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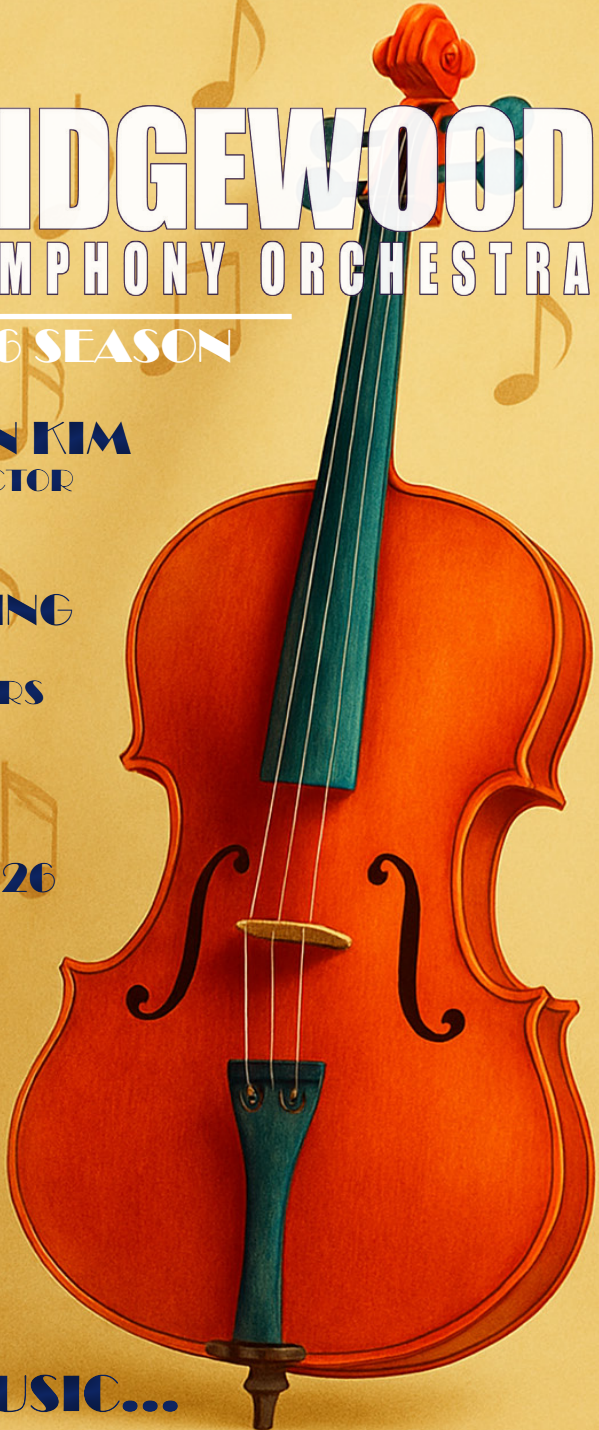
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**Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra**  
**Kyunghun Kim, Artistic Director and Conductor**

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**March 6, 2026**

**Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)**

*Nabucco — Overture*

**Scott Brubaker**, Assistant Conductor

**Franz Liszt (1811–1886)**

*Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Major, S. 125*

**Kwan Yi**, Piano Soloist

Adagio sostenuto assai – Allegro agitato assai – Allegro moderato –  
Allegro deciso – Marziale, un poco meno allegro

**— Intermission —**

**Gustav Mahler (1860–1911)**

*Symphony No. 1 in D Major, “Titan”*

- I. Langsam, schleppend — Immer sehr gemächlich  
(Slow, dragging — Always very leisurely)
- II. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell — Recht gemächlich  
(Powerfully moving, but not too fast — Quite leisurely)
- III. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen  
(Solemn and measured, without dragging)
- IV. Stürmisch bewegt — Energisch  
(Stormily agitated — Energetic)

## About the Artists

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### Kwan Yi

Pianist Kwan Yi has performed throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kimmel Center, the Kennedy Center, Chicago Symphony Center, the Mann Performing Arts Center, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, the Library of Congress, the Metropolitan and Isabella Stewart Gardner Museums, the Großer Sendesaal des Hessischen Rundfunks, the Auditorium du Louvre, Suntory Hall, and the Seoul Arts Center.



*Kwan Yi*

Yi has appeared as a soloist with the Russian National Orchestra and the Houston Symphony Orchestra. He has collaborated with Itzhak Perlman, Miriam Fried, and Roberto Diaz on national tours. He was invited to perform at the Kronberg, Ravinia, Trondheim, and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern festivals as well as Carnegie Hall Presents and the Peoples' Symphony Concerts series. He has recorded for the FHR and Hänssler labels with violinist Itamar Zorman. His debut solo album "The Last Look," featuring late works by Haydn, Brahms and Dutilleux, was released on Centaur Records.

Yi's awards include the Mieczyslaw Munz Prize, the National Federation of Music Clubs Award, and prizes in the Fourth Sendai International Piano Competition.

Yi is a graduate of the Curtis Institute, the Juilliard School, and the Peabody Institute where he worked with Leon Fleisher and Robert McDonald. He currently serves as associate professor of piano at the East Carolina University School of Music. He has given masterclasses at the Curtis Institute of Music, the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the Vivace International Piano Festival.

# UPCOMING CONCERT



*Elaine Douvas*

## Closing Concert - May 3, 2026

3:00 PM West Side Presbyterian Church

Location: 6 S Monroe St. Ridgewood, NJ 07450

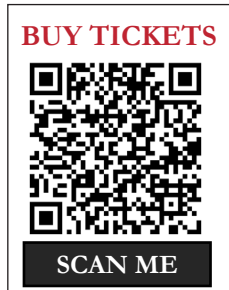
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Harberg, New Commission by RSO

Dvořák, Symphony No. 9, "From the New World"



**KYUNGHUN KIM**, Conductor

**RIDGEWOOD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

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## Scott Brubaker, Assistant Director

Scott Brubaker retired from the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra horn section in 2020 after 47 seasons. There he enjoyed performing, recording, and touring with virtually all of the greatest singers, conductors, and fellow musicians of several generations. During this time he also developed a notable career as a soloist, chamber musician, and recording artist, performing throughout the US, Europe, and Asia. In Japan alone, he made fifteen concert tours, seven as a featured soloist.



*Scott Brubaker*

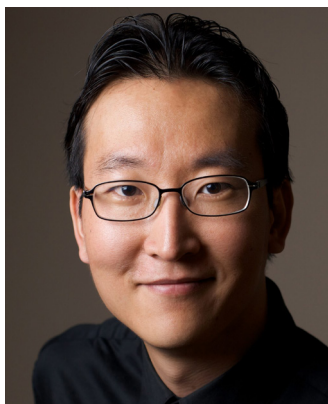
Dedicated to enriching the repertoire for solo horn, and the public's awareness of the horn as a solo voice worthy of greater attention, Mr. Brubaker has commissioned, premiered, and recorded the works of outstanding American composers. Additionally he has transcribed, published, and recorded several important transcriptions, such as the Brahms clarinet and cello sonatas, now available on Spotify.

Still active, Scott performs with Opera Italiana, the New Hampshire Music Festival and various chamber ensembles. He has performed with the Marlboro Festival, the Emerson String Quartet, Speculum Musicae, Harmonie Ensemble, I Musici de Montreal, and the MET Chamber Series. He has appeared with such eminent orchestras as the Boston Symphony, the NY Philharmonic, the Leningrad Philharmonic, St. Luke's, and Orpheus, while summering with the Colorado, Grand Teton, Manchester, and Mostly Mozart Festivals. A graduate of Oberlin College Conservatory, Mr. Brubaker has taught on the faculties of NYU, the Brooklyn Conservatory and Princeton University.

After appearing as a soloist with the Ridgewood Symphony in years past, and more recently coaching brass and woodwind sectionals, Mr. Brubaker has been appointed Assistant Conductor of the Orchestra this season.

## Kyunghun Kim, Artistic Director and Conductor

Maestro Kyunghun Kim is enjoying his fifth season as Artistic Director of the Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra. He also frequently appears as a guest conductor with major South Korean orchestras, such as the Bucheon Philharmonic Orchestra, the SungNam Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Korean Chamber Orchestra. Maestro Kim recently made his debut with WE Philharmonic Orchestra at the renowned Lotte Concert Hall in Korea conducting two sold-out concerts.



*Kyunghun Kim*

Maestro Kim also serves on the music faculty at Lehman College in New York, teaching string instruments and conducting the Lehman College Chamber Orchestra. He holds the additional position of Principal Conductor of the Adelphi Orchestra. Mr. Kim has held positions as Principal Associate Conductor of Ensemble 212, Resident Conductor of the Chelsea Symphony Orchestra, and Assistant Conductor for both The Greenwich Village Orchestra and the New York Symphonic Arts Ensemble. Additionally, he has conducted the Vidin Philharmonic Orchestra and the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra.

Prior to graduating from The Juilliard School in 2011 with a Masters in Orchestral Conducting under James DePriest, Mr. Kim was assistant conductor of AXIOM, a contemporary music ensemble at the Juilliard School, and was conductor of the same school's Music Advancement Program (MAP) orchestra. Before this he earned an Artist Diploma in Conducting from The Curtis Institute of Music, under the auspices of Otto-Werner Mueller. Mr. Kim has participated in numerous prestigious music festivals and masterclasses including a Kurt Masur conducting seminar, the Wiener Meisterkurse, the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, and the Pierre Monteux School, studying with notable conductors such as Kurt Masur, Michael Tilson Thomas, Alan Gilbert, and Marin Alsop.

Born in Seoul, South Korea, Mr. Kim began studying piano and violin at age five. He continued his studies at the Boston Conservatory, where he holds a Bachelor of Music in viola performance. Mr. Kim currently lives in New Jersey with his wife and two children.

# Program Notes

By Edmund A. Moderacki

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## Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)

### Nabucco — Overture

Politics and composers are rarely foremost in the minds of patrons of the musical arts. However, history provides many examples of politics influencing composers, and sometimes composers influencing politics.

Wagner fled Weimar to avoid arrest. Rimsky-Korsakov lost his professorship after supporting students during the 1905 Revolution against the Czar. Prokofiev and Shostakovich both suffered under, and feared arrest from, the regime of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin. Even Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) played a political role in his time.

After the collapse of the Roman Empire in the sixth century, Italy evolved into a patchwork of city-states, kingdoms, territories governed by foreign powers, and lands controlled by the Papacy in Rome. In the mid-nineteenth century, a movement known as the Risorgimento sought to unify the Italian-speaking regions into a single nation.

When Victor Emmanuel II became King of Sardinia (also known as Piedmont-Sardinia), the groundwork for unification was laid. By 1861, enough of the peninsula had been consolidated to proclaim the Kingdom of Italy, with Victor Emmanuel II as king.

Before these events, Verdi had composed two operas when he was presented with a libretto by Temistocle Solera (1815–1878) based on the Babylonian Captivity. The Old Testament recounts the capture of Jerusalem in 587 BC by King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylonia. Much of the Jewish population of Judea was deported to Babylon, where they remained until 539 BC.

Verdi gradually warmed to the subject, completing the opera by August 1841. Premiered in Milan on March 9, 1842 under the title Nabucodonosor, it was an immediate success. By 1845, performances had spread throughout Europe, and by 1848 the opera had been staged in New York. The title was later shortened to Nabucco.

Over time, a myth developed that the opera was composed as an expression of Verdi's support for Italian unification. The chorus "Va, pensiero," sung by the Hebrew slaves longing for their homeland, was said to parallel Italians' desire for unity and was even described as an

unofficial national anthem. While the chorus became associated with the Risorgimento, there is little evidence that Verdi consciously intended it as political propaganda.

Verdi did, however, compose one overtly patriotic opera: *La battaglia di Legnano* (1849), which clearly supported the unification cause.

The slogan “Viva Verdi” also carried a political double meaning: *Viva Vittorio Emanuele Re D’Italia* (“Long live Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy”). It served as a discreet expression of nationalist support under the watchful eyes of authorities.

In 1859 Verdi was elected to the provincial council of Emilia. In March 1861 he took a seat in the Parliament of Piedmont-Sardinia, soon to become the Kingdom of Italy. In 1874 he was appointed to the Italian Senate, though he rarely participated.

## **Franz Liszt (1811–1886)**

### **Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Major, S. 125**

In the eighteenth century, composers seldom revised their works. Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Haydn composed prolifically, and audiences favored novelty over a permanent repertoire. By the nineteenth century, however, composers increasingly revised their music, recognizing that works might endure beyond a single season and responding to publishers’ demands and public expectations. Both Liszt’s concerto and Mahler’s symphony underwent substantial revision.

Like many virtuosi of the early nineteenth century, Franz Liszt (1811–1886) composed works to showcase his own talents. Between 1839 and 1840, Liszt drafted his two piano concertos, then set them aside. He returned to the Second Concerto in 1848 and revised it multiple times, completing the final version in 1861, the version heard today.

The Piano Concerto No. 2 received its premiere on January 7, 1857, in Weimar, where Liszt served as music director of the Grand Ducal Court Orchestra. The soloist was Liszt’s student Hans von Bronsart (1830–1913).

Unlike the traditional three-movement concerto, this work unfolds as one continuous movement divided into six interconnected sections. The orchestra functions not merely as accompaniment but as an equal

*Program notes continued on page 12*

partner with the soloist. Liszt initially considered calling the work a concerto symphonique.

A unifying element ties the concerto together: the opening seven-note theme introduced by the clarinets. Transformed throughout the piece, this theme provides cohesion among its contrasting sections.

## **Gustav Mahler (1860–1911)**

### **Symphony No. 1 in D Major, “Titan”**

Mahler completed the first version of his Symphony No. 1 while serving as assistant conductor at the Leipzig Opera from late 1887 to March 1888, though sketches date back four years earlier.

At its premiere on November 20, 1889, in Budapest, the work differed significantly from the version performed today. Originally described as a symphonic poem, it contained five movements rather than four. The second movement, titled “Blumine,” was adapted from incidental music Mahler had written for a theatrical production based on Joseph Victor von Scheffel’s *Der Trompeter von Säckingen*.

Mahler provided programmatic descriptions and divided the symphony into two parts: “From the Days of Youth” (the first three movements) and “The Human Comedy” (the final two). The premiere was not well received, prompting revisions. “Blumine” was eventually removed, and Mahler discarded the programmatic titles, believing they distracted listeners.

At one stage, Mahler gave the work the subtitle “Titan,” inspired by a novel by the German Romantic author Jean Paul (1763–1825). Although Mahler later withdrew the title, the nickname remains associated with the symphony.

Mahler continued revising the orchestration. Initially scored for standard mid-nineteenth-century forces, he expanded the woodwinds to four of each instrument and increased the horns to seven, creating the rich sonority heard today.

The final revised version was performed in Berlin on March 16, 1896. After years of revisions, the symphony was published in February 1899 in the form we hear this evening.

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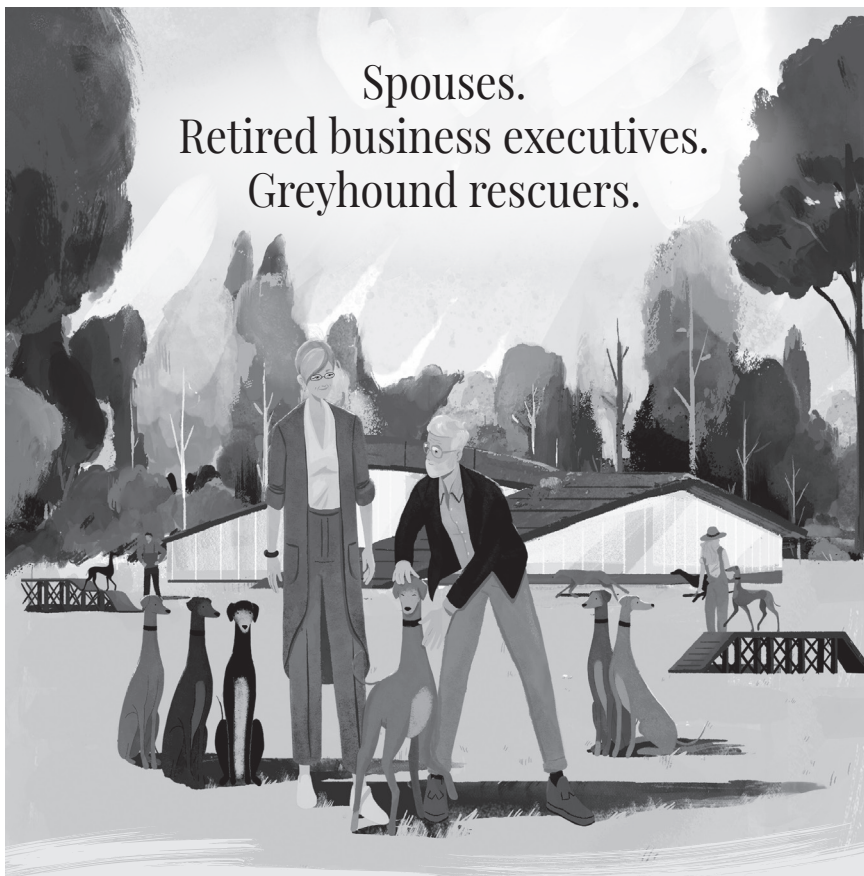
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# Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra

*Kyunghun Kim, Artistic Director and Conductor*

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