

Yale SCHOOL OF MUSIC

José García-León, Dean

Yale Philharmonia

Jeffrey Douma, *guest conductor*

WITH

Yale Glee Club &

Yale Choral Artists

PRESENT

Siddhartha, She

A ritual music drama in
seven tableaux

Saturday, November 15, 2025 | 7:30 p.m.
Woolsey Hall

Siddhartha, She (2025)

A ritual music drama in seven tableaux Oratorio Version

Loosely based on the novel *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse

*World Premiere, co-commissioned with The Aspen Music Festival and School, and
the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, and Dance*

Libretto by Melissa Studdard

Music by Christopher Theofanidis

ACT I

Scene I: She Who Holds Eternity

Scene II: Shedding Skin

Scene III: Door in the River

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Scene IV: Book of the World

Scene V: Inner Sanctum

Scene VI: Break Until You Open

Scene VII: Into the Om

As a courtesy to others, please silence all devices. Photography and recording of any kind is strictly prohibited. Please do not leave the hall during musical selections. Thank you.

CAST *in order of appearance*

OFFSTAGE VOICE	Kelly Yamaguchi-Scanlon
SIDDHARTHA	Adriana Zabala
GOVINDA	Julia Ernst
ABINASWAR	Matthew Dexter
SAMANA (SHAMAN) 1	Jonathan Woody
SAMANA (SHAMAN) 2	Steven Soph
GAUTAMA	Key'mon Murrah
DHARUNA	Tamara Mumford
AMAN	Scott La Marca
KAMALA	Janna Baty
KAMASWAMI (<i>non-sung</i>)	T. Sean Maher
CHORUS 1	Yale Choral Artists
CHORUS 2	Yale Glee Club
ORCHESTRA	Yale Philharmonia Jeffrey Douma, <i>guest conductor</i>

PRODUCTION TEAM

DIRECTOR	Anne Patterson
PROJECTION DESIGN	Adam Larsen Camilla Tassi
LIGHTING DESIGN	Seth Reiser
SURTITLES	Maya Liu
SURTITLE OPERATOR	Kevin Vondrak
SOUND DESIGN	HB Live
SOUND CUES	Ezra Calvino
REHEARSAL COACH	Tomoko Nakayama

Act I

Scene I: *She Who Holds Eternity*

Beside the coursing river, amid the bustle of daily life and vibrant sacred ritual, Siddhartha stands in a quiet spot in deep contemplation. From a remote part of her soul, she hears a call beckoning her to leave home in search of meaning. She breaks the news to her despairing father and departs with her childhood friend, Govinda.

Scene II: *Shedding Skin*

Siddhartha and Govinda find themselves in an arid landscape in which Samanas attempt to lead them to a higher state through a harsh ascetic lifestyle. In a series of surreal visions, Siddhartha discovers the inherent freedom of her elemental nature, inhabiting first the mind of a snake and then a lone heron.

Scene III: *Door in the River*

Escaping the austerity of the desert, Siddhartha and Govinda journey to the lush Jetavana Grove to hear the Buddha speak. Once there, they observe the Buddha's great stillness and determine that the Buddha is indeed enlightened. While Siddhartha experiences the Buddha as a role model, strengthening her resolve to find her own way, Govinda views the Buddha as a teacher and enters into discipleship. For the first time the friends set out on separate paths.

Act II

Scene IV: *Book of the World*

Siddhartha travels across the Ganges with Dharuna, a mysterious ferrywoman, who seems to have a supernatural kinship with the river. As Siddhartha observes the natural world passing by along the shoreline, she sees everything, including her past experiences, with a new clarity. Led into deeper contemplation by penetrating questions from Dharuna, she reflects on her place in the fabric of the universe. As they near the riverbank, Siddhartha becomes mesmerized by the sight of the beautiful courtesan Kamala and asks Dharuna to stop the boat.

Scene V: *Inner Sanctum*

Smitten and determined, Siddhartha shows up on Kamala's doorstep only to be repeatedly sent away. Finally, due to a fear of someone seeing the dirty Samana at her home, Kamala allows an attendant to send Siddhartha around back to speak with her. There, Kamala is surprised to find that Siddhartha is cleaned up and quite charming. The two engage in flirtatious banter, a battle, and dance of wit and will.

Scene VI: *Break Until You Open*

In a dreamy, emotionally intricate montage of song, poetry, and balletic movement, Siddhartha and Kamala enact a life together: they are lovers, they are equals, they are kindred spirits, they fight, they eat, they sleep, they grow old. With a connection and respect so deep that it surpasses earthly desire, the two come to an understanding of the romantic relationship as an obstacle to self-transcendence, and, in order to foster their own and each other's evolution, they separate.

Scene VII: *Into the Om*

Called back to a life of contemplative simplicity, Siddhartha joins Dharuna as a ferrywoman, and Dharuna teaches Siddhartha the language of the river. Experiencing the whole of existence—the suffering, the beauty, the yearning, the material, the ethereal, the past, the present, the future—all of it alive in the river at once, as a single chord, the OM, Siddhartha attains enlightenment. Now at peace, Siddhartha remains with Dharuna, in harmony with the rhythms of river life. Everything has changed and nothing has changed. One evening she is recognized by a passenger, and looking into his face, she realizes it is her father, who is now traveling to Varanasi to die.

Notes on the Work

by Melissa Studdard, librettist

When people hear we've written an adaptation of Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha*, the reaction is almost invariably the same—a momentary awed hush accompanied by an instinctive hand over the heart, as if the person has drifted into deep reverie, reliving how they felt reading the novel. When they return to the conversation, it is with a gush of memories and favorite scenes, and many, many questions. Such is the unique power of this beautiful narrative to move people into simultaneous internal wonderment and expansive connectedness.

As librettist, I was given huge license by the composer, Christopher Theofanidis, to write this performance version, *Siddhartha, She*, from my own vision, and that freedom resulted in a libretto that closely follows the episodic structure and spiritual trajectory of the original but with radical changes to characterization and plot specifics. Whereas the original story consists of primarily male characters, *Siddhartha, She* features many female characters, with Siddhartha herself now a woman. The minor strands of patriarchal thinking have been supplanted by non-hierarchical, relational interactions intended to recognize the divinity in all beings, regardless of their stage in their own evolution. I needed to write a story that was mine as much as it was Hesse's, which is emblematic of the idea that the story of personal evolution is everyone's story. It was the Buddha's, it was Siddhartha's, it was Hesse's, it is mine, it is Christopher Theofanidis', and it is yours.

by Christopher Theodanidis, composer

Siddhartha, She as a project started for me back in 2005 when I had been wrestling with the relationship between my spiritual and artistic paths. The adaptation of Hesse's novel into a music drama presented an opportunity to explore the connection between these two foundational aspects of my life through a different lens, how neither of these paths can be fully given to you by someone else, but ultimately must be awakened to their full potential from within.

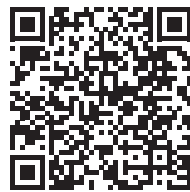
The drama proceeds through several scenes in which Siddhartha confronts some truth about herself, in each case realizing only a *part* of the answer to her own awakening. Throughout these scenes are moments of surreal drama, such as Siddhartha's inhabiting of the minds of herons and snakes, the many-armed representations of Kamala, and the central moment of Siddhartha's enlightenment, in which everything she is fuses into a single sound—the Om, with the action processing through the audience itself, creating a sense of ritual.

All of this takes place in the presence of the river, a metaphor for the spirit – eternally present but always in motion, lending itself to music with an almost Wagnerian time sensibility, flowing between the grand and intimate as the drama leads. Each of the individual characters elicited specific and different kinds of music in the writing of them, and this was one of the deepest joys for me in composing this work.

Please use this QR code for an essay by Jane Forner on the work, commissioned by the Aspen Music Festival for their production of *Siddhartha, She* during the summer of 2025:



Kindle and paperback versions of the full libretto are available for purchase at:



Artist Profiles

Melissa Studdard, *librettist*

Melissa Studdard writes poetry, song cycles, and libretti, and is the author of six books. Her most recent poetry collection, *Dear Selection Committee*, includes poems featured by *The New York Times*, *The Penn Review* Poetry Prize, the Best American Poetry blog, and the Lucille Medwick Award for the Poetry Society of America. Her writing has also been featured by outlets such as *The Guardian*, *Ms. Magazine*, PBS, and NPR, and has been translated into several languages, including Cherokee, Gujarati, and Persian. As a librettist/lyricist, she has had works commissioned by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Wolf Trap, Aspen Music Festival, the University of Michigan School of Music, and more. A short film based on the titular poem from her collection, *I Ate the Cosmos for Breakfast*, won the REELpoetry International Film Festival Audience Choice Award and was an official selection for the Trinidad + Tobago Film Festival and The Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival. Ms. Studdard's poetic collaboration with Kelli Russell Agodon is the subject of the Emmy-nominated short documentary, *Meet the Queens of Quarantine Poetry*. With Agodon, she also co-hosts the YouTube poetry series Poems You Need.

www.melissastuddard.com

Christopher Theofanidis, *composer*

Christopher Theofanidis' music has been performed by many of the world's leading performing arts organizations, from the London Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, and New York Philharmonic to the San Francisco Opera, the Houston Grand Opera, and the American Ballet Theatre. He is a two-time Grammy nominee for best composition, and his Viola Concerto, recorded with David Alan Miller and the Albany Symphony with Richard O'Neill soloist, won the 2021 Grammy for Best Instrumental Solo. Mr. Theofanidis' work, *Rainbow Body*, is one of the most performed works in recent decades, having been performed by over 200 orchestras worldwide. He is a frequent collaborator with the poet, Melissa Studdard, with whom this work, *Siddhartha, She* is written. Mr. Theofanidis is currently on the faculties of Yale University and the Aspen Music Festival, and he has taught at the Juilliard School and the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University. He also leads a composers' workshop at the Albany Symphony's American Music Festival each summer.

www.theofanidismusic.com

Jeffrey Douma, *guest conductor*

Jeffrey Douma is the Marshall Bartholomew Professor in the Practice of Choral Music at the Yale School of Music, and has served since 2003 as Director of the Yale Glee Club, hailed under his direction by The New York Times as “one of the best collegiate singing ensembles, and one of the most adventurous.” He also heads Yale’s graduate program in choral conducting and serves as founding Director of the Yale Choral Artists and as Director of the Chamber Choir and Choral Conducting Workshop at Yale’s Norfolk Chamber Music Festival. He has appeared as guest conductor with choruses and orchestras on six continents and frequently serves as a guest teacher in conducting masterclasses throughout the world.

An advocate of new music, Douma established the Yale Glee Club Emerging Composers Competition and Fenno Heath Award, and has premiered new works by such composers as Jennifer Higdon, Caroline Shaw, Dominick Argento, Joel Thompson, Paola Prestini, Ayanna Woods, Bright Sheng, Ned Rorem, Rodrigo Cadet, Ted Hearne, Hannah Lash, Martin Bresnick, David Lang, Derrick Skye, Rene Clausen, Bongani Magatyana, and James Macmillan. He also serves as editor of the Yale Glee Club New Classics Choral Series, published by Boosey & Hawkes. His original compositions are published by G. Schirmer and Boosey & Hawkes. A tenor, Douma has appeared as an ensemble member and soloist with many of the nation’s leading professional choirs.

Please use this QR code to access full performer bios:



Yale Philharmonia Roster

Peter Oundjian, *principal conductor*

VIOLIN I

Matthew Cone
Sofia Matthews
Nick Hammel
Maya Ito Johnson
Ashley Yoon
Megan Lin
Chaofan Wang
Alex Zhou
Josephine Kim
Eunbee Cho

VIOLIN II

Sumin Cho
Jiwon Choi
Cameron Chase
Leona Liu
Jeongmin An
Francesca Sacco
Lingxiao Feng
Jimin Lee

VIOLA

Soyoung Cho
Lola Pinney
Kiarra Saito-Beckman
Ayano Nakamura
Aditi Prakash
Miranda Werner

CELLO

Hayoung Moon
Amy Goto
Austin Fisher
Michael Bridges
Dylan Kinneavy
Balder Hella Mikkelsen

DOUBLE BASS

Joshua Rhodes
Yihan Wu
Josue Alfaro Mora
Skyler Lee

FLUTE

Jolie Fitch
Rafael Mendez

PICCOLO

Rafael Mendez

OBOE

Gabriela Fry
Alexis Wilson

ENGLISH HORN

Alexis Wilson

CLARINET

Ian McEdwards
Juan Pedro Espinosa
Monteros

BASS CLARINET

Juan Pedro Espinosa
Monteros

BASSOON

Emma Fuller
Abigail Lopez

CONTRABASSOON

Abigail Lopez

HORN

Sam Hart
Aidan Lewis
Dylan Kingdom
Cristina Vieytes

TRUMPET

Terri Rauschenbach
Karlee Navarro
Katie Hillstrom

TROMBONE

Madelyn Stoklosa
Griffin Rupp

BASS TROMBONE

Jeremy Mojado

TUBA

Mikal Martin

TIMPANI

Han Xia

PERCUSSION

Matt Boyle
Judy Hu

HARP

Sebastian Gobbels

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Thomas Nettle

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Jeffrey Douma, *conductor*

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Arianne Abela
Maura Tuffy
Shabnam Abedi
Ellen Roberston
Madeline Healey

ALTO

Katherine Maroney
Eric S. Brenner
Megan Roth
Clifton Massey
Meghan Stoll
Karolina Wojteczko

TENOR

Gene Stenger
Steven Soph
Colin Britt
Noah Horn
Wilson Nichols
Corey Shotwell

BASS

Jonathan Woody
Will Doreza
Steven Hrycelak
Fredy Bonilla
Ben Ferriby
Matt Cramer

Yale Glee Club Roster

Jeffrey Douma, *conductor*

SOPRANO I

Tamara Bafi '27
Joleen Bakalova '28
Yara Chami '26
Alliese Bonner '27
Kinnia Cheuk '26
Anjal Jain '26
Miriam Levinson '29
Erica Lu '28
Rhea McTiernan Hugel '28
Elizabeth Wolfram '27

SOPRANO II

Kylie Berg '28
Senlee Dieme '26
Sophie Dvorak '26
Manon Gilles '29
Katie Gurney '26
Aurelia Keberle '27
Rose Kosciuszek '27
Catherine Lee '27
Christina Logvyniuk '26
Teresa Ng '29
Cayley Tolbert-Schwartz '28
Naomi Tracey-Hegg '29
Claire Zhong '28

ALTO I

Omeno Abutu '27
Ziqi Cui '27
Logan Gilbert '28
Mika Hiroi '28
Sreetama Kushari '29
Alistair Lam '27
Sofia Sato '28
Francesca Sisskind '29
Sarah Sparling '26
Hila Tor '28
Angelique Wheeler '26

ALTO II

Temiladeoluwa Adeniran '29
Alexis Cruz '28
Audrey Jamieson '29
Alexis Mburu '27
Catalina Ossman '27
Aryana Ramos-Vazquez '26
Fiona Ress '29
Myla Toliver '28
Thisbe Wu '26
Anna Zoltowski '28
Dibora Yilma '29

TENOR I

Matthew Chen '27
Schandy Cordero '28
Ayush Iyer '26
Harry Pambianchi '29
Bill Qian '26
John Raskopf '27
Gbemiga Salu '27
Nate Stein '28
Noah Stein '26
Kevin Vondrak YSM '26

TENOR II

Jonathan Akinniyi '26
Andrew Jean-Charles '27
Tavian Jones '26
David Liebowitz '26
Parker Mednikow '29
Stephen Morris '27
Prithvi Narayanan '28
Jaden Nicita '28
Max Ondik '28
Ari Tsomocos '27
Corin Wang '29
Andrew Xu '27

BASS I

Andrew Boanoh '27
Alexandre Campant '29
Aviv Fetaya '26
Creed Gardiner '26
Cameron Gray-Lee '27
Alex Kingma '28
Lukas Koutsoukos '27
Frank Petty '29
Vishwa Rakasi '29
August Rivers '28
Everett Tolbert-Schwartz '26
Jeffrey Yang '28

BASS II

Seung Min Baik '26
Ethan Cooper '29
Ben Graham '28
Zach Jarvis '28
Josh Li '26
Kyle Thomas Ramos '26
Lukas Vander Elst '28
Ben Weiss '27
Ben Xu '26
Charlie Zhong '29

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Madelyn Stoklosa

Diego de la Cruz Iwadare

Shengyu Meng

Carter Reynolds

Juan Alvarez Jimenez

Alex Felker

Han Xia

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Skyler Lee

Ashley Yoon

Aditi Prakash

Edenia Maureen

PHILHARMONIA

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Ben Smith

Yale Glee Club Staff

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Angelique Wheeler

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Prof. Jeffrey R. Powell & Dr. Adalgisa Caccone

Arthur Rosenfield and Wilma Ezekowitz

Jennifer Werner

More Music Awaits!

Thank you for joining us — we'd love to have you back! If you liked today's concert, here are a few more performances we think you'll enjoy:

DEC 11 **New Music New Haven**
New Music for Orchestra
7:30 p.m. | Woolsey Hall
Free admission

JAN 23 **Xian Zhang, *guest conductor***
Yale Philharmonia
7:30 p.m. | Woolsey Hall
Tickets start at \$13, Faculty/Staff start at \$9, Students free

FEB 5 **New Music New Haven**
Zosha di Castri, *guest composer*
7:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall
Free admission

FEB 14 & 15 ***La Bohème***
Yale Opera
Sat 7:30 p.m. & Sun 2:00 p.m. | Shubert Theatre
Tickets available through the Shubert box office, 203-562-5666 and shubert.com

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