



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 20, 2024

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**ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND GOETHE-ZENTRUM ATLANTA PRESENT  
A FESTIVAL OF GERMAN ROMANTIC MUSIC IN APRIL 2024**

**ATLANTA** – The **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra** and the **Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta** present a month-long festival exploring the German Romantic movement. Performances of masterworks by Brahms, Strauss, and Beethoven will be offered alongside free community lectures, chamber music, and more. Official festival events will be held at the Woodruff Arts Center, while other events from community partners will also be highlighted.

“Even the most timeless and beautiful works of art are the products of their times, their battles and changes, their aspirations, and their personalities,” said Oliver Gorf, Executive Director Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta. “The German Romantic Festival is doing an outstanding job in portraying the period of German romanticism from so many important perspectives. Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta, the German Cultural Center for the Southeast, is honored to be adding a few notes to this masterpiece of a music festival.”

The contributions of the artists from the German Romantic era have impacted the history of virtually every art form, and their importance cannot be underestimated. Most of the festival events are free and presented with generous support from The Halle Foundation.

“We are pleased to support this special partnership with the ASO and the Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta,” said Foundation Trustee Dr. Eike Jordan. “Through this collaboration, we hope audiences will deepen their knowledge of the music, literature, and landscapes that influenced Brahms, Beethoven, and so many other great German artists.”

The festival kicks off on Thursday, March 21 at 6:30 pm in the Rich Theater with a lecture to set the framework for the festival. *Notes on the Romantics* is presented by Boris Cepeda, as part of the Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta's popular "A Note on Opera" series. This lecture will introduce audiences to the operatic and symphonic composers that defined the German Romantic period.

On April 4 and 5, ASO Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann leads the ASO in a concert at 8pm in Atlanta Symphony Hall featuring Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante*, which shines the spotlight on Concertmaster David Coucheron, and Principal Viola Zhenwei Shi as soloists. Rounding out the program are two works by Brahms—one the of the leading composers of the German Romantic era.

Before each of those concerts, there will be free chamber music performances in Symphony Hall at 6:45 that feature works by Mozart, Beethoven and Haydn performed by 14 luminaries of the ASO.

The following week, Maestro Stutzmann will conduct the ASO and superstar soprano Renée Fleming in an evening of works by Richard Strauss on Thursday, April 11 and Saturday, April 13 at 8 pm in Atlanta Symphony Hall. The program includes the German romantic composer's *Four Last Songs*, and excerpts from the operas *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Capriccio*.

Before those concerts, there will be two free pre-concert programs. On Thursday, April 11 at 6:30 pm the Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta and ASO will present *Myth and the Romantic Rhine*, an evening of Romantic music, theater and poetry inspired by Germany's greatest river. On Saturday, April 13 at 6:30 pm, bestselling author Andrea Wulf give a talk on the remarkable beginnings of German Romanticism, chronicled in her 2022 book *Magnificent Rebels*.

For the final week of the festival, Portuguese virtuoso Maria João Pires will make her ASO debut in Beethoven's sublime Piano Concerto No. 4. The program then stays in the German-Romantic vein with works by Mendelssohn and Schumann. *Stutzmann Conducts Pires + Beethoven* will take place on Thursday, April 18 and Saturday, April 20 at 8 pm in Atlanta Symphony Hall.

That week, the ASO will offer a number of free pre-concert programs. On April 18 at 6 pm, *German Romantic Literature and Music* featuring Dr. Peter Höyng of Emory University will show how the works of Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Schumann, and Strauss were shaped by literature.

On April 18 and 20 at 6:45 pm, the pre-concert chamber performance, *Brahms' Swan Song*, will spotlight Brahms' String Quintet No. 2 in G major, Op. 111, originally intended to be the artist's last published work. Concertmaster David Coucheron and other ASO musicians will bring this beloved and devilishly difficult masterpiece to life.

All these events are presented with major financial support from The Halle Foundation. Founded in 1986 by The Coca-Cola Company executive Claus Halle, The Halle Foundation exists to support educational and cultural programs and activities which promote friendship and understanding between the peoples of the United States and Germany.

**A CITY-WIDE CELEBRATION with community partners**

More opportunities to celebrate German Romantic composers abound in Atlanta throughout April 2024. On Friday, April 12 at 12 pm, the **Emory Chamber Music Society of Atlanta (ECMSA)** will present the Juilliard String Quartet, the Vega Quartet and pianist William Ransom performing Schumann's brilliant Piano Quintet and Mendelssohn's miraculous Octet at Emerson Concert Hall at Emory University.

On Friday, April 19 at 12 pm, Grammy award-winning cellist **Zuill Bailey and the Vega Quartet** will perform Schubert's glorious Quintet for Strings. The performance is presented by EMCSA at the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta. Details can be found at [concertsatfirst.org](http://concertsatfirst.org).

On Saturday, April 27 at 6:30 pm, **The Atlanta Opera** will begin performances in the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre of *Die Walküre*, the second epic installment of Wagner's *The Ring Cycle*. Tickets and more details can be found at [www.atlantaopera.org](http://www.atlantaopera.org).

Finally, the **Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta** will close out the month's festivities with its Annual Signature Celebration Event & Fundraiser on Sunday, April 28, from 4 to 8 pm. This year's event will be Rhine-themed, with a mystical program of fairy tales, music, food, wine, and more.

The Romantic Rhine Valley is one of Europe's most renowned romantic landscapes. A trip along the river is like a voyage into a fairy-tale land, with 60 picturesque castles presiding over the river from the hilltops and vineyards. Romantic composers, poets and painters were captivated by the Rhine's natural beauty.

"Goethe-Zentrum, the German Cultural Center for Atlanta and the Southeast, is grateful for the partnership with the ASO and are looking forward to their concert at Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta's celebration of "Echoes of the Romantic Rhine" on a wonderful spring afternoon. We invite all lovers of the German Romantics to be our inspired guests," says the Goethe's Executive Director Oliver Gorf.

More details can be found at [german-institute.org](http://german-institute.org).

## CALENDAR LISTING

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### **Lecture: Notes on the Romantics**

Thu, March 21, 6:30pm, Rich Theatre at the Woodruff Arts Center

In anticipation of April's German Romantics Festival, please join us for an introduction to the composers and works that defined the Romantic movement in Germany. Presented by Boris Cepeda. *This lecture is free to the public.*

### **Pre-Concert Chamber Performance: Mozart, Beethoven + Haydn**

Thu/Fri, April 4 and 5, 6:45pm

Atlanta Symphony Hall at the Woodruff Arts Center

Nathan Mo, Ray Kim, Denielle Wilson, and Isabel Kwon, cellos

Elizabeth Tiscione, Zachary Boeding, and Jonathan Gentry, oboes

Emily Brebach, English horn

Anthony Georgeson, Laura Najarian, and Shelby Alfredson, bassoons

Juan de Gomar, contrabassoon

Ryan Little and Kim Gilman, French horns

MOZART: Piano Sonata in D Major, K. 381

BEETHOVEN: Variations on "Là ci darem la mano"

HAYDN: Divertimento in B-flat major (Chorale St. Antoni)

Join us for this special pre-concert chamber performance featuring three of history's greatest composers.

*These pre-concert performances are free to the public.*

**ASO Concert: Stutzmann Conducts Mozart + Brahms**

Thu/Fri, April 4/5, 8pm

Atlanta Symphony Hall at the Woodruff Arts Center

Nathalie Stutzmann, conductor

David Coucheron, violin

Zhenwei Shi, viola

BRAHMS: Variations on a Theme by Haydn

MOZART: Sinfonia Concertante

BRAHMS: Symphony No. 1

Join music director Nathalie Stutzmann and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra for an evening in old Vienna, featuring two iconic works by Brahms. The charmed Variations on a Theme by Haydn takes you into the composer's boundless imagination as he weaves evermore inventive ideas around a single tune (not actually by Haydn). The program closes with a journey through the passion and poetry of a great Romantic symphony. In between, Maestro Stutzmann shines a spotlight on the nuanced artistry of Atlanta Symphony Orchestra principal players, with concertmaster David Coucheron and principal violist Zhenwei Shi taking center-stage for Mozart's brilliant Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat.

**Myth and the Romantic Rhine: An Evening of German Theatre and Song**

Thu, April 11, 6:30pm

Rich Theatre at the Woodruff Arts Center

The Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta joins the ASO in an evening of Romantic music, theater and poetry inspired by Germany's greatest river.

*This performance is free to the public.*

**ASO Concert: Nathalie Stutzmann + Renée Fleming**

Thu/Sat, April 11/13, 8pm

Atlanta Symphony Hall at the Woodruff Arts Center

Nathalie Stutzmann, conductor

Renée Fleming, soprano

R. STRAUSS: Sextet from *Capriccio*

R. STRAUSS: *Four Last Songs*

R. STRAUSS: *Four Orchestral Songs*

R. STRAUSS: *Der Rosenkavalier* Suite

Hear the incomparable Renée Fleming as she joins the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and music

director Nathalie Stutzmann for an evening of Richard Strauss. One of the greatest Strauss interpreters of our time, Fleming, the “people’s diva,” sings the soul-stirring *Four Last Songs*. The program includes sweeping and luxuriant orchestral music from Strauss’s runaway hit *Der Rosenkavalier*, as well as the delicious sextet from his final opera *Capriccio*.

**Lecture: *Magnificent Rebels: The First Romantics and the Invention of the Self***

Sat, April 13, 6:30pm

Rich Theatre at the Woodruff Arts Center

Best-selling author Andrea Wulf takes us on a vivid journey through the remarkable beginnings of German Romanticism, a movement that changed the way we think about ourselves and the world.

*This lecture is free to the public.*

**Lecture: German Romantic Literature and Music**

Thu, April 18, 6pm

Rich Theatre at the Woodruff Arts Center

Dr. Peter Höyng of Emory University shows how the works of Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Schumann, and Strauss were shaped by the literary giants of their day, from Goethe to Schiller to Heine.

*This lecture is free to the public.*

**Pre-Concert Chamber Performance: Brahms' Swan Song**

Thu/Sat, April 18/20, 6:45pm

Atlanta Symphony Hall at the Woodruff Arts Center

David Coucheron and Justin Bruns, violins

Zhenwei Shi and Yang-Yoon Kim, violas

Daniel Laufer, cello

BRAHMS: String Quintet No. 2 in G major, Op. 111

Intended as Johannes Brahms' swan song, String Quintet No. 2 in G Major remains one of the finest pieces of chamber music ever composed.

*These pre-concert performances are free to the public.*

**ASO Concert: Stutzmann Conducts Pires + Beethoven**

Thu/Sat, April 18/20 at 8pm

Atlanta Symphony Hall at the Woodruff Arts Center

Nathalie Stutzmann, conductor

Maria João Pires, Piano

MENDELSSOHN : The *Hebrides* Overture

BEETHOVEN: Piano Concerto No. 4

R. SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 4

Widely regarded as one of the great pianists of our time, Portuguese virtuoso Maria João Pires makes her ASO debut in an evening not to be missed. She joins music director Nathalie Stutzmann and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in Beethoven’s sublime Piano Concerto No. 4. The concert stays in the German-Romantic vein with works by Mendelssohn and Schumann, including a

musical postcard from Scotland by the 20-year-old Mendelssohn. The *Hebrides Overture* paints an enigmatic portrait of a sea cave in the Inner Hebrides islands. And the Symphony No. 4 by Robert Schumann offers a feverish flight through intense lyricism and bravura.

More information and a full list of events can be found at [aso.org/germanromantics](https://aso.org/germanromantics).

*The German Romantics Festival is presented with the generous support of The Halle Foundation and in partnership with the Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta.*

### **About the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra**

Under the leadership of Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) offers live performances, media initiatives, and learning programs that unite, educate and enrich our community through the engaging and transformative power of orchestral music experiences. The ASO engages the diverse international community of our city, bringing people together in harmony—including our youngest citizens, with extensive opportunities for youth and families to fall in love with music. Two of the hallmark education programs celebrate anniversaries this season: the Atlanta Youth Symphony Orchestra celebrates 50 years and the Talent Development Program turns 30.

The Orchestra's range and depth are featured in more than 150 concerts each year, including the flagship Delta Classical Series, Movies in Concert, Family Concerts, Coca-Cola Holiday series, and many community and education concerts. In addition, the ASO presents many vibrant, wide-ranging events and artists through its Delta Atlanta Symphony Hall Live presentations. The ASO also performs with the ASO Chorus, originally founded by Robert Shaw, and currently under the direction of Norman Mackenzie. The Chorus is featured on nine of the ASO's 27 Grammy® Award-winning recordings.

### **About the Goethe-Zentrum**

As part of the world-wide Goethe network, Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta is the preeminent non-profit source for the promotion of the German language and cultural exchange. The Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta provides experiences to enhance learning and the development of personal and professional relationships by uniquely combining immersive classroom and online learning, as well as integrated cultural programs to enrich learning opportunities, build relationships, and create a greater sense of community.

As a Kultur Ensemble, the Goethe-Zentrum and its partner Alliance Francaise d'Atlanta together form the German-French Cultural Institute of Atlanta, one of only 9 Kultur Ensembles across the globe and the one and only in North America.

**About the Halle Foundation**

Founded in 1985 by The Coca-Cola Company executive Claus Halle, The Halle Foundation's mission is to promote understanding, knowledge, and friendship between the people of Germany, as seen in its European context, and those of the United States. In furtherance of this mission, the Foundation supports, primarily through grantmaking, initiatives and activities in the fields of education, culture, science, technology, language, scholarship, and international relations.

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