the St. Louis-based professional group, Continuum Vocal Ensemble. He is frequently invited as a guest conductor and adjudicator for events across the United States. An active member of the American Choral Directors Association, Dr. McDonald serves on the Education and Communication national standing committee and was selected as one of six conductors for the 2023 International Conductors Exchange Program with Germany.

Dr. McDonald earned degrees from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, East Carolina University, and Middle Tennessee State University.

## Collaborative Pianist



**Sandra Geary** is a native of County Cork, Ireland and has received piano performance diplomas from the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity College, London; the Cork School of Music, Ireland and a Bachelor of Music degree from the St. Louis Conservatory of Music. Her teachers include John O'Connor, Joseph Kalichstein, and Carole Tafoya.

On the piano faculty of Washington University, Sandra also accompanies the WashU Concert choir. She has been the Bach Society of St. Louis accompanist for the past 25 years and is also the accompanist for Webster University Opera studio. She is a vocal coach for the Opera Theatre of St. Louis Artist-in-Training program and the Union Avenue Opera Crescendo Young Artist program.

She has collaborated in voice masterclasses given by Nathan Gunn, Stanford Olsen, Kevin Short, Erie Mills, Christine Brewer, Mary Ann McCormack, and Jennifer Johnson Cano.

Sandra regularly accompanies recitals, auditions, and competitions in the St. Louis area.

# Symphony Orchestra

## Violin I

Noah Kennedy  
Nora Navid  
Xiaoyu Luo  
Jessica Hu  
Sofia La Rosa  
Jake Tetenman  
Claire Yi  
Becky Liu  
Jerry Sun  
Jahnvi Datta  
Shashank Mani  
Edgar Palomino  
Andy Liu  
Luc Bourgeade  
Shira Miller  
Arthur Lu  
Jenny Lou  
Danielle Cheong  
Etienne Strandberg-Houze

## Violin II

Bradley Lafayette Gober  
Matthew Du  
Tatiana Flores  
Michelle Lee  
Sadie Navid  
Eva Cohen  
Yang Yang  
Yifei Wang  
James Wang  
Yussif Ramadan  
Lizzie Wagner  
Soumya Bandaru  
Jessica Fang

## Viola

Henry Kessler  
Stephen Lee  
Emily Updike  
Katherine Le  
Mackenzie Bookamer  
Klara Schmidt

## Cello

Eric Liu  
Frances Fang  
Robert Catalano  
Luke David-Pennington  
William Chen  
Luc Neacy  
Rachel Benitez Borrego  
Kimberly Jeong\*

## Bass

Taraneh Atri  
Sam Myers  
Michael Moore  
Max Ding

## Flute

Elizabeth Chen  
Cynthia Yan  
Priya Ramotar  
Olivia Lee

## Oboe

Michelle Zhang  
Joseph Zhou

## English Horn

Michelle Zhang

## Clarinet

Shelby Elliott  
Jayden Liu

## Bassoon

Emily DePaz  
Jeff Panhorst\*\*

## French Horn

Thomas McGrath  
Maddie Peck  
Tai Moore  
Aobo Lyu  
Ceresa Munjak-Khoury

## Trumpet

Mary Weber \*  
Charlie Workinger\*\*  
Spencer Dunlap\*\*

## Trombone

Julian Mitchell  
Sean Wang  
Ed Jacobs\*\*

## Tuba

Tianyue Song

## Percussion

Jake Page  
Christian Kim

\*WashU Music Faculty

\*\*Community Member

# Choir Members

## Soprano

Elma Ademovic  
Jennifer Barnett  
Selma Becarevic  
Sophie Bongiorno  
Danielle Bryden\*  
Kate Burns  
Katya Cavanaugh  
Julianna Cool\*  
Dianne Duncan  
Katie Furby\*<sup>o</sup>^  
Serene Harris  
Julia Claire Johnson  
Lily Johnson\*  
Mary Jane Karlov  
Viktoriia Knyaz  
Josie Kopff\*+  
Stella Larson  
Crystal Lovato\*  
Erica Miller  
Melissa Moore  
Grace Philip  
Aleta Porter  
Brittany Rogus\*  
Amabel Schwaiger^  
Cathy Shi  
Amelia Spencer  
Naomi Turk  
Maya Tylis\*^  
Emma Wells  
Anna Zimmermann

## Alto

Imaan Ali  
Kiersten Anderson^  
Katie Beyers  
Melena Braggs\*^  
Anya Coughlin  
Deborah Collins Grossman^  
Joey Dickinson  
Sylvia Duarte  
Meghan Elliott\*  
Zoe Geyman  
Xing Jian  
Nicole Kusi-Appiah  
Ruihua Li  
Isabella Lombardo\*  
Eve McMillin\*  
Lauren Moutvic^  
Sophia Myers\*  
Ceci Oses  
Paige Quinones  
Aloisa Rickert  
Mariel Scher\*+  
Ava Silverstein\*  
Isabelle Smith  
Shirley Smith  
Addis Tafesse\*  
Melyssah Toledo  
Brionne Webb  
Fay Wong

## Tenor

Seth Alms  
Jared Berger\*^  
Jack Beyers  
Raymond Brooks  
Martín Ibarra\*  
Pratik Jha  
Hayden McAllister  
Joshua Membreno  
Maseo Mercer\*+  
Mitchell Sampson  
Jack Wellons

## Bass

Noah Apley  
Nicholas Chiu\*  
Reece Gray\*  
Michael Hanson  
Elijah Leckerman  
Daniel Marshall  
Jerry Messer  
Caleb Rhodes\*  
Tom Snider  
John Speas\*+^  
Maxwell Spinner\*  
Ryan Williamson  
Thomas Yang\*  
Liam Young

\* = Chamber Choir

+ = Section Leader

<sup>o</sup> = Ensemble Manager

^ = Leadership Council

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 WashU Arts & Sciences

Music

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You can also join the mailing list by using your smartphone.



### Get involved

Get more involved by becoming a member of the Friends of Music at Washington University. This society supports the Department of Music's high standards in performance, musical studies, and research while encouraging Washington University students and faculty in their musical scholarship and creativity.

