

DAYTON PERFORMING ARTS ALLIANCE

DAYTON *Philharmonic*

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS
WITH ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR
NEAL GITTLEMAN



2019-2020 TITANS SEASON

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019 | PROGRAM BOOK ONE

Neal Gittleman Biography, 2019-2020

“Your bio’s dull!” That’s what my wife said after reading the same write-up in 20 years of DPO program books. So I agreed to create a “less dull” bio going forward. Here’s “Volume 5”, a look at my concert-day routine.

Music Review: Concert prep is all about being calm and focused when I step onstage. So every concert day begins with score study. I should know the music cold at the first rehearsal, but I still review every piece before every concert. I sit in a chair with my scores and go through the music. Sometimes it’s a just quick review, sometimes a detailed, bar-by-bar examination, depending on how hard the music is.

Food: Conducting is physically demanding, so I eat the same way many athletes do on game day: a high-protein meal four-to-five hours before showtime, then nothing else. The meal (which I call “linner” because it comes between lunch time and dinner time) gives me plenty of energy. The lead-time guarantees no stomach rumbles during the concert. An apple at intermission makes sure my energy doesn’t sag in the second half.

Nap: After linner comes a power nap—20, 40, or 60 minutes, depending on how I’m feeling. I like to use the Pzizz app. It plays music and environmental sounds along with a soft voice offering periodic hints and suggestions then gently wakes me up and I’m ready to go.

Warm-Up: I usually get to the Schuster Center 90 minutes before showtime so I can warm up my shoulder. Since my rotator cuff surgery three years ago I always do a weights-bands-and-balls routine to make sure my shoulder is stretched out and ready for a musical work-out.

Bruce: After the warm-up routine I listen to Bruce Springsteen on my iPhone while I change into my concert clothes. I’m a late convert to The Boss, but got hooked when my buddy Mr. Phil (a.k.a. “Front-Row Guy”) took me to see a concert. I was blown away by the energy and excitement of a live Springsteen show, so I use playlists of his concerts to get me pumped up during that last half-hour before concert time. We do lots of performances. But fortunately, live.brucespringsteen.net has lots of concerts available for download. I work my way through one playlist, then buy another.

T’ai Chi: Once I’m dressed it’s about 10 minutes before the concert—the perfect time for worries and nerves to creep in. I fight that by doing t’ai chi. It’s the perfect way to stay loose, focused, and energized in those final moments before going onstage. Although I could do it in the quiet of my dressing room, I prefer the hubbub of backstage, with musicians warming up and stagehands running through their pre-show checklists.

Superstitions: Like most performers and athletes, I have superstitions—things I do or don’t do, routines I follow, items I take with me onstage. And those are gonna stay secret. After all, revealing them could undo their mojo! But I will tell you about one superstition. It concerns words I often hear before going onstage: “Good luck!” That phrase is actually considered bad luck, so the only safe response is silence!

To read my “boring bio”, go to <http://www.parkerartists.com/Neal-Gittleman.html>



Neal's Notes 2019–2020

25 Years, 25 Lessons

1. This doesn't seem like Year 25, so time really does fly when you're having fun.
2. Most conductors don't last this long in one place. The key, I think, is to always try to keep things fresh...
3. ...and with every passing year that's more and more important.
4. How do I keep things fresh? Our wonderful musicians continually inspire me and I do my best to respond in kind.
5. Stephen Sondheim was right when he wrote, "Art isn't easy!" in the lyrics to his song "Putting It Together".
6. Art isn't easy, but it's worth the effort!
7. The Schuster Center was a once-in-a-lifetime game changer for the orchestra and for the Dayton arts scene. We owe a great debt to Ben, Marian, and the thousands of people who made it possible.
8. Creating the DPO Artistic Advisory Committee—where musicians critique our (and my) performance—is maybe the smartest thing I've ever done.
9. Music—all kinds of music—inspires the imagination, enlivens the spirit, and can heal the troubled soul of a listener—or a community.
10. When I chose Brahms as my official favorite composer I chose well.
11. But Debussy, Steve Reich, Beethoven, Mahler, Mozart, Bach, and the rest aren't far behind.
12. Every concert is important. Not just Masterworks Series Concerts. Every concert.
13. Doing t'ai chi while Yo-Yo Ma played his encore was fun, but making music with him and the DPO (twice, so far) was even more fun.
14. Dave Freiberg of Jefferson Starship can still bring it, even in his 80s!
15. Merging the Ballet, Opera, and Philharmonic into the DPAA didn't make anything easier money-wise, but it made everything better art-wise.
16. See #5: Art isn't easy.
17. Playing in the pit for Ballet and Opera is tough work in a dark, crowded, sometimes very loud space. But it helps build an even better orchestra.
18. That goes for the conductor, too!
19. When I first came to Dayton I was asked, "What does Dayton need?" I answered, "A baseball team and a new concert hall." We got them both. In that order. Maybe I should have asked for the concert hall first?
20. Year-in and year-out, the Phil has a better season than the Dragons.
21. My colleagues in the DPO have created a space where we can work hard and make great music in a warm, supportive atmosphere and play for a wonderful, appreciative audience.
22. But really...turn off the damn phone!
23. If you love our Philharmonic, our Opera, our Ballet, you must be willing to fight for them. Art isn't easy. And art isn't cheap. But your support can keep it alive.
24. On any given night the musicians of the DPO are the equal of any orchestra in the world. It's been an honor to make music with them all these years.
25. "Here's to another 25 years!" is a lovely sentiment but unrealistic. So let's fill the next however-many-years with 25 years' worth of great music, beginning right now...



Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra Personnel

1ST VIOLINS

Jessica Hung,
Concertmaster
J. Ralph Corbett
Chair
Aurelian Oprea,
Associate
Concertmaster
Huffy Foundation
Chair
William Manley,
Assistant
Concertmaster
Sherman
Standard Register
Foundation Chair
Elizabeth Hofeldt
Mikhail Baranovsky
Louis Proske
Katherine Ballester*
Youjin Na
John Lardinois
Philip Enzweiler
Dona Nouné
Janet George

2ND VIOLINS

The Peter and
Patricia Torvik
2nd Violin Section
Kirstin Greenlaw,
Principal
Jesse Philips
Chair
Kara Camfield,
Assistant Principal
Ann Lin Baer
Gloria Fiore
Scott Moore
Tom Fetherston
Nick Naegele
Lynn Rohr
Yoshiko Kunimitsu
William Slusser
Yein Jin*
Zhe Deng

VIOLAS

Sheridan Currie,
Principal
F. Dean
Schnacke Chair
Colleen Braid,
Assistant
Principal
Karen Johnson
Grace Counts
Finch Chair
Emilio Carlo*
Scott Schilling
Lori LaMattina
Mark Reis
Leslie Dragan
Tzu-Hui Hung
Belinda Burge

CELLOS

Jonathan Lee,
Principal
Edward L.
Kohnle Chair
in memory of
Andra Lunde
Padrichelli,
Principal Cellist
2003–2018
Christina Coletta,
Assistant
Principal
Lucas Song
Mark Hofeldt
Nadine
Monchecourt
David Huckaby
Isaac Pastor-
Chermak
Zoë Moskalew

BASSES

Deborah Taylor,
Principal
Dayton
Philharmonic
Volunteer Assn./
C. David Horine
Memorial Chair
Jon Pascolini,
Assistant
Principal
Donald Compton
Stephen Ullery
Christopher Roberts
James Faulkner
Bleda Elibal
Jack Henning*

FLUTES

Rebecca Tryon
Andres, *Principal*
Dayton
Philharmonic
Volunteer Assn.
Chair
Jennifer Northcut
Janet van Graas

PICCOLO

Janet van Graas

OBOES

Eileen Whalen,
Principal
Catharine French
Bieser Chair
Connie Ignatiou
Robyn Dixon Costa

ENGLISH HORN

Robyn Dixon Costa
J. Colby and
Nancy Hastings
King Chair

CLARINETS

John Kurokawa,
Principal
Rhea Beerman
Peal Chair
Robert Gray
Christopher Rueda

BASS CLARINET

Christopher Rueda

BASSOONS

Rachael Young,
Principal
Robert and Elaine
Stein Chair
Kristen Smith
Bonnie Sherman

CONTRABASSOON

Bonnie Sherman

FRENCH HORNS

Aaron Brant,
Principal
Frank M. Tait
Memorial Chair
Jessica Pinkham
Todd Fitter
Amy Lassiter
Sean Vore,
Assistant
Principal

TRUMPETS

Charles Pagnard,
Principal
John W. Berry
Family Chair
Alan Siebert
Daniel Lewis

TROMBONES

Timothy Anderson,
Principal
John Reger
Memorial Chair
Richard Begel
Chad Arnow

BASS TROMBONE

Chad Arnow

TUBA

Timothy Northcut,
Principal
Zachary, Rachel
and Natalie
Denka Chair

TIMPANI

Donald Donnett,
Principal
Rosenthal Family
Chair in Memory
of Miriam
Rosenthal

PERCUSSION

Michael LaMattina,
Principal
Miriam Rosenthal
Chair
Jeffrey Luft *
Richard A. and
Mary T. Whitney
Chair
Davi Martinelli
de Lira
Gerald Noble

KEYBOARD

Joshua Nemith,
Principal
Demirjian Family
Chair

HARP

Leslie Stratton,
Principal
Daisy Talbott
Greene Chair

*Leave of Absence

Neal Gittleman
Artistic Director
and *Conductor*

Patrick Reynolds
Associate
Conductor and
Conductor, DPYO

Hank Dahlman
Chorus Director

Jane Varella
Personnel
Manager

Eric Knorr
Orchestra
Librarian

Elizabeth Hofeldt
Youth Strings
Orchestra Director

Kara Camfield
Junior Strings
Orchestra Director

Meet Your Orchestra Up Close and “Personnel”

We recognize and thank several members of the Orchestra who assumed special duties this past season. The first is **Christina Coletta**, who finished the season as the Acting Principal Cello following the passing of **Andra Lunde Padrichelli** last December. With our Concertmaster, Jessica Hung, on maternity leave, **Aurelian Oprea**, Associate Concertmaster, took her place for several concerts. Finally, we thank and recognize **Jane Varella** for her 60 years’ association with the Orchestra as percussionist, Principal Percussion, and since 1975 as the Orchestra’s Personnel Manager, the latter a role she continues this season.



Christina Coletta earned a Bachelor of Music Degree from the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music, where she served as principal cellist of the CCM Philharmonia. After college, Christina played eight years with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra and was a member of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra for seven seasons, during which time she filled in as interim principal cello. Since 1996 she has performed regularly as an extra musician with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, including the CSO’s 2008 Europe and China tours, and was appointed as a full-time musician for the orchestra’s 2013–2014 season. Christina has performed concertos with the Dayton Philharmonic and Wright State University orchestras. A passionate chamber musician, she has played with the Amicus Chamber Players and ConcertNova and is a founding member of the Duveneck String Quartet, performing with them throughout the Cincinnati and Dayton areas. Christina lives in Cincinnati with her husband, Tad Steen, and their four children.



Aurelian Oprea is an eighth-generation musician who was born in Cluj-Napoca, the cultural capital of Romania’s Transylvania region. His parents and grandfather were string players in the Romanian National Opera House Orchestra, and his grandmother was the prima ballerina of the Opera’s ballet corps. In Romania, Aurelian studied

with Stefan Ruha, a prize winner of the Tchaikovsky and Thibaud competitions. In the United States, Aurelian was the concertmaster of the Chautauqua Institution Youth Orchestra (NY) in 1993 and 1994 and of the Chautauqua Institution Music Festival Orchestra in 1997, where he also won the Institution’s Concerto Competition. He earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Music Performance from Bowling Green State University in 1999, where he also won a Concerto Competition. Aurelian won his first professional audition at the age of 20, becoming the youngest member of the Michigan Opera Theater Orchestra in Detroit, a position he held until 2000 when he became the DPO’s Assistant Concertmaster and later Associate Concertmaster. Aurelian is fluent in Romanian, Hungarian and English. He resides in Grafton Hill with his wife, Rachel, and his daughter, Hanna.



Jane Varella is the retired Principal Percussion of the Orchestra. She began playing percussion with the DPO in 1952 as a high school junior. Jane is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, where she earned a Bachelor of Music in Performance.

Jane has taught at four Dayton area universities as well as the Stivers School for the Performing Arts. Jane became the Orchestra Personnel Manager in 1975, for one year—a job she has now held in excess of 44 years! In many ways, Jane is the heart and soul of the Orchestra. She has two children: a daughter, Stacey, who lives in Virginia, and a son, Ian, who resides in Texas. Jane is also blessed to have three granddaughters and one great-granddaughter.

Transition: Two long-time members of the Orchestra, **Robert (Bob) Gray** and **Karlton (Karl) Taylor**, retired at the end of last season. Both have been with the Orchestra for many years and played for all of the Philharmonic Orchestra’s conductors, beginning with its founder, Paul Katz. Bob joined the DPO in the 1962–1963 season, and Karl joined in 1968 while still a student at Vandalia Butler High School. Thank you to both of these gentlemen for 50+ years of faithful service.

DAYTON PERFORMING ARTS ALLIANCE
Dayton Philharmonic Volunteer Association
MASTERWORKS SERIES
Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra

Neal Gittleman, Artistic Director and Conductor

Friday,
**October
18, 2019**
8:00 P.M.
Schuster Center

Messiaen's *Turangalila*

Michael Chertock, piano soloist
Estelle Lemire, ondes Martenot soloist

Saturday,
**October
19, 2019**
8:00 P.M.
Schuster Center

**Michael Chertock and Estelle Lemire are the 2019–2020
Erma R. and Hampden W. Catterton Endowed Guest Artists.**

Olivier Messiaen
(1908–1992)

Turangalila-Symphony

1. Introduction
2. Love Song 1
3. Turangalila 1
4. Love Song 2
5. Joy of the Blood of the Stars
6. Garden of Love's Sleep
7. Turangalila 2
8. Development of Love
9. Turangalila 3
10. Finale

Mr. Chertock
Ms. Lemire

Turangalila artwork by Bridget Caffrey, UD 2019 and Jack Hadley, UD 2020

There will be no intermission in this evening's performance.
Microphones on stage are for recording purposes only.

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Michael Chertock

Biography

Michael Chertock fashioned a successful career as a piano soloist, collaborating with conductors such as Keith Lockhart, Jack Everly, Robert Bernhardt, John Morris Russell, Thomas Wilkins, Carmon DeLeone, and the late Erich Kunzel. His many orchestral appearances include solo performances with the Philadelphia Orchestra, l'Orchestre Symphonique du Montreal, the Toronto Symphony, the Dallas Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Naples Philharmonic, the Detroit Symphony, the Chattanooga Symphony, the Utah Symphony, the Oregon Symphony, the Indianapolis Symphony, the Louisville Orchestra and the Dayton Philharmonic.

Chertock has recorded John Alden Carpenter's Concertino for Piano and Orchestra with the BBC Concert Orchestra, Abbey Road Studio; the Roger Davis Piano Concerto in F with the Sofia Philharmonic; and the Rhapsodies of Piano and Orchestra of William Perry with the RTE Orchestra of Dublin, Ireland.

Chertock made his debut at the age of 17, performing the Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 3 with Andrew Litton conducting. Chertock made his Carnegie Hall debut in 1999 with the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, performing Duke Ellington's *New World A'Comin'*. Chertock has toured Asia with the Boston Pops and the

Cincinnati Pops Orchestra. His 2003 performance on the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's recording of Petrouchka with Paavo Järvi turned in rave reviews in Gramophone and American Record Guide. In 2005, Chertock performed Gershwin's Concerto in F Major with Maestro Lockhart and the National Youth Orchestra of London. Later that year, Chertock performed the world premiere of "Jeux Deux" for *hyper-piano* and orchestra by Todd Machover, commissioned by the Boston Pops expressly for Mr. Chertock.

He has garnered numerous awards at major competitions, among them the top prize in the 1989 Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition (Brahms Division) and the grand prize in the 1993 St. Charles International Piano Competition. He also shared the silver medal in the 1991 World Piano Competition of the American Music Scholarship Association. He received the Rildia B. O'Bryon Cliburn Scholarship in 1986.

In 2004 Chertock joined the faculty of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where he is currently chair of the Piano Department. Chertock makes his home in Mason, Ohio, with his wife, Maaiké; son, Joshua; and daughters Maria and Janneke. Most Sundays you can find him playing piano and organ for services at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church.

DAYTON PERFORMING ARTS ALLIANCE

Ballet Opera Philharmonic

2019-2020
Titans



Beethoven



Gittleman

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Estelle Lemire

Biography

Estelle Lemire graduated from the Conservatoire de musique du Québec in Montréal after extensive musical studies from 1982 to 1991. A student of Jean Laurendeau, she was awarded a First Prize in Ondes Martenot performance (1988) and also studied composition under Gilles Tremblay, receiving a First Prize in composition in 1991. Her curriculum also includes Music Analysis in the class of Gilles Tremblay, for which she was awarded a second Prize in 1990, as well as training in electroacoustic music with Yves Daoust.

A soloist and chamber player specializing in Ondes Martenot for over 25 years, Estelle Lemire focuses mainly on the performance of new music while advocating better knowledge and appreciation of her instrument. She has performed for radio and television programs as well as for contemporary music organizations, ensembles, orchestras and festivals in Canada and the United States. Her recordings include a solo album for the SNE label and a Messiaen CD with the Ensemble d'Ondes de Montréal for the ATMA label. In addition to playing staple works from the Ondes repertoire, including all

of Messiaen's pieces, but also Jolivet, Milhaud, Honneger, Varèse, Murail, Vivier and Boucher, Estelle gave the premiere performances of several works by contemporary composers. Estelle also had the pleasure to be appointed Ondes Martenot teacher at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal, the only class of its kind in America.

As a composer, her catalogue comprises over fifty scores written for soloists, chamber music ensembles and orchestra. A number of these feature Ondes Martenot, whether with percussion, with gamelan or live electronics. Her musical language evolves from various influences: minimalism, a yearning for clarity of expression, micro-tonal research, integration of spectral harmony, as well as the recycling of musical objects, processes, manners and styles.

Estelle Lemire is a member of SOCAN and of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM/GMMQ); she is the recipient of numerous grants and commissions from the Canada Arts Council, Radio-Canada/CBC and from the Conseil des arts et lettres du Québec.



(888) 228-3630 | DaytonPerformingArts.org



Olivier Messiaen

Turangalila-Symphony

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, 4 French horns, 5 trumpets (3 trumpets, 1 cornet, 1 piccolo/D trumpet), 3 trombones, tuba, 10 percussion, 2 pianos, celeste, ondes Martenot, strings

This is the first time this work has been performed by the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra.

Olivier Messiaen was an important French composer of the middle twentieth century. Although he is perhaps not a household name, his pedagogical and musical influence was significant: He taught a generation of French composers—among whom the most famous was Pierre Boulez, who would himself go on to a very successful career as both a conductor and composer. Messiaen also developed an immediately recognizable compositional style, partly based on his own, sometimes idiosyncratic, understanding of musical material and analysis, partly based on his studies of various ethnic musics, and partly based, surprisingly enough, on the natural calls of birds.

Messiaen's early life was always inclined toward music, and he began musical studies at an early age. After a successful academic career he then took up work as a professional musician. For six decades he was the organist at La Trinité Church in Paris and, as was earlier mentioned, he also taught music, first in the Schola Cantorum and later at the Paris Conservatory and the influential Darmstadt summer school.

Messiaen did not, however, enjoy unrelenting success. When war broke out between Nazi Germany and France, Messiaen was conscripted into service. He was not a combatant but was nevertheless captured by the Germans and taken to one of the Stalags. He had the great good fortune to be in a camp where the commander took sympathy on him—so much so that Messiaen was given a room in which to compose. It was there that he wrote what is perhaps his most famous work, *Quartet for the End of Time*.

Quartet has an apocalyptic quality about it, a quality obviously arising out of the circumstances under which it was composed. But Messiaen did not write a despairing work. Instead he used his own profound Catholic faith as a source of inspiration and consolation, and the last movement of the work, "In Praise of the Immortality of Jesus," is an intensely lyrical and beautiful duet for violin and piano that builds to a peak evoking a sense of transcendent peace.

In the following years, Messiaen would need all the support he could get, spiritual and otherwise. Although he had been released from the prisoner of war camp shortly after he composed the *Quartet* and was reunited with his wife, Claire Delbos, their time together was short and fraught. She was suddenly taken with a debilitating illness that left her mentally incapacitated, and Messiaen was forced to place her in an institution that could give her the care she needed.

In the midst of this grief Messiaen began to a relationship with Yvonne Loriod, a skilled pianist with whom the composer had worked for years. That Messiaen's wife, whatever her state of mind may have been, was still alive made his relationship with Loriod complicated, to say the least. He saw his art as the only outlet possible in these circumstances, and he both wrote music for her and collaborated on performances with her.

Turangalila was one of those works. It is a colossal piece, lengthy in its duration and elaborate in its orchestration. Messiaen included not only the standard symphonic instruments but also a substantial battery of percussion as well as a part for solo piano, written especially for Loriod. But the most unusual instrument Messiaen required was the ondes Martenot, an electronic keyboard instrument whose sound has an otherworldly, sometimes eerie quality. Unsurprisingly the ondes has been sometimes used in the soundtracks of science fiction movies,

Turangalila-Symphony (cont.)

but numerous classical composers have featured the instrument in their works as well.

Turangalila was commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky for the Boston Symphony Orchestra and was first performed by that organization in 1949. Since its premiere the work has acquired an international reputation and made Messiaen famous, even though the size of the orchestra and the unusual instrumentation make it a difficult piece to perform.

Messiaen wrote *Turangalila* in ten parts but tied those parts together with four themes. The first of these is what he calls the “statue theme,” played

by the trombones “with the heavy, terrifying brutality of old Mexican monuments,” as he puts it. We hear this theme almost immediately in the Introduction. The second theme, what Messiaen calls the “flower theme,” is played very quietly by two clarinets, or as he says, “two voices like a pair of matching eyes.” This theme is also first heard in the Introduction. The third theme, the “love theme,” is first heard during the second part of the work, Love Song I. The fourth “theme” is a succession of chords, used throughout this strange and beautiful paean to love.

—Dennis Loranger, Lecturer in Music,
Wright State University

DAYTON PERFORMING ARTS ALLIANCE

DAYTON
Philharmonic

THANKS



**First-Year Arts Immersion:
Messiaen’s *Turangalila***

The collaboration with the University of Dayton and its First-Year Arts Emersion campus-wide initiative and this performance of Messiaen’s *Turangalila* has added immeasurably to the experience and impact of the DPO’s performance. We extend our sincere thanks to all of those at UD whose hard work and commitment have made this important program possible.

Because *Turangalîla* is such an unusual piece, I created these detailed notes for the Philharmonic musicians to aid their understanding. I figure these might serve equally helpful to our “Concert Night” audience. — NG

***TURANGALÎLA* INFO FOR DPO**

Personal History (Mine)

I “discovered” Messiaen my first day of college. Freshman convocation ended with the university organist playing “Dieu parmi nous”, the last movement of Messiaen’s *Nativité du Seigneur* organ suite. Everyone filed out of the auditorium except for music nerds, who clustered around the organ console in awe as this amazing music filled the room. Then a couple of weeks later my Theory 101 prof (also my faculty advisor) gave a piano recital which included Messiaen’s *Quatre Études de Rythme*. I decided I had to hear more of this music, raided the Music Library stacks for scores and spent hours in the Record Library listening to pieces. That was my first exposure to *Quartet for the End of Time*, *Oiseaux Exotiques*, *et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*, lots more organ and piano pieces, and, *Turangalîla*. A couple of months later I was one of twenty-or-so people who showed up at a dining hall to hear Peter Serkin (dressed in flannel shirt and blue jeans) play *Vingt Regards sur l’Enfant Jésus*. By the end of that evening there was no doubt that I was a major Messiaen fan.

A couple of years later, in 1975, I was home for spring break when the Boston Symphony was playing *Turangalîla*. I went to the morning matinee performance, and it felt like the crowd was made up of all the “little old ladies” of Boston plus me. I expected that this audience—perhaps the most musically conservative audience of the BSO’s musically conservative subscribers—was going to *hate* the piece. But they *loved* it. They went nuts, and when Messiaen (himself a “little old man” at the time) came onstage for a bow, they cheered like he was a rock star. I learned two things that morning: (1) Don’t judge an audience by their age or hair color. (2) The power of *Turangalîla* to win over an audience.

Personal History (Messiaen’s)

Like the Bartók Concerto for Orchestra, Copland’s Third Symphony, Bernstein’s Serenade, Schoenberg’s *A Survivor from Warsaw*, and many other great 20th century pieces, *Turangalîla* was commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky. The instructions for the 1946 commission would have been music to any composer’s ears: write whatever you want, as long as you want, for whatever size orchestra you want.

Turangalîla is part of Messiaen’s “Tristan Trilogy”—three pieces with emotional connections to the Tristan and Isolde story: *Harawi*, a 1945 song cycle for soprano and piano; *Turangalîla*; and *Cinq Rechants*, a 1948 piece for chamber choir. Messiaen’s thing for Tristan and Isolde had roots in his difficult personal life, which perhaps felt a little like the *Tristan* story.

By the mid-1940s Messiaen had been married to composer and violinist Claire Delbos for 15 years, and there was already trouble. Claire’s mental health shaky. After suffering several miscarriages, she had successfully given birth but only after taking drugs that may have affected her adversely. She also suffered from severe post-partum depression following their son’s birth and she had stress raising him alone during the years that Olivier was interred in a German POW camp. The biographical sources are very circumspect about her mental condition, but I suspect it’s possible that she may have had something like to early-onset Alzheimer’s. Claire was eventually institutionalized, and died in a nursing home in 1959.

At the same time all that was going on, Messiaen met pianist/composer Yvonne Loriod, who was his composition student at the Paris Conservatory. As his life with his Claire was falling apart, Olivier was falling in love with Yvonne and started writing pieces specifically for her—*Visions de l'Amen* (1943), *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus* (1944), *Trois Petites Liturgies de la Présence Divine* (1944). The virtuoso solo piano part in *Turangalîla* was written with Loriod in mind and she played it around the world for many years. (That Boston Symphony performance I saw 38 years after the premiere had Yvonne Loriod as the piano soloist and her sister Jeanne as the ondes martenot soloist.)

In a way, the whole piece was written for her. So far as anyone can tell, Olivier and Yvonne—both deeply devout Catholics—never “did anything” about their love while Claire Delbos was alive. They eventually did marry, but not until nearly three years after Claire’s death. But when Messiaen described *Turangalîla* as “a love song”, it’s clear that he meant a song about his love for her. So in a way, it’s a musical sublimation of their romantic relationship. But it’s also his first direct and explicit musical expression of Messiaen’s love for Loriod. It’s also interesting that *Turangalîla* is a rare secular Messiaen piece, perhaps because it’s motivation was more human love than divine love...

Basics About the Piece **(Messiaen’s own words are in *italics*.)**

“Turangalîla” is a word of Messiaen’s own invention, derived from two Sanskrit words: “Turanga” (time, movement, rhythm) and “Lîla” (play, love, creation/destruction, life/death). *The Turangalîla Symphony is a love song. The Turangalîla Symphony is a hymn to joy. Not to the respectable, calmly euphoric joy of some good man of the 17th century, but joy as it may be conceived by someone who has glimpsed it only in the midst of sadness: in other words, a joy that is superhuman, overflowing, blinding, unlimited.*

The piece has a symmetrical structure...

I. Introduction

II. Love Song 1

III. Turangalîla 1

IV. Love Song 2

V. Joy of the Blood of the Stars

VI. Garden of the Sleep of Love

VII. Turangalîla 2

VIII. Development of Love

IX. Turangalîla 2

X. Finale

...in which symmetrical pairs of movements are mirrored by their “opposites”...

Introduction/Finale

Love Songs/Turangalîlas

...and the central pair (Joy.../Garden...) make up the heart of the whole piece. The Joy of the Blood of the Stars depicts the lovers flying through space in an ecstatic dance of joy. The Garden of the Sleep of Love depicts them entwined, asleep in each other’s arms in a beautiful garden, surrounded by singing birds.

The *Turangalîla* orchestra has two solo instruments—piano and ondes martenot. The percussion section is divided into two groups. The pitched percussion instruments (Celesta, Keyboard Glockenspiel, Vibraphone, Chimes) mostly play with the solo piano, creating a pseudo-gamelan ensemble and are placed downstage near the piano to facilitate that ensemble. The unpitched percussion instruments are positioned in their usual upstage position and often play complex webs of rhythmic counterpoint derived from Messiaen’s long study of rhythms in Indian (South Asian) and Greek music.

The piece is built on four cyclic themes:

“STATUE THEME”

“FLOWER THEME”

“LOVE THEME”

“THEME OF CHORDS”

A musical score for a piano piece, labeled 'I: #12'. The score is written for two staves, both in treble clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 12/8. The music consists of a series of chords and arpeggiated figures. The first staff begins with a series of chords, including F#4, A4, and B4, followed by a descending arpeggiated figure. The second staff continues with similar chordal textures, including F#4, A4, and B4, and ends with a final chordal texture.

Each cyclic theme gets slightly different treatment. The Statue Theme usually remains essentially unchanged (like a statue), except in Movement V, where it is drastically sped up to become the first phrase of the main melody. Each appearance of the Flower Theme is identical. At first, the Love Theme is more a feeling than an actual theme, but becomes progressively longer, slower, and more elaborate as it appears in successive movements. It is finally revealed as an extended melody in Movement VI, which then recurs in Movement VIII, and becomes the *fff* climax of Movement X (#34—#36). The Theme of Chords isn't so much a theme, as something like a serial composer's tone row: a set of notes from which Messiaen could generate chords, melodies, and counterpoints.

Many of the movements are organized using Messiaen's own take on "moment form", where a piece doesn't gradually develop in a conventional classical/romantic manner, but is based on discrete musical ideas (moments) that recur in unpredictable patterns. This is perhaps most jarring in the "Love Song" movements, whose fragmented nature might seem at odds with their titles. But maybe not so much if you think of wild, crazy, delirious, I'm-so-in-love-my-mind-is-going-at-a-million-miles-an-hour-and-I-think-my-head-is-gonna-explode love...

The Ondes Martenot

Turangalila is, perhaps, the pinnacle of the repertoire for Ondes Martenot, an electronic instrument invented in 1928 by Maurice Martenot. A cellist, Martenot had also worked as a radio operator, and the Ondes Martenot is the result of these two interests. From the radio side comes the instrument's electronics, which can generate many different varieties of sine waves. From the cello side comes the instrument's singing quality and its ability to play with vibrato and to glide between notes. The Ondes Martenot is a purely melodic instrument—it can play only one note at a time. Notes are played with the right hand (either on a piano-type keyboard or a ring-on-a-wire mechanism that allows glissandos from anywhere on the instrument's range to anywhere else). Attacks and dynamics are controlled by the left hand, via a button which allows the player to create dynamics from barely audible to louder-than-the-entire-orchestra and attacks from gentle to hard and percussive.

ONDES MARTENOT



Movement by Movement
(Mostly in *Messiaen's Own Words*)

University of Dayton art students Bridget Caffrey and Jack Hadley created stunning visual artworks for each movement. These were projected behind the orchestra and are reproduced here.



I. Introduction:



The first two cyclic themes are heard: the Statue Theme: in the trombones, fortissimo, the Flower Theme in the clarinets, pianissimo. After a solo piano cadenza comes the body of the movement, which superimposes rhythmic ostinatos in the woodwinds and strings, a gamelan, and a fourth level where the brass and piano [and maracas] alternate and answer each other.

II. Love Song 1:



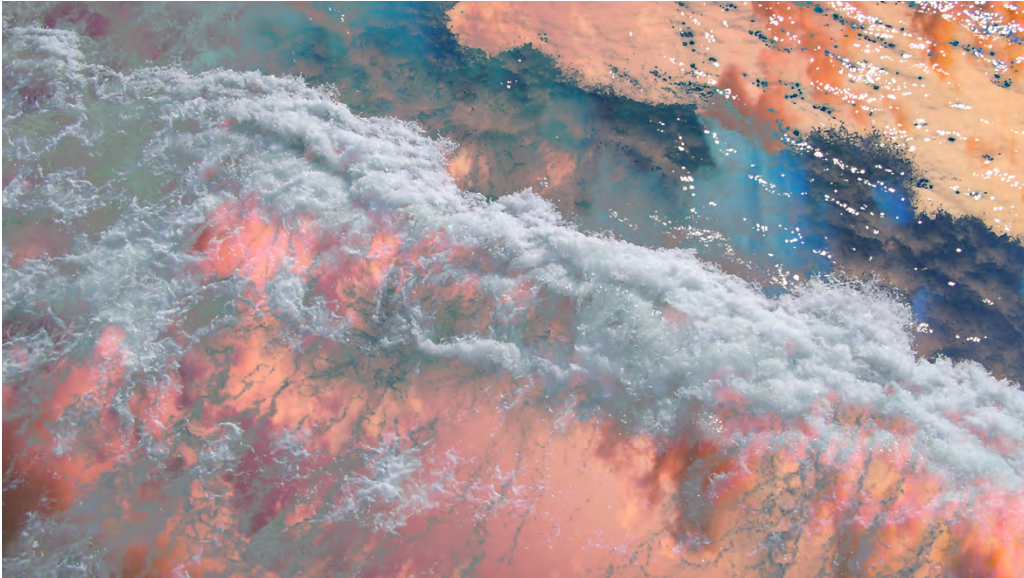
Refrain form.... The refrain alternates two elements completely contrasted in tempo, nuance, and feeling. The first element is a motif in the trumpets [and strings], quick, loud and passionate. The second element is a motif in the ondes and strings, slow, soft, and gentle. At #40 Messiaen takes the first step towards a what eventually becomes the “Big Love Tune”.

III. Turangalîla 1:



The three Turangalîla movements are unpredictable in character and are meant to serve as darker, more sinister mirror images of the love-themed movements (“joy perceived in the midst of sadness”). They are often built of several different musical ideas which appear singly, and then are gradually combined and superimposed. In this movement, there are three main ideas: (1) the opening melody in the clarinet and ondes; (2) the menacing melody in the trombones, bassoons, and basses, accompanied by the piano-plus pitched-percussion “gamelan”; (3) a legato duet for flute and oboe accompanied by unpitched percussion. Messiaen’s description of this movement gets rather bogged down in describing all the elaborate rhythmic canons and retrogrades that are going on, and I’ll spare you all that...

IV. Love Song 2:



Another present-lots-of-different-motifs-then-stack-them-up movement. Most important is the new transformation of the love theme, in a big romantic gesture first played at #5. That passage, which comes back eight times in the movement, is a good place to reference Messiaen's synesthesia. He identified musical sounds with colors. Though he said this was more an intellectual feeling than the serious synesthesia that some people (David Hockney, Van Gogh, Kanye, Tori Amos) have, Messiaen could get very literal when describing it. In Volume VII of his *Treatise on Rhythm, Color, and Ornithology* he describes the color of this passage (#5) as "large vertical bands alternating cobalt blue and green mixed with dark blue, with occasional bindings of saffron red-orange and a few silvery tendrils".

V. Joy of the Blood of the Stars:



This is a long, frenetic dance of joy. In order to understand the qualities of excess in the movement, one must remember that the union of true lovers is, for them, a transformation, and a transformation on a cosmic scale. The movement is based on just one theme, which is a variant of the Statue Theme.

VI. Garden of the Sleep of Love:



This movement is in total contrast with its predecessor. The two lovers are enclosed in love's sleep. A landscape comes out of them. The garden around them is called Tristan; the garden around them is called Isolde. It is a garden full of shadow and light, of new plants and flowers, of bright and melodious birds.... Time flows forgotten. The lovers are outside time. Let us not wake them. A single expansive phrase on the "Love Theme" occupies the whole movement. It is confided to the ondes and muted strings. The solo piano introduces bird songs: a nightingale, a blackbird, a garden warbler, but stylized, idealized.

VII. Turangalila 2:



This is the "horror movie" movement ... where the antagonists are the ondes martenot on one side and the trombones and tuba on the other. Gentle, expressive voice of the ondes, going down, full of pity, into the depths. Thick, muddy voices of the trombones and tuba in close position, rising slowly, like monstrous dinosaurs.... This recalls the double terror of the pendulum knife slowly getting nearer the heart of the prisoner while the wall of red-hot iron closes in on him, and the unspeakable, indescribable depth of the torture pit in Edgar Allan Poe's celebrated story "The Pit and the Pendulum".

VIII. Development of Love:



This terrible title can be understood in two ways: ...a constantly growing passion, multiplying itself to the infinite ... and ... also the musical development. In a work of ten movements a few partial developments would not suffice. There had to be a whole movement of development and this is it. Messiaen works all four cyclic themes into this movement, with the Love Theme and its feeling gradually growing stronger until it all but takes over at #42. The final tam-tam stroke stirs echoing vibrations in the caves of oracles: one hears resonances from the languages of the beyond, and the Statue Theme peers over the abyss...

IX. Turangalila 3:



In this strange movement Messiaen uses just two main ideas: (1) an exotic melody and (2) a complicated five-part percussion counterpoint. We hear these elements separately, then together, then with superimposed elaborations in the solo piano and ondes. One really fascinating feature is at #5, where Messiaen “doubles” each percussion instrument with solo strings (wood block with two 1st violins, suspended cymbal with four 2nd violins, maracas with three violas, tabor with two cellos, and tam-tam with two basses). These dense chords of the solo strings (taken from the Theme of Chords) provide a soft, mysterious background resonance to the percussion instruments, whose sound predominates.

X. Finale:



The first theme is a fanfare for trumpets and horns [and everybody else, too]; the second is the Love Theme. In the big tutti on the Love Theme...the woodwinds, brass, and strings mutually reinforce each other and the power of the brass gains in feeling from the extra-terrestrial voice of the ondes in the extreme treble, communicating to the whole orchestra its light and its tears of joy. The melody stops and rests in suspense, in a state of luminous expectation, and this great gesture towards an end that does not exist (Glory and Joy are without end) inspires the coda, a brilliant, vehement statement of the first theme.

CONCERT PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDY SNOW





Piano Soloist Michael Chertock



Ondes Martenot Soloist Estelle Lemire

