

## Leshnoff bio **Feb 24, 2026**

Distinguished by *The New York Times* as “a leader of contemporary American lyricism,” GRAMMY-nominated composer Jonathan Leshnoff is renowned for his music’s striking harmonies, structural complexity, and powerful themes. The Baltimore-based composer has been ranked among the most performed living composers in recent seasons with performances by over 100 orchestras. He has received commissions from Carnegie Hall, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Baltimore, Dallas, Kansas City, Nashville, and Pittsburgh, among others. Leshnoff’s compositions have also been premiered by classical music’s most celebrated soloists, including Gil Shaham, Johannes Moser, Manuel Barrueco, Noah Bendix-Balgley and Joyce Yang.

In 26-27, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Leshnoff join forces as Leshnoff becomes its composer-in-residence, with the BSO commissioning several new works including his *Violin Concerto No. 3* for Gil Shaham. Leshnoff’s residency includes mentorship to young composers, community engagement in addition to his work with Maestro Jonathon Heyward and the BSO. Leshnoff will also have three new symphonies premiered and recorded this season: his *Symphony No. 5* for the Buffalo Philharmonic and JoAnn Falletta, his *Symphony No. 6* for the Baltimore Symphony and Jonathon Heyward and his *Symphony No. 7* for the Santa Rosa Symphony and Francesco Lecce-Chong.

Highlights in recent seasons include the premiere and recording of *Sacrifice of Isaac*, an hour-long oratorio on the Biblical account of the binding of Isaac, commissioned by the Atlanta Symphony and recorded by the Nashville Symphony and *Rhapsody on America*, commissioned by Orchestra Lumos, the Pasadena, San Jose and Valdosta Orchestras for pianist Joyce Yang. In 2026, Demarre McGill premiered Leshnoff’s *Flute Concerto No. 2* with the Fairfax Symphony, which was recorded for commercial release.

There are nine all-Leshnoff albums to date. Leshnoff’s *Symphony No. 4*, “*Heichalos*” performed on the *Violins of Hope*, was recorded by the Nashville Symphony, Giancarlo Guerrero conducting, for the Naxos label and was nominated for a 2020 GRAMMY for Best Classical Compendium. Naxos also released Leshnoff’s *Violin Concerto No. 2*, with violinist Noah Bendix-Balgley and the Oklahoma City Philharmonic conducted by Alexander Mickelthwate. Also on that album was “*Of Thee I Sing*,” for chorus and orchestra, commissioned to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Oklahoma City Bombing. Reference Recordings has released a highly acclaimed all-Leshnoff album featuring his *Piano Concerto* and his *Symphony No. 3* commemorating World War I. Other recordings on the Reference Recordings label include the Pittsburgh Symphony, Manfred Honeck, conductor, featuring his *Double Concerto for Clarinet and Bassoon*, which made it to the top of the *Billboard* charts. The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus recorded Leshnoff’s *Symphony No. 2* and *Zohar* oratorio, and three earlier all-Leshnoff albums—of both his orchestral and chamber music works—on the Naxos American Classics label and an album featuring all of his string quartets.

Celebrated by *BBC Music Magazine* as “enchanting” and by *American Record Guide* as “lyrical, virtuosic, tender, and passionate all at once,” Leshnoff’s music has been lauded

by *Strings Magazine* as “distinct from anything else that’s out there” and by *The Baltimore Sun* as “remarkably assured, cohesively constructed and radiantly lyrical.” Leshnoff’s catalog is vast, including several symphonies, oratorios, concerti, and solo / chamber music works. Leshnoff is a Professor of Music at Towson University.

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