

# Season 2015-2016

**Friday, November 13, at  
8:00**

**Saturday, November 14,  
at 8:00**

**Sunday, November 15, at  
2:00**

## The Philadelphia Orchestra

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** Conductor

**Laquita Mitchell** Soprano

**Rodrick Dixon** Tenor

**Combined Choirs including  
Delaware State University Choir**

**Lloyd Mallory** Director

**The Lincoln University Concert Choir**

**Edryn Coleman** Director

**Morgan State University Choir**

**Eric Conway** Director

**J. Donald Dumpson** Choral Direction

**Sibelius** *Finlandia*, Op. 26

**Copland** *Appalachian Spring* Suite (1945 version)

### Intermission

**Hannibal** *One Land, One River, One People*

I. Veil One—One Land: The Veil of Creation

II. Veil Two—One River: The Veil of Imparted  
Knowledge and Divine Instruction

III. Veil Three—One People: The Veil of Eternal  
Being

World Premiere—Commissioned by The Philadelphia  
Orchestra

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 50 minutes.

These performances are made possible by the generous support of the **Presser Foundation**.

LiveNote®, the Orchestra's interactive concert guide for mobil devices, will be enabled for these performances

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM. Visit [www.wrti.org](http://www.wrti.org) to listen live or for more details.

Please join us immediately following the November 15 concert for a free Chamber Postlude, featuring members of The Philadelphia Orchestra.

**Bartók** String Quartet No. 1, Op. 7

- I. Lento—
- II. Poco a poco accelerando al allegretto—  
(Introduzione) Allegro—
- III. Allegro vivace

**Miyo Curnow** Violin

**Elina Kalendarova** Violin

**Kerri Ryan** Viola

**Kathryn Picht Read** Cello

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

Jeffrey Griffin



The Philadelphia Orchestra is one of the preeminent orchestras in the world, renowned for its distinctive sound, desired for its keen ability to capture the hearts and imaginations of audiences, and admired for a legacy of imagination and innovation on and off the concert stage. The Orchestra is transforming its rich tradition of achievement, sustaining the highest level of artistic quality, but also challenging—and exceeding—that level by creating powerful musical experiences for audiences at home and around the world.

Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin's highly collaborative style, deeply-rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike since his inaugural season in 2012. Under his leadership the Orchestra returned to recording, with two celebrated CDs on the prestigious Deutsche Grammophon label, continuing its history of recording success. The

Orchestra also reaches thousands of listeners on the radio with weekly Sunday afternoon broadcasts on WRTI-FM.

Philadelphia is home and the Orchestra nurtures an important relationship with patrons who support the main season at the Kimmel Center, and also with those who enjoy the Orchestra's area performances at the Mann Center, Penn's Landing, and other cultural, civic, and learning venues. The Orchestra maintains a strong commitment to collaborations with cultural and community organizations on a regional and national level.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, presentations, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador for Philadelphia and for the United States. Having been the first American orchestra to perform in China, in 1973 at the request of President Nixon, The Philadelphia Orchestra today boasts a new partnership with the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing. The ensemble annually performs at

Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center while also enjoying summer residencies in Saratoga Springs, New York, and Vail, Colorado.

The Philadelphia Orchestra serves as a catalyst for cultural activity across Philadelphia's many communities, as it builds an offstage presence as strong as its onstage one. The Orchestra's award-winning Collaborative Learning initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members through programs such as PlayINs, side-by-sides, PopUp concerts, free Neighborhood Concerts, School Concerts, and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad. The Orchestra's musicians, in their own dedicated roles as teachers, coaches, and mentors, serve a key role in growing young musician talent and a love of classical music, nurturing and celebrating the wealth of musicianship in the Philadelphia region. For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

# Music Director

Chris Lee



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** is an inspired leader of The Philadelphia Orchestra, and he has renewed his commitment to the ensemble through the 2021-22 season. His highly collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called him “phenomenal,” adding that under his baton, “the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better.” Highlights of his fourth season include a year-long exploration of works that exemplify the famous Philadelphia Sound, including Mahler’s Symphony No. 8 and other pieces premiered by the Orchestra; a Music of Vienna Festival; and the continuation of a commissioning project for principal players.

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling talents of his generation. He has been music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic since 2008 and artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal’s Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. He also continues to enjoy a close relationship with the London Philharmonic, of which he was principal guest conductor. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world’s most revered ensembles, and he has conducted critically acclaimed performances at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Deutsche Grammophon (DG) enjoy a long-term collaboration. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with two CDs on that label; the second, Rachmaninoff’s Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini with pianist Daniil Trifonov, was released in August 2015. He continues fruitful recording relationships with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records; the London Philharmonic and Choir for the LPO label; and the Orchestre Métropolitain for ATMA Classique.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied at that city’s Conservatory of Music and continued lessons with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini and with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick’s honors are appointments as Companion of the Order of Canada and Officer of the National Order of Quebec, a Royal Philharmonic Society Award, Canada’s National Arts Centre Award, the Prix Denise-Pelletier, and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec, the Curtis Institute of Music, and Westminster Choir College.

To read Yannick’s full bio, please visit [www.philorch.org/conductor](http://www.philorch.org/conductor).

# Soloists



Soprano **Laquita Mitchell** first performed with The Philadelphia Orchestra at the Martin Luther King Jr. Tribute Concert in January and makes her subscription debut with these current concerts. She has appeared with the Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York City, Houston Grand, and Washington National operas; the Lyric Opera of Chicago; and the Opéra Comique in Paris. Highlights of her current season include two recitals with the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago; the role of Bess in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* with Toledo Opera and the Springfield and Baltimore symphonies; and her debut, alongside bass-baritone Eric Owens, with the New York Philharmonic. An active concert artist, Ms. Mitchell recently appeared in *Over the Rainbow—Songs by Harold Arlen* at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. She also performs in recital annually at the Harare International Festival of the Arts in Zimbabwe. A native of New York City, Ms. Mitchell was a 2004 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Grand Prize Winner and was awarded a Sara Tucker Award. She holds a master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music and completed undergraduate studies at Westminster Choir College.



Tenor **Rodrick Dixon** made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2008 and last appeared with the ensemble at the Martin Luther King Jr. Tribute Concert earlier this year. Notable operatic engagements include the title role in Zemlinsky's *Der Zwerg* and Walther in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* with Los Angeles Opera; Tonio in Donizetti's *The Daughter of the Regiment* at Michigan Opera Theater; Lenski in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* at the Todi Music Festival; and the title role in Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann* at Portland Opera. On the concert stage he is a regular guest of the Cincinnati May Festival, where he has performed Orff's *Carmina burana*, Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*, Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*, Mahler's *Das klagende Lied*, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Rachmaninoff's *The Bells*, and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. As a member of "The Tenors: Cook, Dixon & Young," he has appeared in concert with the Atlanta, Cincinnati, Chicago, and Pittsburgh symphonies and at the Hollywood Bowl. Recent recordings for Sony/BMG include *PBS Great Performances: Cook, Dixon & Young, Volume One*, Liam Lawton's *Sacred Land*, *Rodrick Dixon Live in Concert*, and a Christmas album with the Cincinnati Pops.

# Choirs



The **Delaware State University Choir** has been a substantial part of the University's tradition ever since the school, one of the nation's historically black colleges and universities, was founded in 1891. Ranging from 60 to 80 voices strong, the Choir encompasses the Concert Choir and a smaller ensemble, the University Singers. Repertoire ranges from Classical choral and sacred works to contemporary compositions in genres including jazz, gospel, and Broadway musicals; the choir is also committed to preserving its heritage by singing spirituals and works by African-American composers. The choirs perform for numerous community and university events. Off-campus performances have included Handel's *Messiah* with the Harlem Festival Orchestra at the Grand Opera House in Wilmington; a statewide presentation of Negro spirituals written and conducted by the late composer/performer Jester Hairston with the University of Delaware; a collaboration with Temple University in a presentation of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*; and participation in the Black Music Festival and Workshop of composer William Dawson's spirituals in Birmingham, Alabama. The Choir is under the direction of Dr. Lloyd Mallory, Jr.



The **Lincoln University Concert Choir** is one of the premier organizations on the campus of the Lincoln University in Chester County, Pennsylvania. The students who make up the choral ensemble hail from all corners of the globe and major in a variety of disciplines. The Choir has held the distinct honor of having such members in its ranks as the president of the Student Government Association, Miss Lincoln University, Mr. Lincoln University, and even members of the University football team. Choir members serve as ambassadors for the University, touring extensively and performing recruitment concerts at churches of all denominations and high schools throughout the country. Recent tours have included Los Angeles and the Choir's international debut, in South Africa. The Lincoln University, founded in 1854, is one of the nation's oldest historically black colleges and universities. Distinguished alumni include U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall; author and poet Langston Hughes; and Nnamdi Azikiwe, the first president of Nigeria. Today the University enrolls a diverse student body of approximately 2,000 men and women. The Choir is under the direction of Edryn Coleman.

# Choirs



The choral forces of the critically acclaimed **Morgan State University Choir** include the University Choir, which is over 120 voices strong, and a smaller ensemble, the Morgan Singers. While classical, gospel, and contemporary popular music comprise the core repertoire, the Choir is also noted for its emphasis on preserving the heritage of the spiritual, especially in the historic practices of performance. The Choir has performed for audiences throughout the U.S. and around the world, making the students cultural ambassadors for the University, the City of Baltimore, and the State of Maryland. Performance highlights have included singing under the baton of Robert Shaw with the Orchestra of St. Luke's and soprano Jessye Norman in Carnegie Hall's One Hundredth Birthday Tribute to Marian Anderson; a national ceremony celebrating the bicentennial of the National Anthem at Fort McHenry; and a tour of Argentina. In April 2015, at the request of First Lady Michelle Obama, the Choir sang at the White House for a nationally televised concert in the East Room, accompanying gospel music artists Aretha Franklin, Shirley Caesar, and Tamela Mann. The Choir is under the direction of Dr. Eric Conway.



Choir Director **J. Donald Dumpson** is president and CEO of Diverse Arts Solutions, a division of J. Donald Dumpson Productions. He also serves as minister of music and arts at Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and is the founding director of the Philadelphia Heritage Chorale. He was minister of music and arts at Bright Hope Baptist Church from 1985 to 2010. During the visit of Pope Francis to Philadelphia in September, Dr. Dumpson curated regional singers for a performance with The Philadelphia Orchestra, Aretha Franklin, Andrea Bocelli, Juanes, and the Philadelphia Heritage Chorale. In September 2012 he served as chorus master for the Kimmel Center's world premiere of Hannibal's *Can You Hear God Crying?*, which was released on Naxos in November 2014. He has also collaborated with Hannibal on the premieres of *A Shepherd Among Us* and *God, Mississippi, and a Man Called Evers*. Mr. Dumpson serves as artistic director and conductor for *A Soulful Christmas at the Kimmel Center* this December, featuring gospel singer Shirley Caesar and an array of local ministers and churches. He also appears with jazz bassist Christian McBride at the Merriam Theater later this month.

# Framing the Program

## Parallel Events

**1899**

**Sibelius**

*Finlandia*

**Music**

Elgar

"Enigma"

Variations

**Literature**

Tolstoy

*Resurrection*

**Art**

Toulouse-

Lautrec

*Jane Avril*

**History**

First magnetic

recording of

sound

**1944**

**Copland**

*Appalachian*

*Spring*

**Music**

Prokofiev

Symphony No. 5

**Literature**

Hersey

*A Bell for Adano*

**Art**

Rivera

*The Rug Weaver*

**History**

D-Day landings

in Normandy

The concert today celebrates national and cultural pride with three pieces with spiritual foundations.

Jean Sibelius's *Finlandia*, the most famous piece by Finland's most famous composer, premiered in 1899 in rather modest circumstances: the finale to a benefit event at which it appeared with the title *Finland Awakes*. Russia had recently clamped down on its much smaller neighbor and Sibelius's tone-poem, in which exciting fanfares contrast with hymn-like solemnity, perfectly captured Finnish sentiment. It quickly became the unofficial national anthem of the country.

Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* likewise marvelously evokes an idyllic sense of country and landscape. Copland composed it in 1944 for the celebrated choreographer and dancer Martha Graham and the following year the piece was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. Today we hear the Suite Copland extracted from the full ballet, which features a set of variations on the Shaker song "Simple Gifts."

The program concludes with the world premiere of *One Land, One River, One People* by American composer and jazz trumpeter Hannibal. He calls the work, an exclusive commission of The Philadelphia Orchestra, a "spiritatorio." The piece draws upon a wide variety of images, music, and words to invoke a profound spiritual response: "In this aura that surrounds us all, the Creator will be with us forever." Using a flowing river as his guiding thread, Hannibal explores the connections among communities and all those who live in them. The work features chorus and vocal soloists singing a text written by the composer.

# The Music

## *Finlandia*



**Jean Sibelius**  
**Born in Hämeenlinna,**  
**Finland, December 8, 1865**  
**Died in Järvenpää (near**  
**Helsinki), September 20,**  
**1957**

Finland has produced many accomplished composers during the last two centuries, but abroad we rarely hear the music of any of them, save one. By becoming one of the great composers of the 20th century—indeed, of any century—Jean Sibelius emerged a national hero in this nation of only five million inhabitants. In fact, by composing such works as *Finlandia* and the Violin Concerto, he became perhaps the most famous Finn who ever lived.

**A Unique Compositional Voice** When Sibelius wrote *Finlandia* in 1899, he had spent nearly a decade forging an extraordinarily dense orchestral style—in epic symphonic poems constructed on a formidable scale. Pieces such as *En saga* (1892) and the massive *Lemminkäinen* Suite (first version, 1893–95), had brought him much fame at home. His position as Finland's most prominent citizen is one he has maintained to this day, more than a half-century after his death.

In his younger years he had immersed himself in a wide range of musical styles, including those of the Viennese Classicists, of Liszt and Tchaikovsky, and of Wagner, whose operas he had heard at Bayreuth in 1894. If his early style contained much of these composers' outlooks, it also struck out on a singular path, with a musical style that is as readily identifiable as any composer of the 20th century.

**A Nationalistic Rallying Cry** To call a work *Finlandia* in the Russia-dominated Finland was a subversive and even dangerous act. Imperial Russia still officially ruled over Finland; in 1899 the Russians had declared Finnish rights null and void, and nationalist sentiment against the situation reached an all-time high. Sibelius composed a number of patriotic pieces, among them the *Song of Athenians*, the text of which echoed the sentiment of the majority of Finns at the turn of the 20th century: "Rise with thy strong arm furious. Rise to fight for thy country. Hasten to yield up thy life, life for the races to come!" Alas, Finland was not to break free from Russia's grip for some time.

The same year came Sibelius's most beloved orchestral tone poem, *Finlandia*, which at various times appeared under other titles in early performances. Composed in a quick burst of inspiration just after the completion

*Finlandia* was composed in 1899.

*Leopold Stokowski conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the piece, in November 1914. The most recent subscription concerts were in March 2007 with Charles Dutoit.*

*The Philadelphians have recorded Finlandia seven times: in 1921, 1930, and 1940 with Stokowski for RCA; in 1950 and 1968 with Eugene Ormandy for CBS; and twice in an arrangement that includes chorus (in 1958 with Ormandy and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir for CBS, and in 1972 with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra Chorus for RCA).*

*The work is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, triangle), and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately eight minutes.*

of the First Symphony, it was received with fanatical enthusiasm at a benefit concert in Helsinki for the Press Pension Fund on November 4, when it was called *Finland Awakes*. The music accompanied the final tableau in a series of seven pieces chronologically representing crucial moments in Finnish history. With heavy revisions Sibelius extracted this finale to create a separate tone poem; it was performed in Helsinki the following July and published in 1901 as *Finlandia*. There are good reasons to think the title was meant to place the work in the tradition of Liszt's *Hungaria*, Smetana's *Má vlast* (My Country), and Balakirev's *Russia*. In the years that followed, *Finlandia* evolved into a sort of rallying cry for Finns, containing the potent meanings that Verdi's or Smetana's or Tchaikovsky's nationalistic statements had for their respective audiences.

Sibelius's tone poem relies on folklike themes; they were all of his own invention. The principal subject is known to nearly every listener today, and has been used for countless vernacular settings, especially Protestant hymns. *Finlandia* is a blaze of brass and stirring themes, and is orchestrated with all of the composer's orchestral and motivic acumen.

—Paul J. Horsley/Christopher H. Gibbs

# The Music

## *Appalachian Spring Suite*



**Aaron Copland**  
**Born in Brooklyn,**  
**November 14, 1900**  
**Died in North Tarrytown,**  
**New York, December 2, 1990**

Aaron Copland, born in 1900, lived a long and distinguished life not just as a composer, but also as a conductor, writer, concert organizer, and teacher. He was justly hailed as the “Dean of American Composers” and always seemed to be in the center of things, a generous colleague and an inspiring model.

Beginning in the late 1930s Copland composed his most popular and enduring compositions, works such as the ballets *Billy the Kid* and *Rodeo*, the *Fanfare for the Common Man* (which he incorporated into his magnificent Third Symphony), and *Lincoln Portrait*. These pieces seemed to capture the American experience in vital and unexpected ways. In the summer of 1943 he started a collaboration with the noted choreographer and dancer Martha Graham for a new ballet that was eventually given the title *Appalachian Spring* and that became one of his signal populist pieces.

**Ballet for Martha** Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge commissioned the ballet for Graham to choreograph, accompanied by a small ensemble of a dozen performers. She initially sought works from Copland and Mexican composer Carlos Chávez, but when the latter got delayed she invited Paul Hindemith and Darius Milhaud. Copland's ballet premiered in October 1944 at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. It was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in music the following year.

Copland had no clear scenario when he began composing the piece that for quite a while he simply called *Ballet for Martha*. When he finally saw what she had done just a few days before the premiere he did not think it reflected what he had in mind with the music but was nonetheless magnanimous: “Music composed for one kind of action had been used to accompany something else. . . . But that kind of decision is the choreographer's, and it doesn't bother me a bit, especially when it works.” Copland enjoyed recounting the story of the title, which was Graham's late addition inspired by a Hart Crane poem. The composer recalled how people would endlessly come up to him remarking that they saw the Appalachians and felt spring in the music, neither of which had been part of the

Appalachian Spring was composed from 1943 to 1944.

*Eugene Ormandy conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the work, on a Student Concert in November 1954, to accompany a performance with the Martha Graham Dance Company. The most recent subscription performances of the Suite were in November 2012, with Giancarlo Guerrero on the podium.*

*The Philadelphians have recorded Appalachian Spring twice. The full ballet was recorded in 1954 for CBS and the Suite in 1969 for RCA, both with Ormandy.*

*Copland scored his original ballet for a chamber ensemble of 13 instruments, in which version it is occasionally performed and recorded. Usually it is heard in the suite for full orchestra that the composer prepared in the spring of 1945, for two flutes (fl doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, timpani, percussion (bass drum, claves, orchestra bells, snare drum, suspended cymbal, tabor or long drum, triangle, wood block, xylophone), harp, piano, and strings.*

*Appalachian Spring runs approximately 25 minutes in performance.*

conception. He confessed: "I have even begun to see the Appalachians myself a bit."

**A Closer Look** Graham provided a very short description of the story for the Washington premiere: "Part and parcel of our lives is that moment of Pennsylvania spring when there was 'a garden eastward of Eden.' Spring was celebrated by a man and woman building a house with joy and love and prayer; by a Revivalist and his followers in their shouts of exaltation; by a pioneering woman with her dreams of the Promised Land."

Copland originally composed the complete ballet for just 13 instruments, from which he later extracted a concert Suite of eight continuous movements scored for large orchestra, which we hear today. While various sections have a folkish feel to them, in fact he used only one borrowed tune, the Shaker song "Simple Gifts." The composer provided the following description of the Suite:

1. Very slowly—Introduction of the characters, one by one, in a suffused light.
2. Fast—Sudden burst of unison strings in A major arpeggios starts the action. A sentiment both elated and religious gives the keynote to this scene.
3. Moderate—Duo for the Bride and her Intended—scene of tenderness and passion.
4. Quite fast—The Revivalist and his flock. Folksy feelings—suggestions of square dances and country fiddlers.
5. Still faster—Solo dance of the Bride—Presentiment of motherhood. Extremes of joy and fear and wonder.
6. Very slow (as at first)—Transition scenes reminiscent of the introduction.
7. Calm and flowing—Scenes of daily activity for the Bride and her Farmer-husband. There are five variations on a Shaker theme. The theme—sung by a solo clarinet—was taken from a collection of Shaker melodies compiled by Edward D. Andrews, and published under the title *The Gift to Be Simple*. The melody I borrowed and used almost literally is called "Simple Gifts."
8. Moderato—Coda—The Bride takes her place among her neighbors. At the end the couple are left "quiet and strong in their new house." Muted strings intone a hushed, prayer-like passage. We hear a last echo of the principal theme sung by a flute and solo violin. The close is reminiscent of the opening music.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

# The Music

## *One Land, One River, One People*



### **Hannibal**

**Born November 11, 1948,  
in Smithville, Texas  
Now living there**

Famed composer and jazz trumpeter Hannibal Lokumbe was born Marvin Peterson in Smithville, Texas. During the late 1960s, he studied at North Texas State University while leading a soul/jazz band, the Soulmasters, that accompanied such iconic artists as Jackie Wilson, Otis Redding, Etta James, and T-Bone Walker. It was during this time that he adopted the name “Hannibal” as a kind of professional stage name.

In 1970 “Hannibal” Peterson moved to New York, and played trumpet in the New York jazz scene for more than three decades as sideman to Gil Evans, Pharaoh Sanders, and others, and as leader of his own ensemble. Though he never met John Coltrane, Hannibal cites his legacy, passed on through so many of Coltrane’s associates, as one of the most profound formative influences on his own music.

**A Spiritual Turning Point** A visit to Kenya in 1979 proved a turning point in Hannibal’s life and career. There a tribal healer cured him of pneumonia and, he recalled, also released him from the internal anger that had accumulated. Through the 1980s, he then began performing more frequently in non-traditional venues such as churches and prisons. He took the name Hannibal Lokumbe while still using the mononym “Hannibal” as a professional name.

Hannibal turned to composition under the advice of Charles Mingus and John Lennon, finding success with his *African Portraits*, a 1990 oratorio for orchestra, jazz quartet, blues guitar, gospel singer, and chorus. From 1999 he served a three-year stint as composer-in-residence with the Louisiana Symphony Orchestra. He is the recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and was awarded a 2009 USA Cummings Fellowship. He is also founder and director of the Music Liberation Orchestra, a program that teaches music, genealogy, and writing to incarcerated men in prisons across the country.

As a composer Hannibal has concentrated on relating the slave experience through works that combine jazz and orchestral elements. But that story doesn’t focus solely on the slaves themselves—it is mirrored in his musical

accounts of historical figures who show courage through oppression, including Anne Frank, Rosa Parks, and Fannie Lou Hamer.

**A Creation Story** That story continues in Hannibal's *One Land, One River, One People*, a creation story written with the intent of reminding its listeners of their own divinity. He explains, "One Land refers to the physicality of humanity, One River the blood of humanity, and One People the spirituality of humanity." He describes this work as a "spiritatorio," a genre of his own inventing that uses images, music, and text to invoke a profound spiritual response. "In this aura that surrounds us all," he notes, "the Creator will be with us forever. This composition is for the New Beings: the ones who choose to be slain by the sword of spiritual bliss; the ones who reject greed and power and all that they bring to bear upon humanity. This spiritatorio is an attempt to keep the skin of our beautiful Mother Earth from becoming like that of a Martian landscape."

The lyrics for this work were given to Hannibal by the spirit of his great-great-grandmother, a Cherokee shaman, and the music came to him from his ancestors and from Nature, "my greatest teachers." "The foundation of this work lies in the text," he continues. "The orchestration is the river, the text is the ground within which the river flows."

**A Closer Look** *One Land, One River, One People* is presented in three "veils," Hannibal's preferred term for movements. (The word "movement," he observes, implies the ability to go either forward or backward. But lifting a veil on one's consciousness is a transformative experience that can only increase understanding.) The first veil, "**One Land: The Veil of Creation,**" introduces references to the Dogon religion of Mali in West Africa, where the Creator, "Amma," forms and gives life to humans, or "Nommo." After the creation of light, the human and physical worlds are formed, represented by the orchestral woodwinds and repeating bass patterns that symbolize the growing life force. As the choir enters, moving like a kind of "dark matter" in celestial winds, its first word is "light," the essence of humanity. The ascending and descending waves of sound throughout this veil—an influence from Coltrane—underscore the creation of a physical world for Nommo. The veil then ends with a whisper: "I trust a whisper more than I trust a shout," the composer affirms.

The second veil, "**One River: The Veil of Imparted Knowledge and Divine Instruction,**" opens with a

One Land, One River, One People was composed from 2014 to 2015.

*These are the world premiere performances of the work.*

*The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two English horns, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, four trumpets, two trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, bells, drum set, Brother Martin's Emmett stick, cymbals, Einstein's rattle [an instrument invented by Hannibal], glass chimes, rattles, snare drum, songba drums with bells) strings, soprano and tenor soloist, and mixed chorus.*

*Performance time is approximately 40 minutes.*

“blugue,” Hannibal's term for a combination of Bach-like fugal technique and blues changes. Here the blugue represents the sacred, life-giving space of a womb—a parallel to the black holes from which the universe was created. After an orchestral “gamma ray explosion,” the choir enters with a series of lamentations for human suffering. Amma, the Creator, then shares her wisdom with Nommo, teaching him how to live and find peace in the world.

The final veil, **“One People: The Veil of Eternal Being,”** opens with a piccolo that invokes the spirit of Hannibal's Cherokee ancestor. This grows into a brass fanfare, a call of love to all humanity. Nommo is left to find his way in the world, but before Amma leaves, her final words to him encapsulate the work's overarching message, “Let peace be your master, let grace become your bed, love all that you see, then time will become your bride.”

—Luke Howard

## **One Land, One River, One People**

(Text by Hannibal)

Brackets signify where parts are sung simultaneously.

### **Veil One—One Land: The Veil of Creation**

*Amma is the name for God in the Dogon spirituality system and Nommo is the name for humans in that same system. Amma is light, and by speaking light, Nommo is formed. The piccolo is used as a medium that allows the essence of the spirit to be transferred to the flesh.*

#### **Amma**

Light moving.  
Light streaming.  
Light pouring out of itself into you.  
Light moving  
throughout the endless realm  
into the pores of you.  
You have come from the light,  
light you are,  
now veiled in a skin  
of benevolent wonder,  
a tapestry of divine mystery.  
Of cosmic dust  
your spirit was made,  
and the infinite stars  
are the mirrors to your soul.

*Amma creates Nommo from light and waits to hear the first words Nommo will speak.*

*The choir now represents the Collective Winds of Creation, a name given by Amma. They gather to observe Nommo's human form and marvel at what they see. The Collective Winds speak in a language of tones represented here by the vowel "E."*

*When Nommo speaks the word "light," the Collective Winds of Creation are inspired to repeat it. Light was the first word of humanity, so said the spirits to me.*

#### **Choir**

EEEEEE

#### **Amma**

Now  
the Collective Winds of Creation  
have gathered  
and wait  
with celestial joy  
to hear  
the first of your tones.  
And by the name you have been given  
I say to you now, Nommo,  
speak into the universe  
the essence of who you are.

#### **Nommo**

Light—  
Light I am.

#### **Choir**

Light.

#### **Nommo**

From you I have emerged  
into this state of physical wonder.  
For what reason  
am I now cloaked in this garment  
of skin, bones, and attributes to which  
I find myself a stranger?  
How, Amma,  
how can I fulfill  
what it now requires  
of me?

#### **Choir (Sopranos)**

Light—Light—from the light we all have  
come—sacred luminous light—light  
moving—sacred light moving throughout  
the pores of you—you are the new being  
of flesh—blood—mind—spirit—from divine  
soul—matter—Eternal—energy.

#### **(Altos)**

Light—Light—from the light we all have  
come—sacred—endless streams of divine  
light now pouring into the soul of you—in your  
blood—in your heart and mind—you are the

*Please turn the page quietly.*

new being of flesh—blood—mind—spirit—  
from divine soul—matter—Eternal—energy.

**(Tenors)**

Light—Light—from the light we all have  
come—sacred light—moving throughout  
the universe—you are the new being of  
flesh—blood—mind—spirit from divine  
soul—matter—Eternal—energy.

**(Basses)**

Light—Light—from the divine light we have  
come—a sacred form of bone, flesh, and  
blood—of wind, fire, earth, rain, sky we are  
made—a soul of endless form and faith—  
you are the new being of flesh—blood—  
mind—spirit from divine soul—matter—  
Eternal—energy.

*Nommo is now in a state of confusion.*

**Nommo**

Why have I been given this house,  
which cannot traverse the heavens  
as my spirit does?  
I feel that it is in need of things  
which I do not know.  
Help me, Amma,  
help me to find the truth of it.

**Choir**

Divine, cosmic dust,  
you are  
moving throughout creation.  
A soul of radiant beauty.  
Omniscient being of light.

**Amma**

Nommo,  
even I, the light of you,  
have envy  
of what you have now become.  
A being of two worlds,  
one of spirit  
and one of flesh.  
The spirit I am,  
the flesh  
I must ponder.

**Choir (as Amma)**

Om-  
Om-  
Omniscience light  
you are made.  
Radiant mind  
moving back to the perfect  
light.

**Nommo**

This state of physical wonder.  
How, Amma, how could there be  
such a place?  
My flesh now feels tired  
and must rest.  
Help me, Amma.  
Help me to find  
the truth of it.  
This state of spiritual wonder.

**Amma**

Then I will come to you  
in a way that is known  
to both your spirit  
and to your flesh.  
There must be a place for you now,  
a place that can hold the part of you  
which the wind cannot.  
From the winds  
of eternal matter  
I will form a world  
of radiant beauty  
and in this world  
you, and the likeness of you,  
shall become many,  
and know the rapture  
of both the spirit  
and the flesh.

**Choir**

Timeless matter,  
timeless truth.

*The choir now conveys the sacred  
covenant of Amma, one that is given to  
remind beings of the fate they have, the  
power to live and to enact.*

**Choir**

All the beings of the world will one day come to see the truth of their nature, and the lies of ignorance, fear, and hatred will be gone from them and all that they do. Their minds will recall the cosmic womb from which it came. Then death will be known for the gift that it is and grace will at last become their wealth, and peace will become the ruler of this land. And this peace will hold them like a child holds a bowl full of all that it needs to grow in mind, flesh, and spirit. Then nations will fly the flag of one land, and the pain of being will be no more.

*Amma now induces a state of spiritual rest upon Nommo, during which all the powers of wisdom, emotion, and knowledge will be imparted to his mind.*

**Amma**

Now find you a place to rest, Nommo, until this home of fire, iron, and land is made. And the land shall be your skin, and your skin shall be the land.

**Nommo**

This garment of skin and bones.  
I will seek spiritual slumber.  
You are the sum of me, Amma.  
I await the gift of this land.

**Choir**

Pure light,  
you are now veiled  
in a skin of

benevolent wonder:  
Light.

**Veil Two—One River: The Veil of Imparted Knowledge and Divine Instruction**

Ladies and gentlemen, you have a unique opportunity to participate in today's world premiere performance. You will be asked to give a shout out to the many unsung workers who helped to build our great country. This shout out will be done by saying the word "whoop" during the Second Veil. We ask that you say it with as much reverence and as much power as possible. Thank you.

*Amma has created the earth for Nommo to inhabit and brings him out of his state of spiritual slumber, during which she infused him with the covenant—knowledge of life.*

*Nommo awakens and looks upon the earth with awe.*

**Choir (as Celestial Beings, dark matter)**

Light, light, o light, pure light,  
come forth world.

This world spinning 'round,  
dancing, made of wonder,  
absolute, perfect design,  
made of perfect love.  
One Land, One River, One People,  
One Soul.

**Amma**

Wake up, Nommo,  
and look upon what  
has been formed  
by things  
both seen  
and unseen.  
It is your home, Nommo,  
made in the image of you.  
At its center  
there beats a heart of fire  
to feed all that now lives  
upon this form  
called Earth.

*Please turn the page quietly.*

From the heart of fire  
comes an aura  
that will keep the winds of the sun  
from turning all that was made  
into dust.  
And surrounding your earthen temples  
there is an aura as well  
of my Love, it is made.

**Nommo**

Is it a dream, Amma,  
this sight I now behold?  
How can it be?  
How divine  
the dancing blue miracle  
spinning before me.  
O how great you are.  
Breathless wonder,  
I thank you.

**Amma**

Its light, I am  
in it.  
We are one.  
There I will always be a mirror  
to remind you  
of who you  
truly are.

**Nommo**

How can it be,  
this spinning blue mystery?  
Look how it dances with the sun.  
Now I will dance with her forever  
the Dance of Thanks for my Life.

**Choir (as Celestial Beings)**

Sacred blue orb,  
spinning, dancing.  
One River of life  
flowing in you.

Beautiful red river  
flowing with life.

**Nommo**

The sound,  
the fragrance of you, Amma,

makes me weep with joy!  
This earth you have created,  
now spinning before me,  
the oceans, hills, the streams,  
the rivers, the mountains,  
the valleys, the creatures  
of wings, skin,  
fins, and fur—  
the many stars,  
the peaceful night,  
the sacred drum  
beating inside of me!

**Choir (as the New Beings)**

There is a song  
inside of you.  
It is older  
than time and space.  
It can teach you  
all things of life.  
Listen quietly to its healing tones  
of peace and divine joy.  
Silent rapture, eternal bliss.

**Nommo**

This timeless  
covenant of life  
you have given to me  
is but proof  
that your love  
has no measure.  
If the same sun  
that feeds the skyward trees,  
you have placed at the crown of my head  
to nourish the garden  
of eternal mind.

Thank you for the blessings of Life, Amma.  
Thank you for the gift of being.  
Thank you for the world before me.  
Thank you for the life within me.  
So I dance the dance of thanksgiving.  
I dance the dance of re-healing.  
I dance the dance of redemption.  
I dance the dance of mercy.  
I dance the dance of freedom.  
I dance the dance of peace.  
I dance the dance of love and of life.

### **Choir (as Humans; Sopranos, Altos, Tenors)**

Thank you  
for the gift of life,  
the sound, the sight,  
the smell, the touch,  
the pain, the joy,  
the tears, the smiles,  
the moon, the stars,  
the day, the night,  
the black, the blue,  
the yellow, the green,  
the brown, the white,  
the snake, the fly,  
the hawk, the dove,  
the ice, the sand,  
the stone, the wind,  
the storm, the calm,  
the weak, the strong,  
the rich, the poor,  
the toil, the rest,  
the book, the sword,  
the womb, the seed,  
the love, the hate,  
the soul, the flesh,  
the river of blood,  
of life.

### **Choir (as Humans; Basses)**

Dance the gift of life  
around you.  
Praise the light from which  
you came,  
for heaven is the life  
within you.  
Each beat of your heart is proof  
so do not let it pass you by.  
The river of life flows within you,  
dancing, speaking,  
saying clearly in you  
flows the one river of life.

### **Choir (as the New Beings)**

There is a spirit  
living in you.  
It lives in the stars.  
It lives in the sea.  
River of one life.

Live each breath,  
each birth,  
each sunrise, sunset,  
winter, spring,  
fall, struggle, mercy,  
heaven is now.

*Amma prepares to leave.*

### **Amma**

Nommo,  
I have given all I know to give to you,  
all the many jewels of creation.  
The herbs, the fruit,  
and the grain  
for your well-being.  
Of all the food of life,  
none will be to your soul  
like those of peace and love.  
Without the eternal wealth  
of peace and love  
the truth of your spirit  
will always be  
a breath or more away from you.  
Ev'rything has been made  
to bring healing and affirmation  
to your body and soul.  
You are surrounded by life, Nommo.  
Ev'rything is within you.

### **Nommo**

How could it be, Amma?  
How could such as you ever be?  
How could there be a name  
capable of describing  
who and what you are?

### **Amma**

Many of your seed will give me names  
from the spirit and their flesh.  
They will give me names.  
Keep these words closer to you  
than the clouds are to the sky, Nommo.  
Don't worry to define me.  
I am ev'rywhere for you to know.

**Choir (as people of Jonah working in the fields, building railroads and levees)**

Whoop!

**Amma**

I am the part that, uh  
never dies and, uh  
I am the tears falling  
from your eyes.  
I am the song that will  
heal the nation and, uh,  
I am the dance of your  
liberation.

**Choir**

Freedom. Justice. Mercy.  
Serving.

**Amma**

Freedom is my name.  
Justice is my name.  
Mercy is my name.  
Serving is my name.

**Choir**

Whoop!

**Amma**

I am the bread given,  
not withheld and, uh,  
I am the water going  
from the pail and, uh,  
I am the song that will  
heal the nation,  
I am the key to your  
liberation.

**Choir**

I am that I am  
your child, your slaves,  
speak truth,  
cry out.

**Amma**

I am the child  
you do not see,  
the people

you think your slaves.  
I am the voice  
for those  
who cannot speak,  
the cries for those  
who cannot weep.

**Choir**

Whoop!

**Amma**

I am the day and, uh,  
I am the night and, uh,  
I am the power that, uh,  
makes things right.  
I am the one that, uh,  
gold can't buy and, uh,  
I am the tongue that, uh,  
cannot lie.  
I am the sigh of the prophet.  
I am the prayer of the midwife.  
I am the sound of chains  
falling from your hands.  
Healing is my name  
and peace I do proclaim.  
I am the womb  
of time and space,  
the blood of the human race.

**Nommo**

Amma.

**Amma**

I am the beauty of your midnight skin,  
the lines etched upon the sky  
by a solitary bird.  
Life is my name.

**Choir**

I am that I am.

**Nommo**

Now I see the truth of it:  
The oneness of the blood we share  
from the same womb.  
We all are born  
a sacred light,  
a river of one.

**Choir (as the New Beings of Enlightenment)**

River of life flowing in you,

born from the spring of mystery.  
River dancing  
in your temple  
as was taught  
by timeless forces.  
Affirmation of your  
being.

Energy.  
Light streams,  
flows  
through you.

**Amma**

I am the living word,  
not bound  
by pen or page.  
What I am  
cannot be  
lost, sold,  
stolen,  
or kept in a box.

I am what you feel  
when you say  
"I am sorry."  
I am what you become  
when you say  
"I forgive you."

**Nommo**

How clear  
you are to me now,  
the absolute truth,  
that you are!

**Amma**

It is not a name  
I require of you.  
To know my name  
you only need to look  
with a still  
and quiet eye,

silent tongue.

Then you will not only  
know my name,  
you will become  
my name.

**Nommo**

You are ev'rywhere.  
Covenant of life.

**Choir (as Amma)**

I am ev'rywhere  
to know.  
I am all.  
In your soul  
flows the  
all-knowing,  
the true rivers  
of fire,  
rivers of wind,  
rivers of stars,  
one river of  
life.

**Amma**

Free will I have given you, Nommo,  
to pass on to those  
who will come from you,  
so that by their will  
they may follow,  
or not follow,  
this covenant of life  
between us.  
Their fate will depend upon  
what they see  
when they look at each other.  
If for whatever reason  
they begin to deny my presence  
in the aura of one of them,  
then the earth will  
cease to be their mother  
and become their tomb.  
And their only path to restoration  
will be to see my presence  
in the essence  
of each another.

**Nommo**

With all I am

I will comply.  
Rivers of life.  
There is no great gift.

**Amma**

Below your feet, Nommo,  
there are rivers of fire,  
and around your body  
there are rivers of wind,  
and above your head  
there are rivers of stars.  
Yet, none proclaims my love  
as does the river flowing  
in your veins,  
not of many  
but of one,  
the one river  
of life.

**Veil Three—One People: The Veil of  
Eternal Being**

*With the knowledge Amma has  
bequeathed to Nommo, he now feels  
confident that he can honor and pass on  
the covenant of life to his offspring as was  
required by Amma.*

**Choir (as the New Being)**

One land,  
one soul.

**Nommo**

Now is the light.  
I can begin to live  
the true life  
that I am,  
that I seek  
by my words,  
by my deeds,  
by the seeds  
that I sow  
in the soil  
of all time.  
By the grace  
I have seen  
and have shared.  
By the will of the fire  
in my spine,

by the cosmic elixir  
divine,  
by the omnipotence  
of my mind,  
by the sound  
of the wind  
in my soul,  
singing light into light  
as was told  
by the light of the  
light that I am.  
Not of fear,  
not of hate,  
not of death,  
not of things  
that are bought,  
lost, or sold,  
not the riches  
of silver or gold,  
but of light  
from the light  
as was told.

Swirling seeds  
of subatomic matter  
bursting forth  
from cosmic dust  
and sacred night  
of perfect square,  
of two,  
of magnetic pull,  
balanced force,  
and gravitation,  
energy,  
life force,  
light being,  
supreme being  
made visible,  
behold!

**Choir (as the New Being, yet to  
evolve and come into the sphere of  
the earth)**

Now in the light  
you can begin to live,  
in the light  
that you are,  
that you seek,  
by your words,

by your deeds,  
 by the seeds  
 that you sow  
 in the soil  
 of all time.  
 By the will of the fire  
 in your spine,  
 by the cosmic elixir  
 divine,  
 by the omnipotence  
 of your mind,  
 by the sound,  
 of the wind  
 in your soul,  
 singing light into light  
 as was told  
 by the light of the  
 light that you are.  
 Not of fear,  
 not of hate,  
 not of death,  
 not of things  
 that are bought,  
 lost, or sold,  
 not the riches  
 of silver or gold,  
 but of light  
 from the light  
 as was told.

*Amma bids farewell.*

### **Amma**

Farewell, Nommo.

### **Nommo**

Don't leave me, Amma.

### **Amma**

We will always be one  
 in spirit.  
 Remember to let peace  
 be your master.  
 Let grace become  
 your bed,  
 and love all  
 that you see.  
 Then joy  
 will be your feast.  
 Then time  
 will become your bride.

### **Nommo**

Aural beauty.  
 The seed of love  
 I now carry.  
 The whole  
 of the earth  
 my fertile field.  
 Ancient songs  
 of shimmering light,  
 I shall sing into the souls  
 of all beings.

### **Choir**

One Land,  
 One River,  
 One People.

*With a loving heart I would like to thank the Creator, the spiritual guidance of my great-great grandmother, my family, and my teacher, Mr. James Wilson. I cherish the collaboration of love and enlightenment shared with maestros Yan and Dumpson. An ocean of thanks to this soulful, powerful, Orchestra and staff. Thank you Rodrick and Laquita for believing. To the remarkable choirs of Morgan, Delaware, and Lincoln, and to the genius of their conductors, Dr. Conway, Dr. Mallory, and Dr. Coleman, I send you a deep old time religion embrace. The Ashe Cultural Arts Center of New Orleans founded by Sister Carol BeBell and Brother Douglass Redd allowed me to work in their glorious space for many months, to which I am wordlessly grateful. And to my eternal friend and sister, Carole Haas Gravagno, I thank you for the heaven that is the Nest. Sumai, thank you for seeing to it that I did not go completely insane. Haile, Eternal, Krystal, Bill, Shawn, Carter, Martin, Sonia, Nile, Ron, Emilio, Luther, Lorene, Valerie—it would not be without you. And to all of you present, may you be increasingly enriched by the light that you are.*

—Hannibal Lokumbe  
 Man of Jonah



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