

The Handel and Haydn Society will bring live performances back to iconic venues with its 2021-22 season, celebrating the 13th and final season for Artistic Director Harry Christophers. The 207th season will feature eight signature programs at historic venues around Boston including Symphony Hall and H+H's first ever performance at Carnegie Hall.

Christophers's final season will showcase the H+H Orchestra and Chorus performing music that has been the foundation of his tenure including masterpieces from Handel and Haydn Mozart, Bach, Beethoven, Bologne, Vivaldi, Gabrieli and Farrenc, and will be a triumph of choral works including Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *Creation* and *Theresienmesse*.

Christophers was appointed Artistic Director at H+H in 2009, the 13th artistic director in the organization's history. During his tenure, the organization has been transformed and H+H is now regarded as one of the finest Baroque and Classical ensembles in the nation. The 2020-21 season was billed as his last season with H+H, but due to the global pandemic Christophers agreed to stay on through the 2021-22 season.

"Serving as Artistic Director of the Handel and Haydn Society has been a privilege. The past twelve years have flown by. Yet when I look back at all we have accomplished together, I feel an immense sense of both pride and gratitude," said Christophers. "I am honored to have been a part of the organization's success and I look forward to watching the organization continue to grow and achieve greater heights."

"For more than a decade, Harry Christophers has pushed the Handel and Haydn Society to new heights with his passion and unmatched talent. Harry has hired the majority of our current roster of musicians, led us in 15 commercial recordings, brought the magic to audiences at Tanglewood and in New York City, and so much more," said David Snead, president and CEO of the Handel and Haydn Society. "His knowledge and dedication shine every time he takes the stage, and in his final year, he and H+H will show what they do best: performing a veritable feast of choral/orchestral masterpieces that, in scale and scope, stands out as unique among American ensembles next season."

The season also will feature the H+H debuts of guest conductors Laurence Equilbey, Raphaël Pichon, and Václav Luks, as well as the return of Jonathan Cohen following his acclaimed debut in March 2020, H+H's final concerts before live performances were prohibited due to COVID. Special guest soloists will include sopranos Carolyn Sampson, Mary Bevan, and Joëlle Harvey; countertenor Reginald Mobley; tenors James Way, Jeremy Budd, and Robert Murray; baritones Roderick Williams and Sumner Thompson; and bass-baritone Matthew Brook.

New this season, guests no longer need to worry about last minute scheduling conflicts as H+H will livestream all Sunday performances at Symphony Hall. The streams will be free to all subscribers and will remain online for future viewing so guests can watch them at their leisure.

### **The 2021-22 Season**

The 207th season will kick off with **Vivaldi *The Four Seasons*** on October 8 and 10, 2021 at Symphony Hall in Boston. Concertmaster Aisslinn Nosky will lead the H+H Orchestra in its first

performance in front of a live audience since March of 2020. The concert will pair an all-time masterpiece with a new work inspired by a remarkable composer whose career has gone largely overlooked for centuries. First published in 1725, *The Four Seasons* stands as one of the earliest examples of music with a narrative element, evoking the sounds of nature. One of the most popular pieces in classical music, Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* has crossed over into popular culture, appealing to the broadest possible audience of classical music listeners. The concert will also include Jonathan Woody's Suite for String Orchestra after the works of Charles Ignatius Sancho. Commissioned by H+H and premiered in 2021, this original piece plays on the themes of Sancho, who was born on a ship carrying enslaved people, escaped slavery, and became the first person of African descent to vote in a British election and to publish classical music. Additional works will be announced at a later date.

The season continues November 5 and 7, 2021 at Symphony Hall with **Beethoven's Symphony No. 6, Pastoral**. Laurence Equilbey, conductor of Paris's acclaimed Insula period instrument orchestra and accentus choir, will make her H+H debut. Equilbey will take the audience on a walk in the country with Beethoven's Symphony No. 6. H+H is dedicated to bringing audiences the best possible musical experiences, including best-loved masterpieces as well as neglected gems. In that vein, the orchestra will perform French composer and pianist Louise Farrenc's vibrant and dramatic Symphony No. 3,

an H+H premiere of a work composed in 1847. Farrenc is an icon for gender equality. She was the only woman to be appointed to the position of professor at the Paris Conservatory in the 19th century, and publicly fought pay inequality for a decade before she was granted an equal wage with her male counterparts.

For the 168th consecutive year, H+H will celebrate the holiday season with performances of **Handel's Messiah**, at Symphony Hall on November 26, 27, and 28, 2021. For the last time as Artistic Director, Harry Christophers will lead the H+H Orchestra and Chorus in this all-time masterpiece. The performance will showcase Christophers at his finest. Christophers has been met with glowing reviews for his command of baroque and classical music with the Boston Classical Review once writing "No conductor in Boston has quite the feel for this music as Christophers." The 2021 performance will feature soprano Carolyn Sampson, countertenor Reginald Mobley, tenor James Way, and baritone Roderick Williams.

On December 3 and 5, 2021, French conductor Raphaël Pichon will make his US and H+H debut in **Bach Christmas**. Pichon is the founder and artistic director of Pygmalion, a French choir and period instrument orchestra. He'll lead the H+H Orchestra and Chorus in J.S. Bach's exultant Magnificat, BWV 243. The celebration of the season continues with Italian composer Giovanni Gabrieli's "Hodie Christus natus est." Written at the turn of the 17th century, it is one of the older works performed by H+H this season, "Hodie Christus natus est" is a choral masterpiece celebrating the birth of Jesus. **Bach Christmas** will be the only H+H performance in Boston not performed at Symphony Hall this season. The December 3 concert will be at the St. Cecilia Parish in Boston, while the December 5 performance will be at First Church Cambridge.

H+H will kick off the new year on January 7 and 9, 2022, as Václav Luks, artistic director of Prague's Collegium 1704, makes his H+H debut leading **Beethoven's Symphony No. 7**.

Beethoven's exuberant and energetic symphony is creatively paired with Bologne's Overture to *L'amant Anonyme* and the H+H premiere of Czech composer Jan Vaclav Voříšek's Symphony in D Major. Voříšek was contemporary of Beethoven and Schubert, while Bologne's work was written decades before the others; its elegant, charming and incredibly emotional approach make it a perfect companion piece.

The music of **Haydn + Mozart** takes center stage on January 28 and 30, 2022 at Symphony Hall. All eyes will be on the dynamic concertmaster Aisslinn Nosky as she performs Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 1, an H+H premiere, while Christophers will lead the H+H Orchestra in another H+H premiere in Haydn's Symphony No. 103, *Drum Roll*. The H+H Chorus will join the H+H Orchestra for a performance of Haydn's *Theresienmesse*, the solemn mass written in 1799 honoring Empress Maria Theresa. The performance will feature internationally renowned British soprano Mary Bevan, British mezzo-soprano Catherine Wyn-Rogers, English tenor Jeremy Budd who is a former Head Chorister of St. Paul's Cathedral, and American baritone Sumner Thompson, one of today's most sought after performers. This program will be recorded live and become the final installment of H+H's acclaimed recordings of Haydn masses, and the penultimate recording of Mozart concertos.

On April 1 and 3, 2022, H+H performs **Bach + Vivaldi**. Conducted by Jonathan Cohen, founder and artistic director of Arcangelo and well-known for his passion and commitment to chamber music, the performance will include CPE Bach's Magnificat, featuring festive trumpets and drums, J.S. Bach's Orchestral Suite No. 1, BWV 1066 and Vivaldi's sunny Gloria, RV 589. The H+H Orchestra and Chorus will be joined by Joëlle Harvey, an American soprano recognized as one of the most promising talents of her generation, American tenor Nicholas Phan, described by the *Boston Globe* as "one of the world's most remarkable singers," and baritone Tyler Duncan.

On April 7, 2022 the Handel and Haydn Society Chorus will make its debut at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Bernard Labadie, principal conductor of the Orchestra of St. Luke's and founder of the La Chapelle de Québec chorus, will take the baton as the H+H Chorus joins La Chapelle de Québec and the Orchestra of St. Luke's in performing J.S. Bach's masterpiece **St. Matthew Passion**.

The Harry Christophers era will conclude in spectacular fashion on April 29 and May 1, 2022 at Symphony Hall in Boston with **Haydn *The Creation***, an oratorio that depicts and celebrates the creation of the world. In his final appearance as Artistic Director, Harry Christophers will lead the H+H Orchestra and Chorus in a spectacular performance of this exalted choral work, featuring soprano Joëlle Harvey, tenor Robert Murray, baritone Tyler Duncan, and bass-baritone Matthew Brook. H+H has a long history with *The Creation* as the Chorus premiered the work in the United States in 1819. Christophers himself led H+H in a performance of *The Creation* in 2015 as part of H+H's Bicentennial celebration.

"Considered one of Haydn's masterpieces, *The Creation* has always been one of my favorite works, allowing both the H+H Orchestra and Chorus to shine," said Christophers. This triumphant piece is a celebration of new beginnings, a perfect finale to my time as Artistic Director as the organization embarks on a new journey."

The Handel and Haydn Society plans to introduce additional performances to the 2021- 22 season schedule as circumstances permit.

The Handel and Haydn Society is committed to the health and safety of our musicians and audiences. H+H will follow all health guidelines put forth by the local health departments and the venues in which H+H performs.

Subscription packages are now available with great savings and may be purchased by calling 617-266-3605 or visiting [www.handelandhaydn.org](http://www.handelandhaydn.org). Subscribers will receive the new benefit of access to H+H's digital streaming season. Single tickets will go on sale in August 2021.