

October 17, 2026

7:30 pm

“Mahler Symphony No. 1”

America the Beautiful

Samuel A. Ward – music (1848 - 1903)

Katharine Lee Bates – lyrics (1859 - 1929)

Proclamation for Orchestra

Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)

Orchestrated by Phillip Ramey (b. 1939)

Clarinet Concerto

Russell Platt (b. 1965)

- I. Fast*
- II. Lento: soave, sostenuto*

Mariam Adam, Clarinet

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 1 in D Major (with ‘Blumine’ Movement from original version)

Gustav Mahler (1860 - 1911)

- I. Langsam; Schleppen; Wie ein Naturlaut — Sehr gemächlich*
- II. Blumine: Sehr allegretto*
- III. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell*
- IV. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen —*
- V. Stürmisch bewegt*

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“Mahler Symphony No. 1”

America the Beautiful

Samuel A. Ward – music (b. Newark, New Jersey, December 28, 1848; d. Newark, New Jersey, September 28, 1903)

Katharine Lee Bates – lyrics (b. Falmouth, Massachusetts, August 12, 1859; d. Wellesley, Massachusetts, March 28, 1929)

This is a truly melodious song and is always performed with cherished devotion to our country. What a wonderful way to begin the 2025-26 LSO Concert Season! The song is one of the most popular of the many American patriotic songs, a wonderful American hymn.

Ace Collins writes in his book, *SONGS SUNG – Red, White, and Blue*, “Scores of editorials stated that *America the Beautiful* reflected the complete American story. Perhaps many Americans had decided it was the nation’s hymn.”

Katharine Lee Bates, a professor at Wellesley College in the Boston area, is best remembered as a patriot. She gave our country one of its most memorable anthems: Ms. Bates composed the lyrics to *America the Beautiful*.

Collins continues, “In 1893, Bates was invited to journey west to teach a summer session at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. On her way riding the train from the East Coast of Massachusetts to the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, she viewed the nation’s most fertile farmland.”

While in Colorado she hiked up Pike’s Peak seeing flowers, trees, and mighty snowcapped peaks. “She looked east and saw the flat wheat fields, towns, rivers, roads, and tiny farmhouses. When she turned west, she observed a wall of mountains that were so high they seemed to touch the heavens.

“In those moments, the young woman was not just awed but inspired. The words of the poem came to her during these moments. All the wonder of America seemed to be displayed there, with the sea-like expanse. Bates picked up her notebook and jotted down each phrase that flew into her mind,” continues Collins.

“After some polishing, Bates sent her poem *America the Beautiful* to a magazine named the *Congregationalist* which published it on July 4, 1895.”

Another author, C. A. Browne, writes in the book, *The Story of Our National Ballads*, that “*America the Beautiful* tugs at the heart more than any other song which America has accepted as a proud possession. Its purpose was solely to put into words the love for the varied natural beauties of the land and the ideal of brotherhood held by its citizens ‘from sea to shining sea.’”

In 1904, Clarence A. Barbour, a Baptist minister, set the poem to music, a tune called “Materna.” This piece (Materna) was written by Samuel Ward, a Newark, New Jersey church musician and organist, in

1882. Ward studied under several teachers in New York City before taking his position as organist at Grace Episcopal Church in his hometown in 1880.

"First performed at the Lake Avenue Baptist Church in Boston, the newly merged lyrics and music quickly made their way into other venues," continues Collins. "In 1910, when Barbour placed this version of *America the Beautiful* into his best-selling *Fellowship Hymns*, the union seemed to be everlasting."

C. A. Browne continues, "In 1922 the composition was selected by the General Federation of Women's Clubs as its official song. *America the Beautiful* is unique among national songs in that it is a true hymn rather than a mere patriotic song."

It was Bates' adventurous spirit that led to this masterpiece that is still sung from sea to shining sea.

"It is often said of the poem that it expresses for the millions of Americans their loftiest ideal of patriotism. For them, it rejoices in the gifts of their great country, it honors their dead, it pays homage to their past, it utters their aspirations, and it lifts their prayers. It is truly an American anthem," writes Dorothy Burgess, a recent biographer of Bates.



Katharine Lee Bates



Samuel A. Ward

Proclamation for Orchestra

Aaron Copland (b. New York City, New York, November 14, 1900; d. North Tarrytown, New York, December 2, 1990)

Orchestrated by Phillip Ramey (b. Elmhurst, Illinois, September 12, 1939)

Aaron Copland has been called the "Dean of American Music." He was an American composer, critic, writer, teacher, pianist, and conductor of his own and other American music. After some initial studies with composer Rubin Goldmark (who was an outstanding student among composer Antonín Dvořák's students when he taught in the United States), Copland went to Paris, where he studied for three years with noted composer and teacher Nadia Boulanger, whose eclectic approach to music inspired his own

broad taste, especially in his compositions. "In fact, he frequently included material he had written (under Boulanger) years earlier," writes author Howard Pollack in his book, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*.

Léonie Rosenstiel writes in her book, *Nadia Boulanger: A Life in Music*, that Boulanger and Copland stayed regularly in touch with each other including scheduling concerts and regular performances of each other's music as well as other composers, including Roger Sessions (another Boulanger student).

Copland's familiar style was vast, open, conjuring Americana. *Copland sought to bridge the gap* between contemporary composers and the public during the Great Depression and World War II. He wrote "open" harmonies which avoid thicker, European-style dissonance to create a sense of vast, empty landscapes. He also seamlessly blended indigenous American idioms, including cowboy songs, Shaker hymns such as "Simple Gifts" in *Appalachian Spring* (which the La Crosse Symphony performed this past September), and Latin American rhythms.

Later, Copland became a frequent guest conductor in the United States and made a series of recordings of his music in London. He also made a record with the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO). He spent much time at the Tanglewood Music Center near Lenox, Massachusetts, the home of the BSO.

Phillip Ramey, a composer, pianist, and writer on music, orchestrated Aaron Copland's work for solo piano called *Proclamation for Piano*. Ramey was a close friend and associate of Aaron Copland from 1967 until Copland's death in 1990.

In 1985, Ramey presented the work *Proclamation for Orchestra (Orchestration of Aaron Copland's Proclamation for Piano)*. Officially, *Proclamation for Orchestra*, Ramey's orchestration of Copland's *Proclamation for Piano*, received an unusual bi-coastal premiere: by the New York Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. (The New York Philharmonic concert was telecast as "Aaron Copland's 85th Birthday," episode 61 of the *Live from Lincoln Center* telecasts.)

Proclamation

"Copland's final work, the piano piece *Proclamation*, was completed in November 1982, at my urging," writes Ramey. "By then, Copland, suffering from symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, was incapable of any sustained or original composition, so that both brief works are based on earlier material."

Copland's 1973 sketch, with the working title *Improvisation*, was the basis for *Proclamation for Piano*. In the early 1980s, this intriguing sketch, for what had been intended to be a large-scale piano work, consisted of only thirty-five bars, and Copland enjoyed playing it.

When *Proclamation* was published, Copland described it in a note in the score as a "rather stern-sounding piece in what has not inappropriately been termed my 'laying-down-the-law' style."

dramonline.org/albums/copland-piano-music-romantic-modern/notes

Pollack writes about Copland's *Proclamation*: "In the late 1970s and early 1980s, his compositional career essentially behind him, Copland published three short piano pieces, all based on earlier sketches, at the promptings of composer Phillip Ramey."

“Proclamation offers a valuable glimpse into Copland’s final musical thoughts, the music is, apparently, the last he ever wrote,” continues Pollack. “Copland often had the sheet music on the piano stand and would occasionally play it upon request. At Ramey’s urging, he completed it as the two-minute *Proclamation*.

Pollack continues, “*Proclamation* is a short, moody piece, but updated to allow for kinds of tonal and formal ambiguity characteristic of the composer’s late piano style. Although the piece contains a moment of nostalgic sweetness at its center, the overall mood is quite restless and dark; the work ends abruptly with a pounding note in the bass. Copland retained his strong, forceful musical personality to the very end.”

Pollack continues, “Copland wanted to write new works, but he had run out of fresh ideas. ‘It was exactly as if someone had simply turned off a faucet,’ said Copland. ‘You have to get ideas that excite you,’ he explained to Ramey.”

“Copland dedicated *Proclamation* to Ramey and authorized his idiomatic orchestration.”



Aaron Copland

Clarinet Concerto

Russell Platt (b. New York City, New York, April 7, 1965)

- I. Fast*
- II. Lento: soave, sostenuto*

Mariam Adam, Clarinet

Russell Platt serves as the Adjunct Associate Professor of Music and Coordinator of Music as a Second Major or Minor at Vanderbilt University – Blair School of Music.

Dr. Platt holds a BA from Oberlin College, M Phil from Cambridge, and a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. He also attended the Curtis Institute of Music. Platt’s principal teachers were Ned Rorem, Dominick Argento (University of Minnesota), Judith Lang Zaimont (University of Minnesota), Alexander Goehr, and Edward J. Miller.

The recipient of several composer residencies at Yaddo, (the leading nonprofit retreat in Saratoga Springs, New York, for artists and writers), Platt has also had the privilege of working at the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, (located in a 15th century castle in the Umbrian region of Italy, Civitella is a residency program for international writers, composers, and visual artists), and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. His music has been honored with both the Charles Ives Scholarship and Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Tennessee Arts Commission Individual Artist Fellowship (2023), a Copland House Fellowship, a McKnight Fellowship from the American Composers Forum, a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship, and an ASCAP Young Composers Award.

His works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, and vocalists have also been performed by such distinguished ensembles and soloists as the Borromeo String Quartet, Escher String Quartet, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra Ensembles, Brooklyn Art Song Society, American Modern Ensemble, the Wisconsin Philharmonic, the Dale Warland Singers, the Metropolitan Opera tenor Paul Appleby, and the violinist Frank Almond.

Recent performances include the world premières of “Madrigal” for alto flute and violin (at the New Year’s New Music concerts at Bargemusic) and of his Robert Frost song “After Apple-Picking” (at Brooklyn Art Song Society); commissions include a work for the Blair Woodwind Quintet and a piece for solo bassoon to commemorate the centenary of the Curtis Institute.

His most recent work, “Arizona Echoes,” was commissioned by the College Band Directors National Association and premiered in April of 2025 by Thomas Verrier and the Vanderbilt Wind Ensemble.

Before joining the Vanderbilt faculty, Platt was a senior editor and critic for classical music at *The New Yorker* (2000-2018). He won the ASCAP Deems Taylor Award for Music Criticism in 2010.

Deeply rooted in the legacy of Romanticism, the music of Russell Platt (b. 1965) is narrative-driven, formally dynamic, intellectually active, and frequently engages with works from other mediums.

His *Symphony in Three Movements (For Clyfford Still)* (2019-20), commissioned and premiered by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and JoAnn Falletta, is a response to four paintings by the legendary Abstract Expressionist artist held by Buffalo’s beloved Albright Knox Art Gallery.

The Revised Clarinet Concerto

Mariam Adam, Blair School of Music associate professor of clarinet at Vanderbilt University, recently premiered the revised and rescored version of this *Clarinet Concerto* at Maverick Concerts in Woodstock, New York.

Platt, originally wrote the piece in 2002-03 for the Wisconsin Philharmonic and Russell Dagon (the late principal clarinetist of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra), commissioned by the American Composers Forum. Written in the shadow of the 9/11 disaster, which Platt experienced while living in New York as a journalist, the *Concerto* is an exciting, virtuoso work scored with strings, piano and percussion which moves freely between Romantic, modernist, and American jazz idioms.

Soloist Mariam Adam said, “One of the best ways to ensure a piece of music will have longevity is working with the composer, which is why I was delighted to learn Professor Platt had a clarinet concerto he wanted to show me a couple years ago.” Adam states, his piece is a rollicking journey of different moods, ‘sass’, and extensive use of the clarinet in all its ranges. The interactive moments between

soloist and ensemble convey an earnest dialogue that is at one point interrupted in a capitulating moment by the percussion.”

Remembering 9/11, that scary time, Adam adds, “The source of inspiration for this piece was a time that we were both in New York City, when the common experience of tragedy, fear, and then unity brought millions of people together. I had such a fun time preparing for this debut of this concerto and can’t wait to perform it again!”

The composer concurred, noting, “This piece was originally written for the superb principal clarinet of the Milwaukee Symphony, but the revised version has found its ideal interpreter in Mariam, whose virtuosity has been shaped by her broad experience as a musician fluent in the varied styles of the American continent.”

CLARINET CONCERTO PROGRAM NOTES BY RUSSELL PLATT, COMPOSER

“This piece was written in New York City in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, and its original version was scored with a grandeur appropriate to that circumstance. Two decades on, I have decided that the work’s tragic essence should be articulated in a more refined format that puts as much emphasis on architecture as on emotion.”

Its new scoring, for chamber strings with percussion and piano—dedicated to Mariam Adam— has a more abstract, neo-classical quality that evokes the era of Aaron Copland and other composers who forged a uniquely American classical-music identity in a time of national strain. This is appropriate, since while the piece was written in homage to the Copland *Clarinet Concerto*, my concerto reverses Copland’s two-movement, slow-fast plan, abandoning the older composer’s jazzy optimism for something darker and more ritualistic. This new version was premiered by the soloist Mariam Adam, the Manhattan Chamber Players, and the conductor Alexander Platt at the Maverick Concert Hall, Woodstock, N.Y., on July 6, 2025. — *Russell Platt, 2025*



Russell Platt

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 1 in D Major (with ‘Blumine’ Movement from original version) Gustav Mahler (b. Bohemia, July 7, 1860; d. Vienna, Austria, May 18, 1911)

- I. Langsam; Schleppen; Wie ein Naturlaut — Sehr gemächlich**
- II. Blumine: Sehr allegretto**
- III. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell**
- IV. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen —**
- V. Stürmisch bewegt**

Original movements as listed in German.

- I. Langsam, schleppend, immer sehr gemächlich
'Blumine'***
- II. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell, recht gemächlich, a Trio—a Ländler***
- III. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen, sehr einfach und schlicht wie eine
Volksweise, and wieder etwas bewegter, wie im Anfang, "Bruder Jacob"***
- IV. Stürmisch bewegt – Energisch***

- The first movement is in modified sonata form in 4/4 time throughout. It begins with a slow introduction representing the gradual 'awakening of nature from a long winter's sleep.'
 - The second is a scherzo and trio based on a Ländler, a traditional Austrian waltz.
 - The third is a slower funeral march with a lyrical central section.
 - The fourth serves as an expansive finale.
- (This information and listening guide come from the Utah Symphony, the first organization to record all the Mahler symphonies.)

utahsymphony.org/explore/2014/09/mahler-1-listening-guide/

Instrumentation - the orchestra is large

- 4 flutes (3rd and 4th doubling piccolos, 2nd doubling piccolo in movements 1 and 4 briefly)
- 4 oboes (3rd doubling cor anglais, 4th used only in the fourth movement)
- 4 B♭, A, C, E♭ clarinets (3rd doubling bass clarinet and E♭ clarinet)
- 3 bassoons (3rd doubling contrabassoon)
- 7 horns
- 5 trumpets (3rd of which is offstage in movement 1, the 5th used only in the fourth movement)
- 4 trombones (4th used only in the fourth movement)
- 1 tuba
- 6 timpani (two players, 2nd player appears only in the fourth movement)
- bass drum (with a cymbal attached; and cymbals (crash and suspended); triangle; tam-tam
- harp
- strings

How lucky we are at tonight's La Crosse Symphony Orchestra (LSO) concert to be able to hear a complete performance of this work, including an original movement called "Blumine" (the goddess of flowers) which was deleted in later versions. LSO Conductor Alexander Platt writes when planning the 2026-27 Concert Series, "We will perform the adorable discarded second movement from the original version of the *Symphony No. 1* by Mahler, as my first teacher in New Haven – Frank Brieff, the Music Director of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra – actually made the very first recording of the 'Blumine' movement, in 1970."

Mahler's Early Life

Gustav Mahler was born on July 7, 1860, the second child of Bernhard and Marie Mahler. "Ten more brothers and sisters were to follow him, most of them doomed to pass away in their early youth. The town of his birth was Kalist, in Southern Bohemia, a purely Czech settlement," writes composer Ernst

Krenek (1900 – 1991) in a biographical essay. “The nearby township of Iglau, situated at the Western edge of Moravia, is however, largely inhabited by Germans.” Incidentally, Krenek had strong qualifications to write about Mahler in that he married Mahler’s daughter, Anna.

“Shortly after Mahler’s birth the family moved into Iglau where he grew up in predominately German surroundings,” Krenek continued. “His first music instructors, however, including a piano instructor, were Czech. He attended grammar school and then the public high school with emphasis on classical languages.”

“However, it was his outstanding musical proficiency which caused his parents to send him to Vienna in 1875. Here he concentrated on his musical studies at the Conservatory of the Society of Friends of Music, which later became the Imperial Academy of Music,” adds Krenek. “He then graduated and entered the University of Vienna in 1877 where for two years he took courses in philosophy, history of art, and music.”

He was a successful student at the Vienna Conservatory. “Some of his chamber music compositions were awarded prizes by the faculty,” writes Krenek. “His musical studies brought him in contact with composer Anton Bruckner, an acquaintance which probably was of great influence in the formation of Mahler’s personality.”

Deryck Cooke (British musician, musicologist, broadcaster and Gustav Mahler expert) in a booklet he wrote for the BBC’s (British Broadcasting Corporation) celebrations of the centenary of Mahler’s birth writes, “Mahler’s stature was then moving forward in Germany and Spain and beginning even in France and Italy.”

Mahler’s Career

As we learn more about *Symphony No. 1*, let’s view some background of the composer. Conductor Bruno Schlessinger, better known as the conductor Bruno Walter (1876-1962), met Gustav Mahler who became his mentor and friend. “Bruno Walter would become one of Mahler’s most ardent champions and one of the great interpreters of his orchestral repertoire,” writes Erik Ryding in an introduction to the book, *Gustav Mahler*, by Bruno Walter. “Walter’s thorough knowledge of Mahler’s music, including *Symphony No. 1*, and his role as Mahler’s close friend and confidant make him an important source of the composer’s life and personality.”

Walter worked closely with Gustav Mahler, whose music he helped to establish in the symphonic repertory. Walter ultimately held major positions with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Salzburg Festival, Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Staatsoper Unter den Linden and Deutsche Oper Berlin, among others, and made recordings of historical and artistic significance. Walter is widely considered to be one of the great conductors of the 20th century.

“An elemental musical instinct lies at the bottom of Mahler’s creative work,” writes Walter. “While the spiritual undertone of his music was at first a decidedly romantic one, his subsequent development shows the conflict of mixture of romantic and classic elements. At the time when he wrote his *First Symphony*, he was thoroughly under the spell of the symphonic idea.” Walter continues, “In it the mood of his soul, engendered by memory and present feeling, produces themes and influences the general direction of their development, without introducing itself forcibly into the musical issue.”

"It is true that, in the *First Symphony* and especially in its third and fourth movements, the music is thoroughly colored and influenced by occurrences in Mahler's life," concludes Walter. (*Walter, Bruno. 1991. Gustav Mahler. Trans. L.W. Lindt. New ed. Quartet Books*).

"Mahler, like Berlioz, Wagner, Sibelius, and others, in no sense 'orchestrated' his music, but conceived it straightaway for orchestra," writes Deryck Cooke in his complete book *Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music*. "The significance of the material is inseparable from its instrumental form." Cooke continues, "Mahler's orchestration is his most admired feature, and it speaks for itself."

Author Deryck Cooke continues, "He always insisted that his music was *about* something. He once wrote about his first two symphonies that 'My whole life is contained in them: I have set down in them my experience and suffering. My creative works and my existence are so closely interwoven that, if my life flowed as peacefully as a stream through a meadow, I would no longer be able to compose.'"

Several wealthy New Yorkers brought Mahler to the Philharmonic as principal conductor in 1909 and expanded the season from 18 concerts to 54, which included a tour of New England. Interestingly, while Mahler was a major opera conductor in Europe, the New York Philharmonic was the only symphonic orchestra where Mahler worked as music director without any opera responsibilities (1909-1911). He conducted the final, four-movement version of this symphony on December 16, 1909, with the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall. He also conducted several works for the first time in his career in Carnegie Hall and introduced audiences to his compositions. In 1911, Mahler died unexpectedly.

Background of the *Symphony No. 1*

Jens Malte Fischer writes in his biography of Mahler, *Gustav Mahler* (translated by Stewart Spencer), "At the first performance in 1889, the work was called a 'Symphonic Poem in Two Parts' - five movements:

- I. Introduction and Allegro comodo
- II. Andante (later described as 'Blumine,' this movement about flowers and nature was removed at the time of the work's Berlin premiere in 1896)
- III. Scherzo
- IV. A la pompes funebres (here is heard a double-bass solo of 'Frère Jacques')
- V. Molto appassionato

"For the Hamburg performance in October 1893, (when he added the title, 'Titan') Mahler revised the work and discarded the term 'Symphonic Poem'. Not until the first printed edition of 1899 that the work was described as Mahler's *Symphony No. 1 in D Major*, and 'Titan' was removed" adds Fischer.

"In the opening movement, Mahler had struck out boldly in a new direction, and it seems that he sought to ensure that the final movement was more firmly embedded within the existing tradition," writes Fischer. Yet some people saw the symphony as an outstanding, inspired work.

Egon Gartenberg writes in his book, *Mahler: The Man and His Music*, that "he spent time when not composing during the summer by taking brisk walks alone for hours through the alpine landscape which he loved." Gartenberg continues quoting the composer, "'My work, this first symphony, is finished! It was flowing out of me like a mountain torrent!'"

“Blumine” Movement

The first three performances of Mahler’s *First Symphony* contained a serenade-like second movement titled Andante or “Blumine.” This is a German word for ‘the goddess of flowers.’ This movement received criticism and was later removed from the work by Mahler after its third performance in the Weimar, Germany, also being omitted from the first publication in 1899. Mahler’s *First Symphony* has been played as a work of four movements since the symphony’s fourth performance at the Berlin premiere which took place on March 16, 1896.

The “Blumine” movement was rediscovered by the biographer Donald Mitchell in 1966 while he was carrying out research for his Mahler biography in the Osborn Collection at Yale University. Mitchell the manuscript as a copy of the Hamburg version which included the “Blumine” movement.

The manuscript had previously been auctioned off at Sotheby’s by John C. Perrin in 1959. Perrin had inherited it from his mother, Jenny Feld, who had been a student of Mahler’s at the Vienna Conservatory in 1878. It was purchased at Sotheby’s by Mrs. James M. Osborn. who later donated the manuscript to the Osborn Collection of Yale University.

A year after Mitchell’s discovery, English composer and conductor Benjamin Britten gave the movement’s 20th-century premiere on June 18, 1967, at the Aldeburgh Festival, the first time the music had been heard since 1894. “Blumine” was first published in 1968 by the Theodore Presser Company.

“Blumine” has been either performed or eliminated in many different concert formats by conductors since its discovery and publication. Yet famous Mahler conductors such as Leonard Bernstein (New York Philharmonic), Georg Solti (Chicago Symphony), and Bernard Haitink (Amsterdam Concertgebouw) never performed “Blumine” as part of the symphony. Some of these conductors performed “Blumine” before or after the symphony, while others have performed it on its own or alongside Mahler's other works.

gustavmahler.com/symphonies/No1/Blumine-Movement.html



Gustav Mahler