

Leshnoff bio April 1, 2023

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Distinguished by *The New York Times* as “a leader of contemporary American lyricism,” GRAMMY-nominated composer Jonathan Leshnoff is renowned for his music's striking harmonies, structural complexity, and powerful themes. The Baltimore-based composer has been ranked among the most performed living composers by American orchestras in recent seasons and his compositions have been performed by leading international orchestras and chamber ensembles in hundreds of concerts worldwide. He has received recent commissions from Carnegie Hall, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Baltimore, Dallas, Kansas City, Nashville, and Pittsburgh, among others. Leshnoff's compositions have also been premiered by classical music's most celebrated soloists, including Gil Shaham, Johannes Moser, Manuel Barrueco, Noah Bendix-Balgley and Joyce Yang.

Highlights for the 2023-24 season include a premiere of a Violin Sonata written for Gil Shaham and Robert Spano at the Aspen Music Festival. The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Choir premiere Leshnoff's hour-long oratorio, *The Sacrifice of Isaac* in May of 2024. This work was co-commissioned by the Nashville and Baltimore Symphony Orchestras. Joyce Yang performs Leshnoff's *Piano Concerto* with the Alabama Symphony, under the baton of Carlos Izcaray, and also with the Knoxville Symphony, conducted by Aram Demirjian. JoAnn Falletta will conduct Leshnoff's *Violin Concerto No. 1* with the National Repertory Orchestra in the summer of 2023 and Leshnoff's fifth oratorio, *Saul*, will be premiered with the Harrisburg Symphony under the direction of Stuart Malina.

There are nine all-Leshnoff albums to date. 2023 brings a Naxos release of world premiere recordings from the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, violinist Bendix-Balgley, the Canterbury Voices, and conductor Alexander Mickelthwate, featuring Leshnoff's “*Elegy*”, Violin Concerto No. 2, and “*Of Thee I Sing*” which was commissioned by the Oklahoma City Philharmonic to mark the 25th anniversary of the Oklahoma City Bombing. In 2020, Naxos recording of Leshnoff's of his *Symphony No. 4*, “*Heichalos*” with the Violins of Hope recorded by the Nashville Symphony and conductor Giancarlo Guerrero was nominated for a GRAMMY for Best Classical Compendium. In the fall of 2020, Reference Recordings released a highly acclaimed all-Leshnoff disc featuring world premiere recordings of his *Piano Concerto* and his *Symphony No. 3* commemorating World

War I. Earlier in 2020, Reference Recordings released an extensively reviewed album featuring the world premiere performance of Leshnoff's *Double Concerto for Clarinet and Bassoon* by the Pittsburgh Symphony and conductor Manfred Honeck, which made it to the top of the *Billboard* charts. Other notable releases include a 2016 recording of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus performing Leshnoff's *Symphony No. 2* and *Zohar* oratorio, and three earlier all-Leshnoff albums—of both his orchestral and chamber music works—on the Naxos American Classics label. A disc featuring all of his string quartets was also released in August 2020.

Celebrated by *BBC Music Magazine* as “enchanting” and by *American Record Guide* as “lyrical, virtuosic, tender, and passionate all at once,” Leshnoff’s music has been lauded by *Strings Magazine* as “distinct from anything else that’s out there” and by *The Baltimore Sun* as “remarkably assured, cohesively constructed and radiantly lyrical.” Leshnoff’s catalog is vast, including several symphonies, various concerti, and solo and chamber music works. Leshnoff is a Professor of Music at Towson University.