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Atlanta Symphony's 2022-23 Season: Stutzmann's First, Runnicles's Last

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The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra launches its 78th season in the fall of 2022 with a new music director at the helm. Nathalie Stutzmann, [principal guest conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra](#), becomes the fifth music director and the first woman to hold that position in the ASO's history. She will be on the podium for eight programs during her inaugural season.

As Stutzmann launches her tenure, Principal Guest Conductor Donald Runnicles closes his, which began in 2001 when Robert Spano was named as successor to Yoel Levi as music director. With Spano out of the picture, it makes sense that Runnicles, actually a far more experienced conductor than Stutzmann, would exit as well. He'll conduct Mahler's Fifth Symphony, Bruckner's Eighth Symphony, and Brahms' s German Requiem.

The season opens on September 22 not with Stutzmann on the podium but Peter Oundjian, conducting Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 18 with Emanuel Ax, as well as Joel Thomson's *To Awaken the Sleeper*, and Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances.

Stutzmann's first concert is Oct. 6, with the world premiere of a Philadelphia Orchestra co-commission, *Words for Departure* for choir and orchestra by New England native Hilary Purrington. Also on the program: *Lilacs*, the Walt Whitman setting with which George Walker became the first African American to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music; and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. During the fall, Stutzmann leads two additional programs: one with Brahms's Third Symphony, Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night)*, and César Franck's *Le chasseur maudit (The Accursed Huntsman)*, and the second with Bizet's Symphony in C Major, the *Carmen* Prelude, and selections from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*.

In 2023, she'll take on Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony and Prokofiev's Sinfonia Concertante in February; Bach's Concerto for Oboe and Violin in March; and Bach's St. *Matthew Passion*, in late March and early April. Her penultimate concert includes Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, and her finale will be the overture to Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, Ravel's *Le tombeau de Couperin* and *Boléro*, and Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto.

The season introduces 13 works new to the ASO as well as three new commissions, including *To Awaken the Sleeper* by Atlanta native Joel Thompson, with text by James Baldwin, and the Saxophone Concerto by Tyshawn Sorey, a co-commission with the Lucerne Festival. House premieres include Jessie Montgomery's *Rounds*, *Midnight Sun Variations* by Finland's Outi Tarkiainen, *1920/2019* by Joan Tower, *Fate Now Conquers* by Carlos Simon, *This Midnight Hour* by English composer Anna Clyne, and the Scottish composer Helen Grime's violin concerto.

Seven conductors— Petr Popelka, Kazem Abdullah, Ryan Bancroft, Nicholas Carter, Elim Chan, Han-Na Chang, and Andrew Manze—make their first appearances before the ASO. Guest artists making their Atlanta debuts are sopranos Heidi Stober and Camilla Tilling; mezzos Patricia Bardon and Irene Roberts; tenor Robin Tritschler; baritone Lucas Meacham; basses Justin Austin and Leon Košavac; pianist Tom Borrow; saxophonist Timothy McAllister; and violinists Daniel Lozakovich and Sayaka Shoji.

The orchestra will also welcome back John Storgårds, who joins pianist Inon Barnatan for Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2; violinists Augustin Hadelich, Hilary Hahn, Leila Josefowicz and Gil Shaham; pianists Jonathan Biss, Conrad Tao, and Christina and Michelle Naughton.



Pictured: Nathalie Stutzmann, Tyshawn Sorey

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