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January 7, 2015

The New England Philharmonic Readies for a Spring Awakening

Featuring Benjamin Britten's rarely performed *Spring Symphony*, with Chorus pro Musica & the Boston Children's Chorus, John Harbison's *Darkbloom* & Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring*
MIT's Kresge Auditorium | March 1, 2015 at 4 p.m.

BOSTON | The [New England Philharmonic](#) (NEP) under the direction of [Richard Pittman](#) will present “**Spring Awakening**” on **March 1 at 4 p.m. at MIT's Kresge Auditorium**. The concert features **Benjamin Britten's** rarely performed *Spring Symphony* and celebrates the arrival of spring after a long English winter, vocalizing the settings of poems from Edmund Spenser to W.H. Auden for a splendid array of voices and instruments. **John Harbison's *Darkbloom: Overture for an Imagined Opera***, also on the program, is a balletic story of a man and a woman, echoed by the scenario of the evening's other piece, **Aaron Copland's** beloved American ballet *Appalachian Spring*.

The *Spring Symphony*, originally commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and premiered in 1949, is in Britten's words, “a symphony not only dealing with the spring itself, but with the progress of winter to spring and the reawakening of the earth and life which that means.”

The piece is a large undertaking, requiring a huge orchestra (complete with a cow horn that has to be hired specially), a children's choir, three soloists, and a large chorus, which will be given challenging and detailed music to sing. The NEP will enlist the [Boston Children's Chorus](#) and [Chorus pro Musica](#) for the performance and will feature [Soprano Sarah Pelletier](#), [Mezzo Soprano Krista River](#) and [Tenor Ray Bauwens](#).

Music Director Richard Pittman explains that the challenges presented by *Spring Symphony* are nothing new to the volunteer orchestra. “We've performed other works such as Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* and more recently Britten's *War Requiem* that are just as challenging, and in terms of the Berg piece, more so.” Maestro Pittman adds, “...performing pieces such as these energizes and inspires us all, and keeps the level of musicianship of the NEP orchestra at a very high level.”

Tickets for the NEP's “Spring Awakening” concert on March 1, 2015 at 4 p.m. at MIT's Kresge Auditorium are available at www.NEPhilharmonic.org.

About the New England Philharmonic Now performing its 38th season, the NEP under the direction of Richard Pittman is internationally renowned for its daring programming that encompasses both contemporary and traditional works. The volunteer orchestra has been awarded nine ASCAP awards for Adventurous Programming and named Gunther Schuller composer laureate in 2013. The Boston Globe named NEP's performance of Britten's “War Requiem” as one of the Ten Best Classical Music Performances of the Year. The orchestra's illustrious past includes the installation of three landmark programs: The NEP became the first orchestra of its size to support a Composer-in-Residence (1985), introduce a Call for Scores Program (1985) and a Young Artist Competition (1994), legacies that endure today.

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