NOI Philharmonic: Alsop Conducts Mahler’s “Titan”

Thursday, June 27, 2024 • 7:30PM
Dekelboum Concert Hall
The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center
ABOUT NOI+F

Assembled every year from the country's most talented emerging orchestral musicians, the NOI Philharmonic performs works by today's foremost compositional voices and brings fresh perspectives to the classics. Led by Music Director Marin Alsop, and joined by a cast of extraordinary guest conductors, this summer's concerts explore riveting works ranging from Jennifer Higdon's *blue cathedral* and Gabriela Ortiz's *Antrópolis* to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. In 2019, the NOI Philharmonic’s album “Ruggles, Stucky, Harbison” received a Grammy nomination in the “Best Orchestral Performance” category. The orchestra is regularly heard by millions of listeners through broadcasts on Performance Today, WETA and WQXR.

SPARK! Lounge conversations take place at 6:30PM before most NOI Philharmonic performances. Join us for in-depth and lively discussions!
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NOI+F Music Director Marin Alsop leads the NOI Philharmonic at The Clarice.

The National Orchestral Institute + Festival is supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, the Nicolae Bretan Music Foundation, the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music and The Marinus and Minna B. Koster Foundation.

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**PROGRAM**

**NOI Philharmonic: Alsop Conducts Mahler’s “Titan”**
Marin Alsop, conductor
Julia Cruz, guest conductor and Taki Alsop Conducting Fellow

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**Gabriela Ortiz**  
(b. 1964)

*Antrópolis*  
Julia Cruz, guest conductor and Taki Alsop Conducting Fellow

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**Gustav Mahler**  
(1860–1911)

*Symphony No. 1 in D Major*  
Langsam, schleppend—Sehr gemächlich  
Kräftig bewegt  
Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen  
Stürmisch bewegt

*This program will be performed without an intermission.*
Antrópolis

GABRIELA ORTIZ

Gabriela Ortiz, one of Mexico’s foremost composers, was born in Mexico City in 1964 into a family of musicians in the folk music ensemble Los Folkloristas, founded to preserve and perform the traditional music of Mexico and Latin America. Ortiz studied composition at the National Conservatory of Music and National University of Mexico, and won a British Council Fellowship in 1990 to study in London at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama; she completed her doctoral work two years later at the City University of London. Ortiz now teaches at the Mexican University of Mexico City and has also served as a visiting faculty at Indiana University. She has composed, often on international commissions, for opera, ballet, orchestra, chamber ensembles and film in a style rooted in classical, jazz and traditional Mexican music. Her work frequently focuses on gender issues, social justice, environmental concerns, racism, technological development and mass migration. Notably, her operas are framed by political contexts of complexity and continuing relevance, such as the drug war in Only the Truth, illegal migration between Mexico and the United States in Ana and Her Shadow and the violation of university autonomy during the student movement of 1968 in Firefly.

In addition to two Latin GRAMMY nominations, Gabriela Ortiz has been honored with the National Prize for Arts and Literature (Mexico’s most important award for writers and artists), induction into the Mexican Academy of Arts and the Colegio Nacional, Mozart Medal Award, First Prizes at the Alicia Urreta Composition Competition and Silvestre Revueltas National Chamber Music Competition, and grants and residencies from the Civitella Ranieri Center (Italy), Guggenheim Foundation, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Fulbright Fellowship and Banff Center for the Arts. In 2022, she was appointed curator of the Pan-American Music Initiative with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel, and holds the Debs Composer’s Chair at Carnegie Hall for the 2024-2025 Season.

Gabriela Ortiz wrote of Antrópolis, “The word ‘antro’ has its origin in the Latin ‘antrum,’ meaning ‘grotto’ or ‘cavern.’ In Mexico until the 1990s, the term referred to bars or entertainment places of dubious reputation. Nowadays, and especially among younger people, the word refers to any bar or nightclub. “One time, while talking with flutist Alejandro Escuer, we imagined the title of a future work that would synthesize the music of Mexico’s legendary dance halls and bars: Antrópolis, a neologism, a precise, invented name for a piece that narrates the sound of the city through its dance halls and nightclubs. In 2017, when conductor Carlos Miguel Prieto commissioned me to write a short work—brilliant and rather light-hulled—to be premiered at the close of a concert celebrating the 80th birthday of American composer Philip Glass, performed by the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in New York, I retrieved the title Alejandro and I had imagined, and thus Antrópolis came to life.

“Antrópolis is a piece in which I wanted to pay a very personal tribute to some of those antros, the emblematic dance halls of Mexico City that left a special sonorous imprint.
in my memory. These cabarets or dance halls represent the nostalgia for rumberas and live dance orchestras, such as ‘El Bombay,’ where it is said that Che Guevara would twirl; or the ‘Salón Colonia,’ which seems to have come out of dreams taken from a film of the Golden Age of Mexican cinema. Who doesn’t remember the fun ballroom ‘Los Infiernos,’ a perfect place for those who, after a long day at work, would leave their cubicles to go dancing, drink and listen to music? Finally, the memory of the bar ‘Tutti Frutti’ leaves an impression, where I first met the punk couple who own the antro, where you could listen to experimental music from the 1980s.

“Antrópolis is the musical reflection of a city through its antros, including the accumulation of our experiences that form an essential part of our history in this very complex but fascinating Mexico City.”
Symphony No. 1 in D Major
GUSTAV MAHLER

“To write a symphony means, to me, to construct a world with all the tools of the available technique,” wrote Gustav Mahler. The world in a symphony—the experiences, qualities and meaning of life enfolded in tone. Mahler, the most ardent of the Romantics in his belief in the bond between human existence and music, spent his career pursuing this lofty aim. He once said, “My whole life is contained in them [i.e., the first two symphonies]: I have set down in them my experience and my suffering.... To anyone who knows how to listen, my whole life will become clear, for my creative works and my existence are so closely interwoven that, if my life flowed as peacefully as a stream through a meadow, I believe I would no longer be able to compose anything.” Mahler certainly had a full share of rocks and rapids in the stream of his life: deaths of loved ones, including a child, only weeks apart; a critical heart condition that precipitated his premature death at the age of 50; severe bouts of depression that led him to seek the counsel of Sigmund Freud; and great difficulties in finding acceptance for his works. Though these experiences were still in the future when he wrote this First Symphony, Mahler nevertheless embodied profound thoughts and emotions in this early work. Written during his tenure as conducting assistant to the great Arthur Nikisch at Leipzig, the D major symphony reflects Mahler’s concerns with romantic love, with establishing himself as a creative artist, and with finding a musical language proper to express his inner turmoil.

Though he did not marry until 1902, Mahler had a healthy interest in the opposite sex, and at least three love affairs touched upon the First Symphony. In 1880, he conceived a short-lived but ferocious passion for Josepfinie Poisl, the daughter of the postmaster in his boyhood home of Iglau, and she inspired from him three songs and a cantata after Grimm (Das klagende Lied) that contributed thematic fragments to the symphony. The second affair, which came early in 1884, was the spark that actually ignited the composition of the work. Johanne Richter possessed a numbing musical mediocrity alleviated by a pretty face, and it was because of an infatuation with this singer at the Kassel Opera, where Mahler was then conducting, that not only the First Symphony but also the Songs of the Wayfarer sprang to life. The third liaison, in 1887, came as the symphony was nearing completion. Mahler revived and reworked an opera by Carl Maria von Weber called Die drei Pintos (“The Three Pintos,” two being impostors of the title character), and was aided in the venture by the grandson of that composer, also named Carl. During the almost daily contact with the Weber family necessitated by the preparation of the work, Mahler fell in love with Carl’s wife, Marion. Mahler was serious enough to propose that he and Marion run away together, but at the last minute she had a sudden change of heart and left Mahler standing, quite literally, at the train station. The emotional turbulence of all these encounters found its way into the First Symphony, especially the finale, but, looking back in 1896, Mahler put these experiences into a better perspective. “The Symphony,” he wrote, “begins where the love affair [with Johanne Richter] ends; it is based on the affair which preceded the Symphony in the emotional life of the composer. But the extrinsic experience became the occasion, not the message of the work.”
The “message” of this work, and of all Mahler’s symphonies, is that life comprises a countless number of feelings and sensations, a ceaseless ebb and flow of sentiments gliding together, combining, then disappearing in the marvelous complex of the emotional life of the individual. In each of his symphonies, this world of experience is mirrored in a wide spectrum of musical styles, from child-like simplicity to transcendent profundity—folksong beside fugue, parody beside pathos, tempest beside tranquility. Mahler spread wide the boundaries of the symphony as a form, as had Beethoven a century earlier, to include an unprecedented wealth of emotion within a single work. Of his initial foray into the genre, he wrote, “My First Symphony will be something of which the world has never heard the like before.”

The Symphony begins with an evocation of a verdant springtime filled with the natural call of the cuckoo (solo clarinet) and the man-made calls of the hunt (clarinets, then trumpets). The main theme, which enters softly in the cellos after the wonderfully descriptive introduction, is based on the second of the Songs of a Wayfarer, Ging heut’ Morgen übers Feld (“I Crossed the Meadow this Morn”). This engaging, folk-like melody, with its characteristic interval of a descending fourth, runs through much of the Symphony to provide a link among its movements. The first movement is given over to this theme combined with the spring sounds of the introduction in a cheerful display of ebullient spirits into which creeps an occasional shudder of doubt.

The second movement, in sturdy triple meter, is a dressed-up version of the Austrian peasant dance known as the Ländler, a type and style that finds its way into most of Mahler’s symphonies. The simple tonic-dominant accompaniment of the basses recalls the falling fourth of the opening movement, while the tune in the woodwinds resembles the Wayfarer song. (Note particularly the little run up the scale.) The gentle trio, ushered in by solo horn, makes use of the string glissandos that were so integral a part of Mahler’s orchestral technique.

The third movement begins and ends with a lugubrious, minor-mode transformation of the European folk song known most widely by its French title, Frère Jacques. It is heard initially in an eerie solo for muted string bass in its highest register, played above the tread of the timpani intoning the falling-fourth motive from the preceding movements. The middle of the movement contains a melody marked “Mit Parodie” (played “col legno” by the strings, i.e., tapping with the wood rather than the hair of the bow), and a simple, tender theme based on another melody from the Wayfarer songs, Die zwei blauen Augen (“The Two Blue Eyes”). The mock funeral march of this movement was inspired by a woodcut of Moritz von Schwind titled How the Animals Bury the Hunter from his Munich Picture Book for Children.

The finale, according to Bruno Walter, protégé and friend of the composer and himself a master conductor, is filled with “raging vehemence.” The stormy character of the beginning is maintained for much of the movement. Throughout, themes from earlier movements are heard again, with the hunting calls of the opening introduction given special prominence. The tempest is finally blown away by a great blast from the horns (“Bells in the air!” entreats Mahler) to usher in the triumphant ending of the work, an affirmation of joyous celebration.
One of the foremost conductors of our time, Marin Alsop represents a powerful and inspiring voice. Convinced that music has the power to change lives, she is internationally recognized for her innovative approach to programming and audience development, deep commitment to education, and championing of music's importance in the world. The first woman to serve as the head of a major orchestra in the United States, South America, Austria and Britain, she is, as The New York Times put it, not only "a formidable musician and a powerful communicator" but also "a conductor with a vision."

The 2023-2024 Season marks Alsop's fifth as Chief Conductor of the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, which she leads at Vienna's Musikverein and Konzerthaus, as well as on recordings, broadcasts and international tours; her first as Artistic Director & Chief Conductor of the Polish National Radio Symphony; and her first as Principal Guest Conductor of London's Philharmonia Orchestra. She also holds positions as Chief Conductor of the Ravinia Festival, where she curates and conducts the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's annual summer residency and as the first Music Director of the National Orchestral Institute + Festival (NOI+F) at the University of Maryland, where she launched a new academy for young conductors and leads the NOI Philharmonic each June.

A full decade after becoming the first female conductor of London's Last Night of the Proms, Alsop made history again in September 2023, as both the first woman and the first American to guest conduct three Last Nights in the festival's 128-year history. In Spring 2024, she made her company debut at The Metropolitan Opera, leading John Adams's oratorio El Niño in a fully staged new production starring Julia Bullock and Davóne Tines. Other 2023-2024 highlights include a new production of Bernstein's Candide with the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony, an all-American program to inaugurate her four-season Philharmonia appointment, Penderecki's seldom-heard opera The Black Mask with the Polish National Radio Symphony, and returns to the podiums of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

In 2021, Alsop assumed the title of Music Director Laureate and OrchKids Founder of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, which she continues to conduct each season. During her outstanding 14-year tenure as its Music Director, she led the orchestra on its first European tour in 13 years, released multiple award-winning recordings, and conducted more than two dozen world premieres, as well as founding OrchKids, its groundbreaking music education program for Baltimore's most disadvantaged youth. In 2019, after seven years as Music Director, Alsop became Conductor of Honour of Brazil's São Paulo Symphony Orchestra (OSESP), with which she continues to undertake major projects each season. Deeply committed to new music, she was Music Director of California's Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music for 25 years, leading 174 premieres.
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Recognized with BBC Music “Album of the Year” and Emmy nominations in addition to Grammy, Classical BRIT and Gramophone awards, Alsop’s discography comprises more than 200 titles. These include recordings for Decca, Harmonia Mundi and Sony Classical, as well as her acclaimed Naxos cycles of Brahms with the London Philharmonic, Dvořák with the Baltimore Symphony and Prokofiev with the São Paulo Symphony. Recent releases include a live account of Candide with the London Symphony Orchestra & Chorus; a Kevin Puts collection with the Baltimore Symphony; and the first installment of a complete Schumann symphonic cycle for Naxos with the Vienna RSO.

The first and only conductor to receive a MacArthur Fellowship, Alsop has also been honored with the World Economic Forum’s Crystal Award. Amongst many other awards and academic positions, she served as both 2021-2022 Harman/Eisner Artist-in-Residence of the Aspen Institute Arts Program and 2020 Artist-in-Residence at Vienna’s University of Music and Performing Arts; is Director of Graduate Conducting at the Johns Hopkins University’s Peabody Institute; and holds Honorary Doctorates from Yale University and The Juilliard School. To promote and nurture the careers of her fellow female conductors, in 2002 she founded the Taki Concordia Conducting Fellowship, which was renamed in her honor as the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship in 2020. The Conductor, a documentary about her life, debuted at New York’s 2021 Tribeca Film Festival and has subsequently been broadcast on PBS television, screened at festivals and in theaters nationwide, and recognized with the Naples International Film Festival’s 2021 Focus on the Arts Award.
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Spanish born conductor Julia Cruz has an enthusiastic, dynamic and communicative personality that allows her to connect with orchestras and audiences. Her repertoire ranges from Haydn to contemporary music, with a special focus on opera and new music. She is a Britten Pears Young Artist 2023-2024 and, since 2022, she is an award recipient of the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship.

Next engagements for the following season include her debut with Orquesta Nacional de España and invitations to return to Compañía Nacional de Danza de México and Orquesta del Teatro de Bellas Artes, leading Alberto Ginastera's last opera Beatrix Cenci in its Mexican premiere. She will also lead a L'elisir d'amore production with Opera Terrassa and will debut with Orquesta de Extremadura.

During previous seasons, Julia has led The Nutcracker winter production at Mexico’s National Hall and has been guest conductor with Bilbao Orkestra Sinfonikoa, OFUNAM, Orquesta Filarmónica de la Ciudad de México, La Jolla Symphony and Chorus or Orquesta del Festival Internacional de Música de Cambra among others. In the opera field, Julia has conducted La Traviata at the Kolozsvári Magyar Opera and L'elisir d'amore at the Stara Zagora State Opera. In 2021, she was awarded at the Blue Danube/Béla Bartók Opera Conducting Competition, being invited to conduct in various European opera houses during the next seasons.

As assistant and cover conductor, Julia collaborates regularly with the National Orchestral Institute + Festival at the University of Maryland, and has worked for Ópera de Colombia and Jove Orquestra de la Generalitat Valenciana.

Julia was born in 1996. At age six, she began playing the trombone, however quickly discovered conducting. She studied at Conservatorio Superior de Música de Aragón and at Zuyd University of Applied Arts, finishing her studies cum laude in both cases. She has attended masterclasses and workshops with Marin Alsop–whom she considers her mentor–Johannes Schlaefli, Gregory Vajda, Daniel Oren, Colin Metters, Vladimir Ponkin and Bruno Aprea, among other conductors.
Julia Cruz, conductor

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* denotes NOI+F alumni
Equity Arc is committed to building equity and dismantling discriminatory practices in classical music. NOI+F works with Equity Arc to simplify the summer program application process, allowing rising musicians to have access to more options for study.

Howard County Youth Orchestras and NOI join together for an annual partnership starting this summer. HCYO students will spend a day at NOI working side-by-side with NOI musicians in rehearsals, sectionals and a special side-by-side performance.

Through this multi-year partnership with Naxos Records, the world’s leading classical musical label, NOI+F musicians record a yearly album of American music that is released in over 40 countries. They recently earned a Grammy nomination in the “Best Orchestral Performance” category for 2019 recording “Ruggles, Stucky, Harbison.”

The Network for Diversity in Concert Percussion (NDCP) supports aspiring professional percussionists from underrepresented and underserved communities. Through this collaboration, the NDCP sponsors their Emerging Artists to apply and audition for NOI+F. Upon admission, one student will receive a full tuition scholarship, transportation, food stipends and complimentary housing.

MARYLAND OPERA STUDIO
Continuing their artistic partnership, NOI+F will partner with the Maryland Opera Studio in a performance of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony led by NOI+F Music Director Marin Alsop.

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The National Orchestral Institute + Festival and Hawaii Youth Symphony partnered in 2019 to create the Orchestral Learning Alliance (OLA) at the Pacific Music Institute to take NOI+F students, faculty and alumni to Honolulu to serve as teachers and mentors to Hawaii’s young orchestral musicians.
**NOI+F is the Orchestra Partner for 2024’s National Seminario Ravinia: Orchestras for All.** This summer, NOI+F fellows will work with and perform alongside students from El Sistema-inspired youth orchestras at Ravinia Festival®, conducted by NOI+F Music Director and Ravinia’s Chief Conductor Marin Alsop.

**Smithsonian**

The Smithsonian Chamber Music Society partners with NOI+F to create access for select orchestral fellows to receive access to and perform with historically significant musical instruments from the past 400 years.

**Sound Mind**

*Sound Mind,* formerly known as Classical Musicians Roundtable, cultivates mental wellness in classical music. Through seminars, conversations and workshops, they empower musicians to be vulnerable and hold space for one another.

**Sphinx**

In partnership with the National Philharmonic and The Sphinx Organization, NOI+F hosts an annual fellowship and residency program that combines arts administration, orchestral performance, music curation and community engagement—culminating in an annual engagement project in the community and a professional residency with the National Philharmonic at Strathmore.

**Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship**

The Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship mentors, supports and promotes women conductors through intensive coaching, mentorship and financial support. Today, 19 out of 30 recipients hold music director or chief conductor positions. As part of NOI+F, a Taki Alsop recipient will be in residence during the summer.

**AIE partners with NOI+F to provide space for design thinkers and musicians to collaborate in pushing the margins of what the symphony might become.**

**WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL**

As part of the 2024 Festival, the NOI Philharmonic will perform Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony and Jennifer Higdon’s *blue cathedral* under the direction of NOI+F Music Director Marin Alsop.

**Wolf Trap Opera**

Wolf Trap Opera’s UNTRAPPED series, in partnership with NOI+F, takes thrilling vocal music to spaces beyond the company’s Northern Virginia home. With the NOI Philharmonic, these talented vocalists have performed Maurice Ravel’s *L’heure espagnole*, George Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess* and Leonard Bernstein’s *Songfest*. 
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THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

The support of the following generous patrons of NOI+F will provide vital student sponsorships and programmatic support this year. For more information about giving, visit go.umd.edu/supportnoi or contact Norah Quinn McCormick at 301.405.6485 or naquinn@umd.edu.

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IGNITE is the exciting volunteer and friends group of NOI+F. This group gathers during the festival and throughout the year to work on projects to bring energy, excitement and support. This group ignites the passion for educating the next generation of orchestra professionals by cultivating relationships, creating community and having fun! For more information, or to join IGNITE, contact Richard Scerbo at rscherbo@umd.edu.

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CONDUCTING FELLOWS ON STAGE AND IN CONVERSATION

COLLABORATE WITH NOI ORCHESTRAL, COMPOSITION AND SEE NOI+F FACULTY AND CONDUCTORS IN ACTION AS THEY THRILLING PERFORMANCES AT THE CLARICE BY THE NOI PHILHARMONIC AND A THE GRAMMY-NOMINATED NOI PHILHARMONIC AND A

(6/28 • 7:30PM)
(6/27 • 7:30PM)
(6/29 • 7:30PM)
(7/6 • 7:30PM)
(6/8 • 7:30PM)
(6/1 • 7:30PM)
(6/30 @ Washington National Cathedral)
(7/3 @ National Gallery of Art)

THEIR MAGIC TO VENUES THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, THE NOI PHILHARMONIC TAKES BEYOND PERFORMANCES AT THE CLARICE SMITH

IN ADDITION TO THEIR SYMPHONIC PERFORMANCES,

ALSOP Conducts Beethoven’s Ninth

Alsop Conducts Beethoven’s Ninth

THE GRAMMY-NOMINATED NOI PHILHARMONIC AND A THRILLING PERFORMANCES AT THE CLARICE BY THE NOI PHILHARMONIC AND A

YOUR GUIDE TO NOI+F!

ON STAGE

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<td>Kurt Weill’s The Seven Deadly Sins with Wolf Trap Opera (6/28 • 7:30PM)</td>
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<td>Falletta Conducts Symphonie fantastique (6/15 • 7:30PM)</td>
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Visit NOI.UMD.EDU or call 301.405.ARTS to learn more!
SAFETY FIRST!
Your safety is paramount! For your own safety, look for your nearest exit. In case of an emergency, walk, do not run, to that exit. Please follow all instructions provided by Clarice staff and emergency first responders.

PHOTO & VIDEO
Please note, photo and video recording of this performance is strictly prohibited.