



Dvořák Symphony No. 6

January 18, 2024 | 7:30 PM

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Barnett & Company Masterworks Series
DVOŘÁK SYMPHONY NO. 6

January 18, 2024 | 7:30 PM
Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium

KALENA BOVELL | conductor & Music Director Candidate

Video/audio recording of this concert is prohibited.

The program listed below has been altered since the orchestra's rehearsal time this week was limited from weather impacts. **Zhou Tian** | *Transcend* has been cut from the program

Leonard Bernstein Overture to Candide (5')
(1918 - 1990)

INTERMISSION
(5')

Antonín Dvořák Symphony No. 6 in D Major, Op. 60 (45')
(1841-1904)
I. *Allegro non tanto*
II. *Adagio*
III. *Scherzo, Presto*
IV. *Finale, Allegro con spirito*

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Artist Biography



Kalena Bovell

conductor & Music Director Candidate

With her distinctive voice as maestra, speaker, and poet, critics praise Panamanian-American conductor Kalena Bovell as “one of the brightest stars in classical music.” (Channel 3 News, Connecticut). Propelled by a steadfast commitment to musical excellence and community access, Bovell has rapidly ascended to international prominence. Her recent achievements include receiving the prestigious 2024 Sphinx Medal of Excellence—the highest honor bestowed by the Sphinx Organization—and being named a 2022-2024 Awardee of the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship. In a groundbreaking moment, Bovell etched her name in history in 2023 as the first Black woman to conduct an opera in Canada, conducting a world premiere reimagination of Scott Joplin’s *Treemonisha*.

Bovell's 2023-2024 season sees her traverse Canada, the U.S. and Switzerland: in North America, she will mark her debut performances with the Minnesota Orchestra, Louisiana Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony, Colorado Music Festival, Hamilton Philharmonic, and the Victoria Symphony. Also of note are return performances with the Oakland Symphony and Musikkollegium Winterthur following her 2022 debut with the namesake orchestra. Residencies this season include with University of the Pacific and Juilliard Pre-College Orchestra.

One of orchestral music’s marquee conductors, Bovell has blazed a formidable trail in just the past few years. On the Chineke! Orchestra’s 2022 album—*Coleridge-Taylor*, a celebration of the eponymous African-British composer—Bovell shined as a featured conductor. Among the critical praise for the album released on Chineke! Records, *The Financial Times* penned that Bovell’s musical interpretation “overflows with descriptive imagination.” Apart from the album, her career has had particularly memorable moments, including leading the Chineke! Orchestra at the BBC Proms and conducting Kevin Thomas’s *Firebird* with the Collage Dance Collective as a part of the Kennedy Center’s “Reframing the Narrative”. Reviewing her BBC performance, ArtsDesk stated simply: “Never let her go.”

Until 2023, Bovell made her home in Memphis as Assistant Conductor of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and Conductor of the MSO Youth Orchestra. A longtime guest conductor of the ensemble, she led some of the MSO's more memorable events, from sharing the stage with *Hamilton* star Leslie Odom Jr. to conducting former Music Director Mei-Ann Chen's farewell concerts. Prior to her four year tenure with Memphis, Bovell's professional debut came as the Chicago Sinfonietta's Assistant Conductor in 2015, followed by cover conducting roles with St. Louis Symphony and Hartford Symphony. However, her 2018-2019 appointment as the Music Director at the Civic Orchestra of New Haven would serve as a first marker of Bovell's potential. There, she elevated Civic Orchestra's musicality and the diversity of its repertoire, all while increasing the size of its roster. Further, she made her mark on the region through numerous guest conducting appearances, including Hartford Opera Theater, leading two short operas in its annual "New in November" festival.

Much of Bovell's artistic philosophy stems from her relatively delayed entry to the classical music world. Though Kalena showed promise as a violinist, a lack of musical resources meant her first private lesson would come at 18. Her experience far behind the typical conservatory-trained musician, Kalena found a new home as a conductor, and worked six jobs to fund the many plane tickets, workshops, and conducting lessons required to excel. Hoping to inspire younger musicians, Bovell shares this unique journey to professional conducting as often as possible. Among those who have heard her story are the BBC, the League of American Orchestras, the Sphinx Organization, Tennessee Music Education Association, and the III International Women Conductor's Symposium, among many other radio, webinar, and podcast appearances.

A Los Angeles native, Bovell received a Master of Music and Graduate Professional Diploma in Orchestral Conducting from The Hartt School, where she studied with Edward Cumming. She holds a Bachelor of Music Education from the College of the Performing Arts at Chapman University, which honored her as a Distinguished Alumni in 2021. Outside conducting, Bovell is a published poet and has increasingly interwoven her poetry with her music career. Her original poem, "Tethered Voices," was performed by the University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra and set to music by James Lees III.

Kalena makes her home in Memphis, Tennessee, where she enjoys cooking, writing poetry, weight training, and trying new pizza places.

Program Notes

Overture to Candide

Overture to *Candide*

Leonard Bernstein

(b. August 25, 1918 in Lawrence, Mass.; d. October 14, 1990 in New York City)

"How do I love thee? Let me count the ways" is not a hyperbolic way to begin to talk about the luminous gifts Bernstein brought to American music. He was a charismatic conductor, an inspiring music educator, and a composer of unparalleled versatility. Oddly Bernstein probably would have traded it all to be America's Beethoven, but his talent as a composer was greatest at writing music that had popular underpinnings and that talent, great though it is, is just a part of the whole package.

Candide was Bernstein's effort to write a serious opera. He first enlisted James Agee whose work he discarded and then selected Lillian Hellman to write the script. The libretto was given to poet Richard Wilbur who wrote the lion's share, New York's society critic and satirist Dorothy Parker, a very young Stephen Sondheim, and several other stars.

Bernstein imagined opera singers as he wrote his score, but the venue available to him was Broadway and Broadway musical singers rose to the occasion, acing the technical requirements. The Lillian Hellman script and the relatively complex music seemed to bewilder enough theatergoers that *Candide* ran for 73 performances—respectable, but not a hit by New York standards.

The music of the overture gives vignettes of many of the tunes in the opera and follows a sonata-form as reliably as Mozart's best. Jazzy syncopations and shifting meters keep the listener a little off balance. Nevertheless it is all a fine entertainment that sprints to the end.

The *Candide* Overture is a concert-hall favorite and its persistence helps explain why the opera has had regular revivals. Voltaire's satiric novella about "the best of all possible worlds" is worthy of Bernstein's effort and his effort is a fitting tribute to Voltaire's classic.

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Symphony No. 6 in D Major, Op. 60

Symphony No. 6 in D Major, Op. 60

Antonín Dvořák

(b. September 8, 1841 near Prague; d. May 1, 1904 in Prague)

Written in 1880, Symphony No. 6 stands at the crossroads of Dvořák's personal connection with the eminent German composer, Johannes Brahms, and his own Czech roots. There's a tale to tell about how a Czech composer, befriended by a German composer, wrote a symphony for an Austrian orchestra. It's complicated.

By 1877 Dvořák had attracted the attention of Brahms (German, but living in Vienna). Brahms' support got Dvořák an in with Simrock, Brahms publisher in Berlin. Dvořák's first publication with Simrock, was a book of Slavonic dances that were very successful and that Brahms loved. Brahms' connections to the Vienna Philharmonic led to a Dvořák premiere in 1879. The Vienna Philharmonic conductor Hans Richter was enthusiastic and urged Dvořák to write a symphony for his orchestra.

Dvořák dived in and finished the 6th Symphony in October 1880. Instead of the premiere he expected in December 1880, Dvořák began to get excuses and evasion from Richter. The truth turned out to be that the orchestra players balked at playing the music of a foreigner, relatively little known there, in two consecutive seasons. So the work finally had its debut in Prague in March 1881 and Richter, to whom the work is dedicated, conducted it in London in 1882. Almost inconceivably, the Vienna Philharmonic didn't program it until 1942. Simrock at least published it on schedule but called it Symphony No. 1 because it was the first Dvořák symphony published. Today it is No. 6 based on scholarship by Otakar Šourek (1883-1956) who ordered all the symphonies by composition date.

The first movement has a graceful lilt to it. In the same key (D major) and meter (3/4) as Brahms' 2nd symphony from just three years before in 1877 and with an equally sunny disposition, it must be homage to Dvořák's good friend.

Of the very slow second movement Šourek said it “has the quality of a softly yearning nocturne and of an ardently passionate intermezzo.” The woodwinds have many fine solo moments and the French horns also get their melodic moments—a bit unusual in Dvořák.

The third movement is called a scherzo but subtitled furiant—more to the point. The furiant is a Bohemian dance form, rapidly shifting between 2/4 and 3/4 rhythm. The furiant's beginning and end are aggressive and heavily accented. Although this is quintessential Dvořák, Brahms must have loved it as he was famous for his mixing duple and triple meter figures. The middle trio is much more relaxed and features piccolo solos.

The final movement also corresponds to Brahms' 2nd in instrumentation, tempo, key, and meter—a clear sign of homage to Brahms—and at the beginning, the melody is generous and decorous like the opening of the first movement. These moments return, but much of the movement crosses into boisterousness Brahms might have found unseemly and ends with positively electric exuberance.

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Contact: steve@trecorde.net

Musicians

Tonight's Musicians

Violin 1

Joshua Holritz
Nicholas Naegele
David Katz
Nick Hoy
Nathan Banks
Jasper Sewell
Christy Song
Bram Margoless
Matthew Oshida
J.P. Brien-Slack
William Ronning

Violin 2

Sheri Peck, Principal
Rachael McFarlane
Jennifer Whittle
Emily Drexler
Rebecca James
Mary Margaret Neel
Lee Smith
Mary Benno
Jacob Naggy
Samuel Miller

Viola

Metiney Suwanawongse, Principal
Cristina Micci-Barreca
Michael Hill
Susan Saliny
Michael Holub
Samantha Lester
Theresa Abler
Henry Haffner

Cello

Eric Reed, Principal
Suzanne Sims
Paul Vest
Matthew Wilkinson
Annie Camp
Kaitlyn Vest
Micah Donar
Spencer Brewer

Double Bass

Taylor Brown, Principal
Kaleb Collins
Dexter Bell
Given Graber
Julia Milrod
Jarod Boles

Flute

Kristen Holritz, Principal
Charlotte Roth
Amelia Dicks

Oboe

Jessica Smithorn, Principal
Claire Chenette
Carey Shinbaum

Clarinet

Emily Bowland
Joseph Miller
Katherine White (Eb)
Greg Lawson (Bass)

Bassoon

Eric Anderson, Principal
Shelby Alfredson
G. Eddie McCrary, Jr.

French Horn

Gordon James, Principal
Angela DeBoer
Matthew Meadows
Justin Stanley
Joseph Demko

Trumpet

Christian Pagnard, Principal
Michael Brown
Brian Reichenbach

Trombone

Prentiss Hobbs, Principal
Kevin Dombrowski
Evan Clifton

Tuba

Bernard Flythe

Timpani

Alex Wadner, Principal

Percussion

David Pedigo
Keith Lloyd
Andrew Harnsberger
Caitlin Jones
Nathan Shew

Harp

Caroline Brown Hudson,

Keyboard

Alan Nichols, Principal

CSO Contract Musicians

Violin 1

Joshua Holritz, Associate Concertmaster
Nicholas Naegele, Assistant Concertmaster
Nathan Banks
Caroline Drexler
Jeanne Johnson
David Katz
Calvin Lewis
Mark Reneau
Jasper Sewell

Violin 2

Sheri Peck, Principal Second Violin
Mary Benno
Emily Drexler
Nick Hoy
Rebecca James

Rachael McFarlane

Lee Smith

Jennifer Whittle

Viola

Metiney Suwanawongse, Principal

Katelyn Hoag

Cristina Micci-Barreca

Casie Runkle

Susan Saliny

Gabriel Schlaffer

Cello

Eric Reed, Principal

Spencer Brewer

Annie Camp

Micah Donar

Suzanne Sims

Paul Vest

Double Bass

Taylor Brown, Principal

Dexter Bell

Kaleb Collins

Jonathan McWilliams

Flute

Kristen Holritz, Principal

Lisa Meyerhofer (Leave of Absence)

Amelia Dicks, Principal Piccolo

Oboe

Jessica Smithorn, Principal

Teresa Spilko

Carey Shinbaum, English Horn

Clarinet

Robert West, Principal (Leave of Absence)

Emily Bowland

Joseph Miller, Bass Clarinet

Bassoon

Eric Anderson, Principal

Shelby Jones

G. Eddie McCrary, Contrabassoon

Horn

Gordon James, Principal

Angela DeBoer
Matthew Meadows
Joseph Demko (Leave of Absence)
Mackenzie Newell

Trumpet

Christian Pagnard, Principal
Michael Brown

Trombone

Prentiss Hobbs, Principal
Kevin Dombrowski
Christopher Brown (Leave of Absence)
Evan Clifton

Tuba

Neil Konouchi, Principal

Timpani

Alex Wadner, Principal

Percussion

Matthew West, Principal
David Pedigo

Harp

Caroline Brown Hudson, Principal

Keyboard

Alan Nichols, Principal

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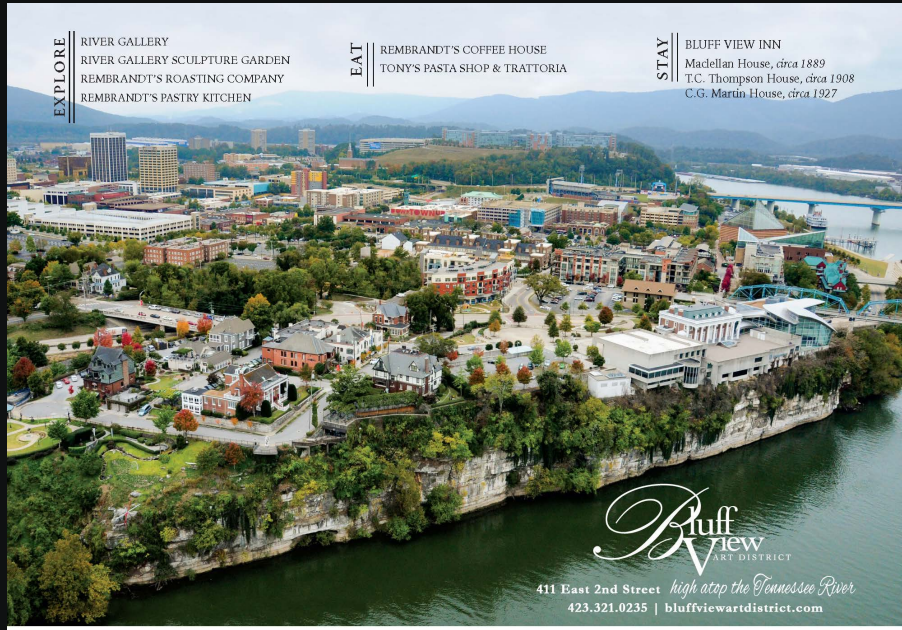
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