

Monday Evening, November 24, 2025, at 7:30

The Juilliard School

presents

Juilliard Orchestra

Nicholas Carter, *Conductor*

Elena Ariza, *Cello*

Stephen Adam Savage, *Viola*

KAIJA SAARIAHO (1952–2023) ***Ciel d'hiver*** (2013)

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949) ***Don Quixote, Op. 35*** (1897)

ELENA ARIZA, *Cello*

STEPHEN ADAM SAVAGE, *Viola*

Intermission

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–97) ***Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98*** (1884)

Allegro non troppo

Andante moderato

Allegro giocoso

Allegro energico e passionato

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes, including an intermission

Nicholas Carter appears with kind permission of the Metropolitan Opera.

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About the Program

By Carys Sutherland

Ciel d'hiver

KAIJA SAARIAHO

Born: October 14, 1952, in Helsinki

Died: June 2, 2023, in Paris

Ciel d'hiver, meaning “winter sky” in French, is an arrangement of the second movement from Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho’s symphonic work *Orion* (2002), which itself was commissioned by the Cleveland Orchestra. Thematically, *Orion*’s setting of starlight to music is illustrative of Saariaho’s spectralist style, a compositional school centered on acoustics and frequencies she first encountered in the modernist scene of 1980s Germany. Saariaho embraced it as a departure from the serialism of her youth, citing the synesthetic pull of nature: “Changes in sunlight throughout the year are so drastic that they affect everyone. You can’t escape its influence,” she said in a 2014 interview. “When I picture certain orchestrations, I make instant connections with light.” Reminiscent of the celestial works of Takemitsu and Messiaen, *Ciel d'hiver*’s eerie, gauzy textures reflect a mastery of timbre and resonance.

Where *Orion* takes a holistic approach, depicting both the constellation and its namesake mythological figure, *Ciel d'hiver* is instead a disembodied wisp, deliberately removed from the larger piece’s context and set against a quiet black night. Solo piccolo introduces a *misterioso* melody above shimmering strings and percussion, passing the fragments among violin, clarinet, oboe, and muted trumpet; it’s as though Saariaho holds a radio antenna to the sky, transcribing the twinkles and flickers of stars into sound. The atmosphere is observant but not tranquil, with uneasy elements of bated breath and chilly air.

Don Quixote

RICHARD STRAUSS

Born: June 11, 1864, in Munich

Died: September 8, 1949, in

Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

The trajectory of Richard Strauss’ career was largely defined by a creative tug of war between his musically conservative father, Franz Strauss, and the modern harmonies of Richard Wagner. In the end, it was Wagner’s influence that won, guiding Strauss’ prolific output of operas and highly narrative instrumental works known as program music. Like Telemann and Salieri before him, Strauss found inspiration in 17th-century Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, which is widely considered to be the first modern novel.

Strauss’ *Don Quixote* stands out among his 10 tone poems because of its unusual structure, somewhere between a concerto and a symphony, that features an extensive solo cello part as the titular character; perhaps for this reason, *Quixote* is less commonly programmed than its counterparts. Alongside the cello, solo viola portrays the Don’s squire, Sancho Panza, and while these are the most important themes, analyses have found as many as 53 motifs at play. This level of complexity may seem ambitious, but the overarching theme-and-variations form and Strauss’ vivid imagery—from water droplets in pizzicato strings to a fall from horseback in the harp—make the story easy to follow.

Quixote’s introduction sees the titular protagonist slip into delusion after reading one too many romance books, believing himself a chivalrous knight, and the variations that follow depict his fantastical adventures and battles, where windmills become giants and toy horses fly. The second variation’s use of flutter-tonguing

in the brass to portray an army of bleating sheep stands out as particularly clever, even to the composer himself; Strauss quotes this motif in later works like the *Alpensinfonie* and *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*. Religion is introduced as a sore subject in variation IV, as the Don attacks a procession of “bandits” (in truth, pilgrims carrying a statue of the Virgin Mary). Variation IX, similarly, has bassoons as a pair of monks, whom Don Quixote sees as evil sorcerers. Ultimately, in the final variation, the Don finds bittersweet clarity and peace with God in death, leaving the audience to ponder his tall tale—after all, as Cervantes says, “too much sanity may be madness, and maddest of all is to see life as it is and not as it should be.”

Symphony No. 4

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born: May 7, 1833, in Hamburg, Germany

Died: April 3, 1897, in Vienna

For such a successful symphonic composer, Brahms wrote some works on a strange timeline: He premiered his first symphony in 1876 at the late age of 43, then wrote the next three in quick succession. Ideas for a fourth symphony came soon after the Third’s premiere, although Brahms, always tiptoeing around the symphonic form, demurred on his progress in an 1885 letter to a friend: “Cherries never get ripe for eating in these parts, so do not be afraid to say if you don’t like the taste. I am not at all eager to write a bad No. 4.” And again, in a letter to conductor Hans von Bülow, there’s imagery of bitter fruit and eventual decay: “I rather fear [the symphony] has been influenced by this climate, where the cherries never ripen. You would never touch them!” Here, Brahms refers to his melancholy turn of mind, brought about

by summers spent studying Sophoclean tragedies in his Austrian mountain home. The weight of Beethoven’s legacy, under which Brahms had always suffered, was now coupled with a sense of dread for the twilight of his life and the fear that he may never write a fifth symphony of his own. Indeed, the Fourth is a spiritual successor to Beethoven’s Fifth in its musings on fate and death; this is Brahms’ only symphony to end in a minor key.

The first movement begins casually, as though opening a book in the middle, with a sighing motif of descending thirds in the violins. This intervallic play, in a way foreshadowing Schoenberg, solidifies the Fourth as Brahms’ most cerebral symphony. The overall atmosphere is sober and patrician, a mood that carries into the *Andante moderato* through its opening ceremonial horn call. The modal fanfare is taken over by clarinets, sweetly leading us to E Major. It seems paradoxical to describe the second movement as a funeral parade in a major key, but miraculously, Brahms pulls it off; a Wagnerian influence is palpable here.

The Allegro giocoso is as close to a true scherzo as Brahms ever got, not in form but in the definition: scherzo means “joke” in Italian. The third movement is a riotous romp in the joyful key of C Major, and a much needed contrast from the previous melancholia. The finale is the intellectual highlight, as Brahms harkens back to the Baroque; the trombones, tacet until now, introduce a quote from one of Bach’s cantatas as the theme, which Brahms then adapts into a passacaglia of grand proportions.

Horn player Carys Sutherland earned her Bachelor of Music degree at Juilliard in 2024.

Meet the Artists



Nicholas Carter

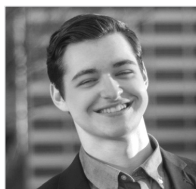
Nicholas Carter, the newly appointed music director of the Staatsoper and Staatsorchester Stuttgart for the 2026–27 season, has emerged as one of our most riveting opera conductors, acclaimed for his arresting presence in the pit. Equally sought-after in the concert hall, Carter conducts a wide breadth of symphonic repertoire and maintains regular collaborations with leading international orchestras. He opens this season with his return to the Metropolitan Opera to conduct Strauss' *Arabella*, followed by debuts with Semperoper Dresden in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Verdi's *La Traviata* as well as with Bayerische Staatsoper for Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*. Carter concludes the season with his return to the Glyndebourne Festival for Britten's *Billy Budd*. In previous seasons, Carter has worked with the Wiener Staatsoper, Oper Zürich, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Hamburgische Staatsoper, Oper Köln, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, and Santa Fe Opera. Alongside regular collaborations with Australia's leading symphony orchestras, Carter's recent and forthcoming symphonic highlights include debuts with the Oslo Philharmonic, Toulouse National Orchestra, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra (RSB), BBC Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic, and Hong Kong Philharmonic. Carter previously held positions as kapellmeister at both the Staatsoper Hamburg and Deutsche Oper Berlin and served as the principal conductor at the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra from 2016 to 2019, chief conductor at the Stadttheater Klagenfurt and the Kärntner Sinfonieorchester from 2018 to 2021, and most recently chief conductor and co-opern-direktor at Bühnen Bern from 2021 to 2025.



Elena Ariza

Elena Ariza (BCJ exchange '16; MM '21, Artist Diploma '23, cello) is recognized for her artistry, versatility, and commitment to community engagement. She has performed in venues including Carnegie Hall, the Berliner Philharmonie, Davies Symphony Hall, Royal Concertgebouw, and Seiji Ozawa Hall. A participant in the 2024 Naumburg International Cello Competition, Ariza won first prize at the 2025 William C. Byrd Young Artist Competition, 2022 Gustav Mahler Prize Cello Competition, and 2022 Philharmonic Society of Arlington Young Artist Competition. An avid chamber musician, she has collaborated with artists including Itzhak Perlman, Steven Tenenbom, Vivian Weilerstein, and members of the Brentano and Cassatt string quartets, and she has attended festivals including Marlboro Music Festival, Ravinia Steans Institute, and the Perlman Music Program. Featured on Yo-Yo Ma's Music Art Life project and on NPR's *From the Top*, Ariza has performed for musicians including Colin Carr, David Finckel, Clive Greensmith, Frans Helmerson, Gary Hoffman, Paul Katz, Ralph Kirshbaum, Philippe Muller, and Marcy Rosen. Dedicated to social impact, Ariza has collaborated with Project: Music Heals Us to perform and teach music in correctional facilities across California and New York. She is the 2025–27 cellist fellow for Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect and a teaching assistant to Astrid Schween at Juilliard. Along with her Juilliard studies, Ariza earned her bachelor's at Columbia University in computer science as part of the Columbia-Juilliard Exchange Program. Her mentors include Richard Aaron, Joel Krosnick, Ronald Leonard, Sieun Lin, Schween, and Eric Sung.

C.V. Starr Doctoral Fellow



Stephen Adam Savage

A native of Port St. Lucie, Florida, Stephen Adam Savage (BM '25, viola) has been playing the viola for 13 years. He has performed recitals and chamber music and has been a member of prestigious orchestras throughout the world. Most recently, he participated in the 2025 Lionel Tertis Viola Competition, where he received the Karl Doktor prize.

He has also been invited to other competitions worldwide, including the 2025 Concours de Geneva Viola Competition and the 2023 ARD International Music Competition. He was a 2025 international performer at Music@Menlo and performed as a guest chamber musician at the 72nd Ljubljana Festival in Slovenia. Savage, who is continuing his graduate studies at Juilliard in the studios of Paul Neubauer and Toby Appel, received an associate in arts degree from Indian River State College. As a 2021 YoungArts Winner, he was chosen as a 2021 United States Presidential Scholar in the Arts.

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Juilliard Orchestra

Juilliard's largest and most visible student performing ensemble, the Juilliard Orchestra is known for delivering polished and passionate performances of works spanning the repertoire. Comprising nearly 400 students in the bachelor's and master's degree programs, the orchestra appears throughout the season in concerts on the stages of Juilliard's Peter Jay Sharp Theater, Alice Tully Hall, and Carnegie Hall. The orchestra is a strong partner to Juilliard's other divisions, appearing in opera, dance, and drama productions as well as presenting an annual concert of world premieres by Juilliard student composers. This season, an impressive roster of world-renowned conductors lead the Juilliard Orchestra, including Marin Alsop, David Belkowsky, Nicholas Carter, Stephanie Childress, Joseph Colaneri, JoAnn Falletta, Patrick Furrer, Fabien Gabel, Barbara Hannigan, Jonathon Heyward, Ken Lam, Brad Lubman, and David Moody as well as faculty conductors David Robertson, the director of conducting studies and distinguished visiting faculty, and Jeffrey Milarsky. Among the virtual projects students from the orchestra participated in during the 2020 lockdown was *Bolero Juilliard*, which became a viral sensation. The Juilliard Orchestra has toured across the U.S. and throughout Europe, South America, and Asia, where it was the first Western conservatory ensemble allowed to visit and perform following the opening of the People's Republic of China in 1987, returning two decades later, in 2008. In summer 2019, the orchestra traveled to London, where they performed alongside the Royal Academy of Music in Royal Albert Hall at the BBC Proms. Other ensembles under the Juilliard Orchestra umbrella include the conductorless Juilliard Chamber Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, Lab Orchestra, and the contemporary music group AXIOM.

Juilliard Orchestra

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Second Violin

Jueyeon Diana Lee,
Principal Second
Sungmin Choi
Isabela Diaz
Daoyi Dong
Anthony Dorsey
Simon Hagopian
Yugin Huang
Jenny Jin
Sara Maxman
Audrey Park
Hanchi Shi
Sisi Tian
Taian Yan
Shunzhe Zhang

Viola

Stephen Adam Savage,
Principal
Stephen Chang
Aliza Creel
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Camden M. Archambeau
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Wujin Kim
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Double Bass

Yue Zhang, *Principal*
Lucas Caceres
Maxine Gimbel
Moa Glimberg
Eric Liu
Isabelle Teo
Lauren Ugarte
Jing Yun Wang

Flute

Phoebe Rawn,
*Principal*³
Brooke Walden,
Principal^{1,2}

Piccolo

Subin Cho^{1,2}
Brooke Walden³

Oboe

Will Simpfordorfer,
Principal^{1,2}
Yang Yu, *Principal*³
Jiayun Li

English Horn

Yang Yu

Clarinet

Yejin Ahn, *Principal*²
Jerry Han, *Principal*¹
Miles Wazni, *Principal*³

E-flat Clarinet

Jerry Han

Bass Clarinet

Miles Wazni

Bassoon

Cole George,
Principal^{1,2}
Zachary VonCannon,
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Lucca Caise
Vinay Sundar

Contrabassoon

Lucca Caise

Horn

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Sylvia Beach, *Principal*³
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