

David Eaton (composer)

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David Eaton (born July 2, 1949, Cleveland, Ohio) is an American composer and conductor who has been the music director of the New York City Symphony since 1985.^{[1][2]} He has also been an active composer and arranger, with 52 original compositions and over 600 arrangements and original songs to his credit. He has appeared as a guest conductor with orchestras in Asia, Canada, Israel, Europe,^[3] Central and South America,^[4] Russia, Ukraine and the United States. His compositions and arrangements have been performed at Carnegie Hall,^{[5][6]} Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the United Nations and by orchestras in the United States, Asia, Israel, South America^[7] and Europe.^[7] He also served at the conductor of the historic Goldman Band from 1998 to 2000 conducting the ensemble in concerts throughout the New York metropolitan area including performances at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.



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Early musical experience

He studied formally at the Cleveland Music School Settlement, Ohio State University, and at the Tanglewood Institute. He has attended conducting master classes with Seiji Ozawa, Roger Norrington, Gustav Meier, and Gunther Herbig. He composed his first symphony while a freshman at Ohio State and has been an active composer and arranger for over 40 years. During his time as a student he performed, composed and produced professionally in the northern Ohio area.

In 1974 he became a member of the Unification Church, which impacted his direction as an artist and composer.^{[8][9]} After two years of lay missionary work, he joined the church's performing arts department, which provided him extensive performing opportunities in New York, Los Angeles, Boston, and internationally.^[10] In 1976 he became a member of the New York City Symphony and has since been an active freelance arranger, conductor and recording producer in New York City.

Professional conducting career

Eaton began his professional conducting career in New York City in 1977, conducting the New York City

Symphony Chamber Ensemble in a series of concerts in Manhattan, and has since led that ensemble in numerous concerts in New York City^[11] as well as a United States tour in 1995 and at the United Nations.

In addition to leading the New York City Symphony^[12] in its highly acclaimed Lincoln Center^[13] concert series at Alice Tully Hall, Eaton led the New York City Symphony and its Chamber Ensemble and Brass Choir in numerous concerts at Carnegie Hall,^[14] Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall,^[15] the Manhattan Center, Merkin Hall, Harlem's Apollo Theater,^[16] the United Nations, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

He also served as conductor of the Goldman Band, and led that ensemble in its summer concert series in New York City from 1998 to 2000, including concerts at Lincoln Center, Brooklyn^[17] and Coney Island.^[18]

After his Carnegie Hall debut in 1989, the *New York Daily News* hailed the New York City Symphony as "one of America's finest orchestras."^[19] He later appeared with the NYC Symphony at Carnegie Hall on four occasions, including a concert during Carnegie Hall's Centennial Celebration.^{[20][21]}

In 1997 he led the NYCS Chamber Ensemble in a program at the United Nations during the U.N.'s 50th Anniversary celebration honoring its Non-Governmental Organizations. He has since returned to the U.N. for three subsequent appearances with the NYC Symphony Chamber Ensemble.

In 1988, he led the New York City Symphony on its first international tour.^[22] The tour included four concerts in Japan. and seven performances at the Olympic Arts Festival in Seoul, Korea. The orchestra's appearance at the Seoul Arts Center marked the first time that a Western orchestra had performed at that hall.

That same year Eaton and the NYC Symphony introduced New York audiences to the music of the Academy Award winning composer Tan Dun (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*). The concert, presented at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, featured four of Tan's works, including the world premieres of his Violin Concerto and Third Symphony.^[23]

He made his European conducting debut in 1989 with L'Orchestra Symphonique Français at the Flaine Summer Music Festival. In 1990 and 1991 he made two subsequent guest conducting appearances with that ensemble in Flaine and at the famed Salle Geveau in Paris. He also appeared as a guest conductor with the Ukrainian National Symphony Orchestra in a program of music by American composers at the Kiev International Music Festival in 1991. He was subsequently invited to conduct an all-Mozart program with the Neri Symphony Orchestra of Moscow at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory as part of the International Mozart Bicentennial Festival in Moscow.

Other guest-conducting appearances include concerts with members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (UK), the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony, the Les Amis Chamber Ensemble of Toronto at the St. Lawrence Performing Arts Center, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Taipei City Symphony Orchestra at the National Concert Hall in Taiwan, the Orquestra Sinfonica Nacional de Guatemala, the Soo Won Symphony (Korea), the Asunción National Symphony Orchestra (Paraguay),^[4] the Goldman Band at Lincoln Center, the Hanoi Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Repertory Ballet (NY) and the Chamber Players of the Americas at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. In 2007 he returned to Korea to conduct the Camerata Chamber Orchestra at the World Culture and Sports Festival. His guest conducting appearance with David D'Or and the Hanoi Philharmonic at the Hanoi Opera House in 2013 was a part the 20th Anniversary celebration of diplomatic relations between Viet Nam and Israel.

He conducted the Belgrade Philharmonic in Serbia in the world premiere concert of *Halelu---Songs of David* in May 2007,^[24] a work that he co-composed with Israeli vocalist and composer David D'Or. In October 2007, he conducted a second performance of *Halelu* with the Sofia (Bulgaria) Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus.

In November 2007 he was featured conductor/arranger in the "Three Sopranos Peace Concert" presented in Asunción, Paraguay. On September 9, 2011 he conducted the NYC Symphony at the General Assembly of the United Nations as part of the UN's 10th Anniversary Commemorative Program honoring the victims of the 9/11 attacks. The program included excerpts of the "Halelu" cantata and his "Hope of All Ages" music. He conducted the NYC Symphony Chamber Ensemble in a return performance at the United Nations in February 2012 at the closing ceremony of the U.N.'s Interfaith Conference. In 2013 he returned to Taiwan to conduct the Evergreen Symphony Orchestra at the National Concert Hall in Taipei.

Music for Peace

A committed advocate for peace and interreligious reconciliation, Mr. Eaton has traveled to the Middle East on numerous occasions since 2003 to produce concerts and conferences in association with the Middle East Peace Initiative (MEPI). He has also written articles and appeared at speaking engagements (including at the United Nations) promoting the utilization of art and music in the effort of creating an atmosphere conducive to inter-cultural and inter-religious harmony.

It was at the MEPI Peace Concert in Jerusalem in 2004 that he first met the renowned Israeli singer-composer David D'Or, which resulted in a collaboration that led to the creation of the Cantata for Peace, *Halelu—Songs of David*.^[25]

His professional relationship with Japanese soprano Seiko Lee^[26] has resulted in numerous concerts, musical arrangements, and recordings that advocate the ideals of peace and reconciliation. Both are charter members of Artists Association for World Peace (AAWP), an organization that encourages artists to use their creative abilities in the most humanitarian and altruistic fashion. He has also co-produced peace-related concerts and conferences in Asia, South America, and Europe.

In addition, he is the President and co-founder of the Peace Music Foundation, a non-profit organization that has sponsored an international peace-song writing contest and various peace-related cultural activities. He was the producer of the CD, *Songs for Peace*, that features the winning entries of the inaugural PMF peace-song competition in 2005. He also co-produced the "Heart to Heart" CD (2004) for MEPI and the Peace Song Competition CD, "Peace Is In Our Hands," for the Universal Peace Federation in 2006.

In 2007 he was awarded an honorary doctorate degree from the Universidad Metropolitana de Asunción (Paraguay) in recognition of his efforts to promote peace through the art of music.

Composing and arranging

In addition to his conducting career, Eaton has been a prolific composer, arranger, and producer with 49 original compositions and more than 600 original songs and arrangements to his credit. In 1986 he was the lead orchestrator for the Universal Ballet Company's production of *Shim Chung, The Blindman's Daughter* (music by Kevin Pickard), which won the award for best entry in the Seoul Olympic Arts Festival.

Two of his compositions, *Fantasie for Violin, Cello, Piano and Strings* (1990) and *Three Miniatures for Chamber Orchestra* (1991), were performed at Carnegie Hall by the New York City Symphony under his direction. His symphonic band work, *Melavations* (2000), was premiered by the Goldman Memorial Band at Lincoln Center as part of that ensemble's 2000 summer concert season.^[27] Another recent composition, *Morning's Calm* for Soprano and Chamber Orchestra (2001), was premiered at the United Nations in 2001 as part of the International World Peace Assembly.

His orchestral settings of Sephardic folk songs, *The Alhambra Suite*, was commissioned for the Second Assembly of the World's Religions in 1985. The suite received two subsequent performances by the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony^[28] and a subsequent performance at the Pittsburgh Jewish Music Festival in

2005.^[29]

In observance of the first anniversary of the tragedy of September 11, 2001, he was commissioned to write music for the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace Conference in New York in September 2002. The resulting music, *The Hope of All Ages*, featured narrated texts by world leaders in the realms of religion, diplomacy and human rights. The composition received a second performance at New York's Lincoln Center in September 2005 at the inaugural ceremony for the Universal Peace Federation.

One his recent composing projects, the Cantata for Peace, *Halelu—Songs of David*, is a collaboration with prominent Israeli vocalist David D'Or.^[30] The debut recording of *Halelu* was recorded in Israel in 2006 with the Ra'anana Symphony Orchestra and the Philharmonia Chorus of Israel. *Halelu* received its world premiere performance in Belgrade, Serbia, under his direction on May 19, 2007, with D'Or and soprano Seiko Lee as the soloists with the Belgrade Philharmonic and the 120-voice choir of the Academic Cultural Artistic Society. The concert was held at the Sava Arts Center in Belgrade and was televised to six other Eastern European countries.^[24] He conducted a second performance of *Halelu* in Sofia, Bulgaria with D'Or, Miss Lee, and the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus on October 8, 2007.

In 2008 and 2009, excerpts of the *Halelu* Cantata were choreographed and presented at the European Dance and Arts-Salzburg (EDAS)^[31] in Cyprus (choreography by Lyn C. Wiltshire, Artistic Director for EDAS Cyprus and Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin and Cristina Uta of the Salzburg Ballet), and by the Kashet Chaim Dance Ensemble of Los Angeles. His arrangement of Israeli vocalist David D'Or's *How Much You Love* was performed by Mr. D'Or and the Israel Philharmonic in June 2010 in Cesarea, Israel. His composition, "Kenny's Joy," was featured on the History Channel's "Stan Lee's Super Humans" in 2010, which featured vocal percussionist, Kenny Mohammad. The piece was performed by the Kokolo String Ensemble in 2011 at the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

He conducted members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in an excerpt from his *The Hope of All Ages* at the Global Peace Festival in London in 2008. Another current composition project is *Juxtapositions: Suite for Electric Viola and Orchestra* which he was requested to compose by Alexander Mishnaevski, principal violist of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Two movements of the suite were performed by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in March 2011^[32] and excerpts of the piece were performed at the Lexington (MI) Bach Festival^[33] in September, 2011. "Juxapositions" received a second performance by the Detroit Symphony under Mr. Eaton's direction in 2012. Another new work, "Diversions for Three" for 2 Violas and Piano is scheduled for its premiere performance in New York City in 2015 as well. In 2013 he composed a Harp Concerto (*Angelic Vibes*, Op. 50) for Patty Masri-Fletcher, principal harpist of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. His most recent orchestral work, *70 and Counting*, is a tribute commemorating the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

As an arranger/conductor/producer he has worked with a wide array of artists including Jennifer Holliday, Philip Michael Thomas, and Paul Sorvino. In the recording studio he has produced numerous tracks utilizing MIDI sequencing synthesizers as well as conventional instrumentation. From 1991 to 1995 he served as a house producer and arranger at the Manhattan Center in New York, arranging and producing scores of songs for a wide array of artists including Columbia/Sony jazz artist Richard Bona. In 2013 he arranged music for New York State's "New York's Rising Communities" television ad campaign.

Recent Compositions

- "The Three Hearts of God" Ballet, Op. 32 (1983/Revised 2006)
- Alhambra Suite (1985/Revised 2005)
- Instrumental Set No. 3 for String Quartet and Piano, Op. 33 (1995/Revised 2007)
- "Kenny's Joy" for Strings and Vocal Percussion, Op. 34 (1998)
- "Melavations" for Concert Band, Op. 35 (2000)

- "Morning's Calm," Concert Aria for Soprano and Chamber Orchestra, Op. 36 (2001)
- "The Hope of All Ages" for Narrators, Strings and Harp, Op. 37 (2002)
- "We Shall Live in Peace," Op. 38 Hymn for the Interreligious Peace Sports Festival (2003)
- Three Hymns for Narrator and Orchestra, Op. 39 (2005)
- "Halelu—Songs of David," Cantata for Peace, Op. 40 (2005)
- "Le Pace L'esperanza," Concert Aria for Tenor and Orchestra, Op. 41 (2009)
- "Juxtapositions: Suite for Electric Viola and Orchestra," Op. 42 (2010)
- "Heavenly Order," Concert Aria for Soprano and Orchestra, Op. 43 (2011)
- "Holy Songs," 15 Hymns arranged for Chamber Orchestra, Op. 44 (2011)
- "Diversions for Three," for 2 Violas and Piano, Op. 45 (2011)
- "Sonic Waltz," for String Quartet, Op. 47 (2011)
- "Variations on a Theme by Carl Nielsen" for Orchestra, Op. 46 (2012-2015 in progress)
- "Earth Music," Op. 48, Song Cycle for Soprano and Chamber Orchestra (2014-2015 in progress)
- "Angelic Vibes," Concerto for Harp and Chamber Orchestra, Op. 49 (2013)
- "Liturgical Songs" for Mixed Chorus, Strings and Harp, Op.50 (2015 in progress)
- "Divertimento for Strings," Op. 51 (2014)
- "Divertimento for Strings and Harp," Op. 51a (2014)
- "White Prelude and Blue Scherzo for Strings," Op. 52 (2014)
- "The Twelve Dimensions," Fantasie for Orchestra, Op. 53 (2015 in progress)
- "70 and Counting" for Orchestra, Op. 54, Tribute to the United Nation 70th Anniversary (2015)

Discography

- "Liberation: Songs of My Spiritual Country," Orchestrated and Arranged for Seiko Lee (2005)
- "Halelu: Songs of David," Op. 40, R'ananna Symphony Orchestra (Israel), Co-producer and Composer (2006)
- "Heart to Heart: Music From the Middle East Peace Initiative," Producer and Composer (2004)
- "Songs for Peace," Co-producer (2005)
- "Peace Is In Our Hands," Producer and Composer (2006)

Footnotes

1. The New York City Symphony was "purchased/rescued" by Rev. Sun Myung Moon in 1973. From 1985 through 1990, the organization received the bulk of its funding in the form of an annual grant/subsidy from the International Cultural Foundation, a church-related entity. The ICF subsidy ended in 1990, and since 1991 the orchestra has received support (grants, contributions, in-kind, earned income) from a variety of sources (National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council of the Arts, NY Daily News, SONY/Columbia, New York Stock Exchange, The Turkish Embassy, Uptown Chamber of Commerce, Universal Peace Federation, *e.g.*)
2. New York Times, Review by Will Crutchfield, June 1985
3. New Sunday Times: Music Section, Article, "Voice From Heaven" by Subhadra Devan, July 29, 2007
4. La Nación: Article, "The sopranos provided a spectacle of luxury CPB", November 16, 2007
5. New York Post: Music Review by Dan Aquilante, May 17, 1991
6. The South Plainfield Reporter (NJ), Music Review by Bill Millard, May 31, 1991
7. La Nación: Article, "Three Sopranos Began its International Tour Today, the BCP", November 14, 2007
8. Witnessing Summit, New York-New Jersey (<http://www.tparents.org/Library/Unification/Talks/Eaton/Eaton-080114.htm>)
9. As of 2008, David Eaton "has worked in the performing arts in the Unification Church for 35 years."
10. Witnessing Summit, New York-New Jersey (<http://www.tparents.org/Library/Unification/Talks/Eaton/Eaton-080114.htm>), David Eaton, January 14, 2008.
11. New York Times: Music Review by Tim Page, July 1, 1986
12. *New York City Tribune*: Culture Section: Article by Tom Pniewski, August 30, 1988.
13. *New York Daily News*: Music Section: Review by Bill Zakariasen, November 10, 1989
14. *New York Post*: Music Review by Dan Aquilante, May 17, 1991

15. New York Times: Music Review by Bernard Holland, February 9, 1988
16. *Black Star News*: "Apollo Makes History Again", by Brenda Jeanne Wyche, June 14, 2006
17. The Arch Newsletter: Memorial Day Concert 2000, Vol I, Issue III, Fall/Winter 2000
18. *New York Times*: Music Guide by Allan Kozinn, June 9, 2000.
19. *New York Daily News*: Music Section: Review by Bill Zakariasen, May 11, 1989.
20. New York Post: Music Review by Dan Aquilante, May 17, 1991
21. Time Magazine: People Section, Vol. 137, No. 19, May 13, 1991
22. Korea Times: Review by David Rahe, October 8, 1988
23. New York Times: Music Review by Bernard Holland, February 9, 1988
24. Blic Zema Weekly: Arts: "Israel to Belgrade and Serbia", Belgrade, Serbia, May 21–27, 2007
25. World & I: Innovative Approaches to Peace, Article: "Peace Cantata Recorded in Israel", Fall Edition, Publisher: Universal Peace Federation, Washington, D.C., 2006
26. New Jerusalem Family Church: Summit Report - NY/NJ - Jan 14, 2008 (http://www.trueparents.org/home_page_images/articles/events/wit_summit_eaton.html) by David Eaton.
27. New York Times: Arts Section/Footlights by Lawrence van Gelder, May 27, 1999
28. Jewish Journal: "For Love of the Dance," by Naomi Pfefferman, September 11, 2003
29. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: Article, Symphonic Review: "Symphonic Concert Looks Back at Vibrant Culture,": by Andrew Druckenbrod, June 9, 2005
30. New Sunday Times: Music Section: "Voice From Heaven" by Subhadra Devan, July 29, 2007
31. In Touch Magazine: Article, "Cantata for Peace", by Gina Coleman, May, 2008
32. Detroit Symphony Orchestra Performance Magazine: "Symphony Electric", by Gabrielle Poshaldo, Vol. XX, Winter 2012
33. Times Herald, Port Huron, MI., Article: "Ah, Bach, September 9, 2011

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- Detroit Symphony Orchestra Performance Magazine: "Symphony Electric" by Gabrielle Poshaldo, Vol. XX, Winter 2012
- Times Herald-Port Huron: Article: "Ah, Bach," Port Huron, MI., September 9, 2011
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- New York Times: Music Review by Bernard Holland, November 12, 1989
- New York Times: Music Review by Bernard Holland, February 9, 1988
- New York Post: Music Review by Dan Aquilante, May 17, 1991
- Black Star News: "Apollo Makes History Again", by Brenda Jeanne Wyche, June 14, 2006
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- Korea Times: Review by David Rahe, October 8, 1988
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- New York City Tribune: Culture Section: Article by Tom Pniewski, August 30, 1988
- New York City Tribune: Culture Section: Article by Steve Longier, October 7, 1988
- New York City Tribune: Music Review by Ireland J. Randolph, May 8, 1987
- World & I: Innovative Approaches to Peace, Article: "Peace Cantata Recorded in Israel", Fall Edition, Publisher: Universal Peace Federation, Washington, D.C., 2006

External links

- New York City Symphony (<http://www.nycsymphony.org>)
- Peace Music Foundation (<http://www.peacemusicfoundation.org>)

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