

**M** Manhattan  
School of Music

# **MSM PHILHARMONIA**

**Perry So**, Conductor

Thursday, February 24, 2022 | 7:30 PM  
Neidorff-Karpati Hall

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Neidorff-Karpati Hall

# MSM PHILHARMONIA

Perry So, Conductor

## **PROGRAM**

UNSUK CHIN *Frontispiece for Orchestra*  
(b. 1961)

CÉCILE CHAMINADE *Callirboë Suite, Op. 37*  
(1857–1944)  
*Prélude*  
*Pas du voile*  
*Scherzettino*  
*Pas des cymbales*

## *Intermission*

GUSTAV MAHLER *Symphony No. 1 in D Major (“Titan”)*  
(1860–1911)  
*Langsam. Schleppend. Wie ein Naturlaut*  
*Kräftig bewegt*  
*Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen*  
*Stürmisch bewegt – Energisch*

# MSM PHILHARMONIA

## VIOLIN 1

**Christophe Koenig,**  
concertmaster  
*East Aurora, New York*

**Youjin Choi**  
*Seoul, South Korea*

**Minseon Kim**  
*Seoul, South Korea*

**Nini Giorgadze**  
*Kutaisi, Georgia*

**Yihan Zhu**  
*Shanghai, China*

**Hanlon Mcgarity**  
*Bellingham, Washington*

**Tara Pagano-Toub**  
*New York, New York*

**Corinne Au**  
*Short Hills, New Jersey*

**Amelia Bailey**  
*Round Hill, Virginia*

**Jihyeon Kim**  
*Seoul, South Korea*

**Noel Doblas**  
*Bilbao, Spain*

**Thierry Neves**  
*Goiania, Brazil*

**Risa Hokamura**  
*Kodaira City, Japan*

**Vlad Hontila**  
*Cluj-Napoca, Romania*

**Ji Su Kang**  
*Seoul, South Korea*

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**Magdiell Antequera**  
Chirinos, principal  
*Coro, Venezuela*

**Ziyao Sun**  
*New York, New York*

**Licheng Chen**  
*Wenzhou, China*

**Bin Gui**  
*Qingdao, China*

**Basil Alter**  
*Memphis, Tennessee*

**Yi Hsuan Lu**  
*Tainan City, Taiwan*

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*Palo Alto, California*

**Ally Cho**  
*Melbourne, Australia*

**Selin Algoz**  
*Istanbul, Turkey*

**Lumeng Yang**  
*New York, New York*

**Carlos Martinez**  
Arroyo  
*Cordoba, Spain*

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*Seoul, Korea*

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*New Orleans, Louisiana*

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*Maplewood, New Jersey*

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**Zofia Los Leznicka**  
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Haettenschwiller\*  
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*Seoul, Korea*

**Kahlin Jordan**  
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**Ki-Deok Park\***  
*Chicago, Illinois*

**Jue Mei**  
*New York, New York*

**Alexander Parlee\***  
*Vista, California,*

**Spencer Reese**  
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*Ellicott City, Maryland*

**Constance Mulford**  
*Setauket, New York*

**Kevin Saum**  
*Valley Cottage, New York*

**Thomas Viola\***  
*North Caldwell, New Jersey*

**Shengmu Wang\***  
*Taoyuan, Taiwan*

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*Washington, D.C.*

**Matthew Beesmer**  
*Accord, New York*

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*Bridgewater, New Jersey*

**Carolyn Douthat**  
*Wayne, New Jersey*

**Benjamin Hambro\***  
*Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey*

**Allie Jenkins**  
*Jacksonville, Florida*

**Kyle Nix**  
*Pontotoc, Mississippi*

**Themba Pieterse\***  
*Albany, New York*

**Jesdelson Vasquez\***  
*Brooklyn, New York*

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**Ihab Hamideh**  
*Corona, California*

**Liam McDonald**  
*New York, New York*

**Harry Ning\***  
*Changsha, China*

**Kesem Ninio**  
*Haifa, Israel*

**Jacob Ogbu\***  
*New York, New York*

**Jahi Alexander**  
*Baltimore, Maryland*

**Samuel George\***  
*Orlando, Florida*

**Benjamin McLaughlin**  
*West Milford, New Jersey*

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**Sebastian Gonzalez\*\***  
*Austin, Texas*

**Tyler Woodbury**  
*Chicopee, Massachusetts*

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**Matthias Ziolkowski**  
*Montigny-en-Gobelle, France*

**William Richards**  
*Wheaton, Illinois*

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**Jeremiah Grace**  
*Buda, Texas*

**Hwaneek Pak**  
*Columbia, Maryland*

**Evan Silberstein**  
*Sparta, New Jersey*

**Liam McDonald**  
*Seaford, New York*

#### **HARP**

**Karen Tay\*\*+**  
*Singapore*

#### **PIANO AND CELESTE**

**Cheryl Chin\***

#### **Brass & Wind Principals**

\* CHIN

^ CHAMINADE

+ MAHLER

# PROGRAM NOTES

## ***Frontispiece for Orchestra*** **Unsuik Chin**

Following studies in Korea, Unsuik Chin moved to Germany in 1985 on a government scholarship to study with György Ligeti. She later settled in Berlin to work in the electronic studio of the Technische Universität. Winner of the 2004 Grawemeyer Award for her Violin Concerto, she also received the 2005 Arnold Schoenberg prize, the 2010 Prince Pierre Foundation Music Award, the 2012 Ho-Am Prize, the 2017 Wihuri Sibelius Prize, the 2019 Hamburg Bach Prize, the 2020 Kravis Prize, and the 2021 Leonie Sonning Music Prize. Chin composes both electronic and acoustic music in a modern, lyrical, original idiom that engages the listener with its orchestral colors and rhythmic imagery.

Chin's works have been performed worldwide by major orchestras such as the Berlin, Los Angeles, London, and China Philharmonics; the Chicago, Boston, Tokyo, BBC, São Paulo, and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras; and the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Royal Concertgebouw, and Swedish Radio Orchestras; and by renowned contemporary ensembles such as the Ensemble Intercontemporain, the London Sinfonietta, the Ensemble Modern, and the Kronos Quartet. Most recently, her Violin Concerto No. 2, "Shards of Silence," was premiered by Leonidas Kavakos with the London Symphony Orchestra in January 2022 after being postponed for a year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Performances are also planned for March in Boston, New York, and Leipzig.

Other recent highlights have included the premieres of *Chant des Enfants des Étoiles* for choirs and orchestra, premiered within the inaugural events at the Lotte Concert Hall in Seoul in 2016, and *Chorós Chordón*, which Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic took on tour to Asia in 2017. Her concerto for orchestra, *SPIRA*, was premiered by the Los Angeles Philharmonic led by Mirga Gražinyte-Tyla in 2019, and her Beethoven-inspired curtain-raiser, *subito con forza*, composed for the 250th Beethoven anniversary in 2020, was premiered by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and has since received many other performances.

Chin served as composer-in-residence with the Seoul Philharmonic between 2006 and 2017, overseeing its contemporary music series, which she also founded. In 2022 she takes up positions as artistic director of both the Tongyeong International Festival in South Korea and the Weiwuying International Music Festival in Taiwan.

Students in this performance are supported by scholarships provided by the Frank & Lydia Bergen Foundation, the Fred J. Brotherton Charitable Foundation, Carol B. Grossman, International Advisory Board, the Maecenata Foundation, Robert Mann, David and Susan Rahm/Allen Berkman, Irene Schultz, the Twiford Foundation, Richard and Laura Weinstock, and the estates of Elizabeth G. Beinecke, Herbert Gold, Joseph F. McCrindle, Homer Mensch, and Penelope Russianoff. We are grateful to the generous donors who made these scholarships possible. For information on establishing a named scholarship at Manhattan School of Music, please contact Susan Madden, Vice President for Advancement, at 917-493-4115 or smadden@msmny.edu.

Unsuk Chin composed *Frontispiece for Orchestra* in 2019 for conductor Alan Gilbert's inaugural season with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, which gave its premiere on September 6 that year. She wrote: "This occasion prompted me to write a short piece in which music history is condensed as if in time lapse: certain aspects of a number of key symphonic works from different eras are evoked, interwoven, and cast in new forms.

"On a detailed level, the piece consists of a number of fragments all relating to gestures typical of certain works and composers. These are never actual style quotations, however, but allusions that are 'translated' into one another in numerous different and occasionally unexpected ways.

"To give just a few examples, I interpret certain chord progressions of Anton Bruckner in the manner of Anton von Webern, Brahmsian harmonies pass through the prism of Charles Ives, splinters of Strauss, Scriabin, and Stravinsky collide, and certain material from Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony—Heaven forbid—is presented *a la manière de* Pierre Boulez.

"This 'translating' process takes place on several levels: diverse materials and gestures, ranging from Baroque music to the avant-garde, are processed and transformed so that something very different arises as a sum of their interactions. All of this happens at a rather microscopic level: the allusions are not immediately perceivable, nor is tracing them necessary to 'understand' the piece. On the level of the macrostructure, the piece is held together by a certain chord, which is, exceptionally, completely self-sufficient, like a pillar.

"*Frontispiece* reflects my decades-long experience with landmark works of the symphonic literature as both composer and recipient. In extracting distinct aspects of works of certain composers, Anton von Webern's art of revealing a 'universe in a nutshell' by means of extreme compression served as a particular inspiration."

—©Compiled by Jane Vial Jaffe

## ***Callirhoë Suite, Op. 37*** **Cécile Chaminade**

Cécile Chaminade won great fame during her lifetime primarily for her roughly 200 character pieces for piano and 125 mélodies or songs. Most of her 400 works were published, which was highly unusual for a woman at the time. She promoted her music through many concert tours, and her popularity spread not only in her native France but throughout England, where she performed regularly beginning in 1892 and became a welcome guest of Queen

Victoria. Her fame grew in the United States as well—many Chaminade Clubs sprang up around 1900, and one could buy Chaminade postcards.

All that celebrity, however, did not prevent a sharp decline in her reputation in the twentieth century as her music began to be viewed as old-fashioned. She was caught in the biases of the time—her lyrical character pieces and songs were deemed too feminine, and her more vigorous, complex pieces, such as the well-known *Concertstück* for piano and orchestra, were considered too masculine.

As a child Cécile had been taught piano by her mother and had shown such promise that Bizet called her "my little Mozart." He suggested that she study at the Paris Conservatoire, but her father forbade it. At the time very few women had ever been admitted, and certain classes were available only to men. Instead she studied privately with members of the conservatory faculty.

Chaminade had composed her first pieces in the mid-1860s and even had her Two Mazurkas published in 1869. She was to continue to write dance-inspired music throughout her career. In the 1880s she published her first chamber work, the Piano Trio, Op. 11, and the following year she composed her first orchestral piece, the four-movement *Suite d'orchestre*, Op. 20. In 1887 her father died, and Chaminade curtailed her composing of larger works in favor of short saleable pieces in order to secure her living. She did, however, compose her Concertino for flute and orchestra in 1901 as a test piece for the Paris Conservatoire, a work that remains in the standard flute literature. Belatedly, in 1913 she was admitted to the Légion d'Honneur—the first woman composer thus honored.

During World War I Chaminade directed a convalescent home for soldiers near Sablettes on the Côte d'Azur. In the 1920s her health began a steady decline, owing in part to her extreme vegetarian diet. She moved to Monte Carlo in 1936 and was cared for by her niece, who worked to promote Chaminade's work after her death.

The music for the ballet *Callirhoë* was to have been composed by Benjamin Godard, but he was busy with another project and offered it to Chaminade, who completed the work in 1887. Based on a poem by Anacreon, the scenario was written by Elzéard Rougier. Replete with twenty-two numbers (twenty-one in the piano-vocal reduction), the ballet was premiered on March 16, 1888, at the Grand Théâtre in Marseilles and received two hundred performances! Chaminade's delightful music, from which she fashioned a four-movement suite, shows all the characteristic elements of her style: tuneful and memorable melodies, colorful evocations of nature scenes and "exotica," lightly chromatic harmonies, and sparkling wit.

The story, typical of French ballet for centuries, involves a “suspend-your disbelief” mythological story ideal for presenting much beautiful dancing and pageantry. The story concerns Greek warrior Alcmeon, in love with captive princess Callirhoë, who is perceived as cold because she spurns his advances. The goddess Venus comes to his aid by turning her into a statue in a fountain, whose water will make anyone who drinks it forget their anguished love. He watches as goatherd Lycidas solves his similar problem by drinking and forgetting shepherdess Myrtha, who also drinks and forgets, and they both go off happily together. Alcmeon won’t drink because he doesn’t want to forget his love for Callirhoë. Eventually Callirhoë, the statue, comes back to life, having forgotten his past behavior, and they happily unite.

The four selections in the orchestral suite begin with the *Prélude*, a lovely, atmospheric pastorella that sets the scene—a landscape of oleander, olive trees, and pines with a statue of Venus in a fountain and the sea just visible beyond—and concludes with a section of merry wit. The second number, *Pas des écharpes* (Dance of the scarves), has become one of Chaminade’s most performed pieces through her various arrangements. Trying to win over Callirhoë, Alcmeon has had his slaves bring many sumptuous scarves, which they offer to her in this dance. (She picks the most somber and dances with it as a funeral garment.) In the lighthearted *Scherzettino*, Callirhoë dances with Venus’s attendant cupids, who have enticed Callirhoë with their charming games.

The *Pas des cymbales* originated as the second of two piano duets, Op. 36, which Chaminade composed in 1886 and incorporated into the ballet suite. One of the entertaining dances just after the *Scherzettino*, its Arabian-like touches show Chaminade capitalizing on the French interest in “exotica”—music that purports to represent foreign lands—much in the way of Saint-Saëns or Chabrier. The piece makes a lively conclusion to this highly entertaining suite, which makes one wonder why the ballet has not been revived except in an audio recording realized by Martin Yates and the BBC in 2016.

## Symphony No. 1 in D Major (“Titan”) Gustav Mahler

“Down with program books! They propagate false ideas!” shouted Mahler at a dinner party. “The audience should be left to its own thoughts about the work that is being played. It should not be prejudiced in any manner.” Mahler wavered on the issue of providing program notes throughout his life. He supplied no program when his *Symphonic Poem in Two Parts* (as the First Symphony was originally called) was first performed in Budapest on November 20, 1889. Although the orchestra was enthusiastic about the work,

public reaction was cold, and one critic blamed Mahler for not providing the audience with any programmatic guide.

In January 1893 Mahler revised the score, renamed the work, and added programmatic titles. When he conducted the work for the second time, in October in Hamburg, he provided these titles with limited explanation:

Part I: From the Days of Youth. Flower, Fruit, and Thorn Pieces

1. Spring without End. The introduction represents the awakening of nature at dawn.
2. A Chapter of Flowers.
3. Under Full Sail.

Part II: Commedia Umana [Human Comedy]

4. Stranded! A funeral march in the manner of Callot [sixteenth-century etcher and engraver]. The following is to serve as explanation if necessary. The composer found the external stimulus to this piece from a pictorial parody, *The Hunter’s Funeral Procession*, well known to all children in southern Germany. [Scholars believe Mahler was actually thinking of an early nineteenth-century woodcut by Moritz von Schwind, not Callot.] The forest animals accompany the dead hunter’s coffin to the grave. The hares carry flags; in front is a band of Gypsy musicians and music-making cats, frogs, crows, and so on, while deer, stags, foxes and other four-footed and feathered denizens of the woods accompany the procession in comic postures. In the present piece the imagined expression is partly ironically gay, partly gloomily brooding. The movement is immediately followed by
5. Dall’Inferno al Paradiso [From Hell to Heaven], the sudden outbreak of a profoundly wounded heart.

By the time the Symphony was published Mahler again felt such a revulsion for programmatic explanations that none appear in the score. Yet as late as 1896 he wrote to Berlin critic and composer Max Marschalk that there was some justification for the title *Titan* and for the program—even though these were attached after the actual composition, were inadequate, and tended to mislead the public.

The subtitle *Titan* was once assumed to refer to a mythological figure, then to the Jean-Paul Richter novel, but Natalie Bauer-Lechner insisted in a 1900 letter and in her *Recollections* that Mahler simply intended it to indicate his general feelings toward the Symphony and to represent his own idea of a hero of the Titan race as he dealt with Fate. Although Mahler later deleted the subtitle just as he had the programmatic explanations, it remained affixed for commercial reasons.



The five items in Mahler's program refer to movements of the Symphony: "Spring Without End" to the first, "Under Full Sail" to the scherzo, "The Hunter's Funeral Procession" to the third, and "Dall'Inferno al Paradiso" to the finale. "A Chapter of Flowers" refers to the "Blumine" movement only relatively recently published in 1967 from the original manuscript that Mahler had given to student and lifelong friend Jenny Feld Perrin, whose family kept it until 1959. The purchaser, Mrs. James M. Osborn, donated it to the New Haven Symphony Orchestra. Though motivically related to parts of the scherzo and finale, Mahler eliminated this movement during the major 1896 revisions and decided not to include it in the Symphony's 1898 and 1906 publications, indicating his final thoughts on the matter.

Though the Symphony was composed primarily between 1884 and 1888 (revised in 1893, 1896, and 1898), some of the material originated earlier. Most prominent are quotes from his song cycle *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (*Songs of a Wayfarer*), begun in 1883. Probably the earliest material is in the third movement, for which exists a piano duet fragment entitled "Scherzo," dated 1876 by Mahler scholar Henry-Louis de La Grange.

The first movement begins eerily with a slow introduction on a sustained "A" pedal spanning six octaves, over which can be heard a slow development of the motive employing descending fourths, distant trumpet fanfares, and cuckoo calls (labeled as such in the score). Mahler's expression of the cuckoo call is unique—it descends in the interval of a fourth; almost all previous composers had their cuckoos descend in thirds. The main subject of the movement is based on the second of the *Wayfarer* songs, "Ging heut' Morgen über's Feld." The tune, particularly its descending and rising fourths, provides thematic material for much of the Symphony.

The scherzo, in a peasant-like romping style, has its roots in Austrian folk dance. Its main theme, as in the first movement, germinates from the interval of a fourth. After the ländler-like trio, the scherzo returns in a condensed form.

Mahler's whimsical and slightly deranged funeral march begins with a round devised over a minor-mode version of *Frère Jacques* or the German equivalent *Bruder Martin*. A new countersubject to the folk tune is introduced by the oboe and E-flat clarinet; and the music soon slips into episodes reminiscent of Gypsy or Jewish tunes and German street bands. The middle section contains another self-quote, from the last of the *Wayfarer* songs, "Auf der Strasse stand ein Lindenbaum." Mahler felt this relatively short movement needed the rather extensive description quoted above, whereas he dealt with the monumental finale in one line.

This crowning movement begins with a sudden outburst, and a long musical drama unfolds that could almost exist independently, were it not for thematic references that tie the music to the rest of the Symphony. After the initial F minor episode comes a beautifully lyric passage in D-flat major. The fiery opening is further developed, beginning in G minor, and eventually the first statement of the "triumphal" motive (so-called in the score) is reached through a startling modulation: C major—D major. This climax is a prefatory one; the final denouement occurs after even more development and is delivered with Mahler's instructions that all the horn players stand.

Now that Mahler's First Symphony has become such a popular and frequently performed work, it is difficult to imagine the jeers, catcalls, and scathing criticisms it provoked in Budapest, Vienna, and Weimar. Although the new symphonic realms that Mahler's inspirations unveiled may not terrify today as they did in his own day, they can still arouse awe and wonderment.

—Program notes ©Jane Vial Jaffe

# ABOUT THE ARTIST

## Perry So, Conductor

Perry So was born in Hong Kong in 1982 and received his early musical training in piano, organ, violin, viola, and composition there. He graduated from Yale University with a degree in literature with a focus on the interaction of literature and music in Central Europe in the modernist era, and as a student at Yale he founded an orchestra and led the undergraduate opera company. He received his formal training as a conductor under Gustav Meier at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore. In 2008 he received First and Special Prizes at the Fifth International Prokofiev Conducting Competition in St. Petersburg, Russia. He has subsequently held posts as Assistant, then Associate Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Conducting Fellow of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Artistic Collaborator of the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias in Spain, and he is a member of the conducting faculty at the Manhattan School of Music.

Beginning in 2022, Perry So was appointed Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra (Navarre Symphony Orchestra). A presence in concert halls on five continents, Perry So recently made his debut with the San Francisco Symphony, his European operatic debut at the Royal Danish Opera in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, and his North American operatic debut at Yale Opera in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Recent highlights include a tour to Milan with the Nuremberg Symphony and a seven-week tour of South Africa with three orchestras including Verdi's Requiem in Cape Town, broadcast in July 2020 as the centerpiece of the South African National Arts Festival. This season he returns to the San Francisco Symphony for his debut on the subscription series.

He has enjoyed a long association with the Royal Danish Theatre and the Royal Danish Orchestra both on the concert stage and in the pit for opera and ballet. He has been a frequent guest at Walt Disney Hall and the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and in 2013 toured the Balkan Peninsula at the helm of the Zagreb Philharmonic in the first series of cultural exchanges established after the breakup of Yugoslavia.

Other debuts in recent years include appearances with the Cleveland and Minnesota Orchestras; the symphony orchestras of Málaga, Tenerife, Nuremberg, Israel, New Zealand, Houston, Detroit, New Jersey, and Shanghai; the London, Szeccin, Seoul, and China Philharmonics; the Residentie Orkest in the Hague; and the Staatsorchester Rheinische Philharmonie in Koblenz.

His work in the recording studio encompasses a broad sampling of twentieth-century British, French, and Russian music with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the BBC Concert Orchestra, and his album of Barber and Korngold's Violin Concertos with soloist Alexander Gilman and the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra was awarded the *Diapason d'Or* in January 2012.

His wide-ranging musical interests encompass numerous world premieres on four continents, as well as the reintroduction of Renaissance and Baroque repertory into symphonic programs, most notably championing the works of Jean-Philippe Rameau. His work with young musicians has taken him to the Australian Youth Orchestra, the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, the Round Top Festival, Manhattan School of Music, the Hong Kong Academy for the Performing Arts, and the Yale School of Music.

Perry, his wife Anna, and daughter Caroline divide their time between Boston and Saint Paul, Minnesota, where Anna is professor of History of Science at the University of Minnesota. [www.perryso.com](http://www.perryso.com)



# ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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We want to acknowledge that we gather as Manhattan School of Music on the traditional land of the Lenape and Wappinger past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well.