

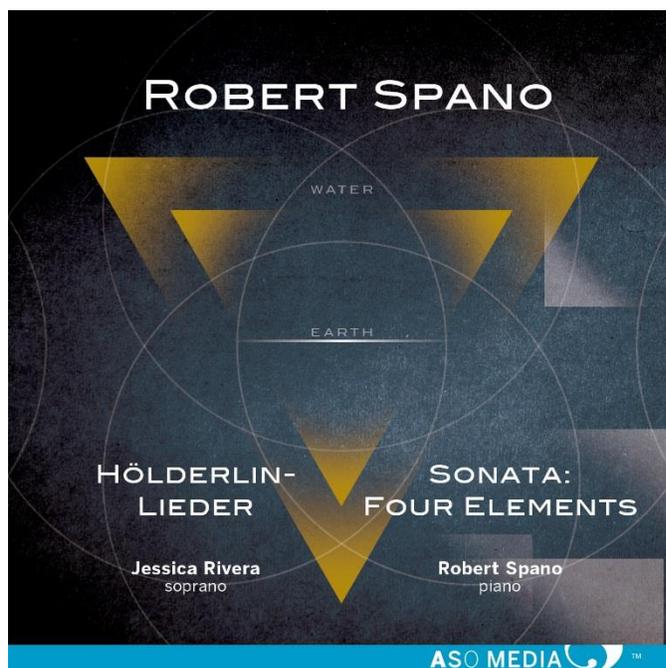
KIRSHBAUM  
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## Recording Release of Composer Robert Spano Original Works on ASO Media Label

### Hölderlin-Lieder Song Cycle Composed For and Performed by Soprano Jessica Rivera

### Sonata: Four Elements Piano Sonata Performed by Robert Spano

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



**March 8, 2017** - Conductor, composer, and pianist [Robert Spano](#) releases a **new recording** on the ASO Media label of **two of his own compositions** on April 25, 2017 on CD and digital platforms. The album, rooted in the philosophical and divine nature of creativity, consists of the **Hölderlin-Lieder song cycle** (2013), based on the poetry of 18th century German poet Friedrich Hölderlin. Mr. Spano wrote the cycle for longtime colleague and collaborator, **soprano Jessica Rivera**, who performs the cycle on this recording. Mr. Spano writes, “*The imagery of the poems sparked in me musical correspondences that I attempted to express through a late-nineteenth-century musical vocabulary, in homage to the masters of the intimate and exquisite*

*form of lieder. I wrote them for soprano Jessica Rivera, whose beautiful voice and rich artistry were my muse in the process.*”

Following the song cycle is a **piano sonata** which Mr. Spano himself performs. Composed in 2016, **Sonata: Four Elements**, is a play on the typical four movements found in sonata form,

with each movement's referring to one of the elements of nature: *earth songs, air born, under water, and on fire*. "These classical elements of earth, air, water, and fire have a rich history of associative meaning. Thinkers as ancient as Thales and Heraclitus, and as recent as Carl Jung, have been fascinated by the multi-layered symbolism inherent in these seed ideas. They are also key concepts in the western esoteric traditions, appearing in astrology, tarot cards, the qabalistic tree of life, and any variety of magical arts," states Mr. Spano. "I was inspired to capture something of the unique and complex qualities of each element, yet also to connect them, as they are dynamically related to each other."

**Track Listing:**

***Hölderlin-Lieder*** (2013)

1. Lebenslauf
2. Sokrates und Alcibiades
3. An die Parzen

Jessica Rivera, soprano

Robert Spano, piano

***Sonata: Four Elements*** (2016)

4. earth songs
5. air born
6. under water
7. on fire

Robert Spano, piano

Live audiences have the opportunity to hear the *Hölderlin-Lieder* song cycle with Ms. Rivera during the [SHIFT Festival](#), a co-presentation between the **Kennedy Center** and **Washington Performing Arts**, which highlights North American orchestras in a week-long celebration including performances, mini-residencies, educational events, panels, and community engagement. On March 30, Mr. Spano joins the vocal soloists - which also include **Sasha Cooke, Thomas Cooley, Nmon Ford, Evan Boyer**, and **Steven Cole** - as collaborative pianist, to perform the *Hölderlin-Lieder* in addition to works by Britten, Poulenc, Porter, and Gershwin.

On March 31, Mr. Spano, music director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, leads the ASO in the oratorio *Creation/Creator* by **Christopher Theofanidis**. This work, **commissioned by the ASO**, features Meses. Rivera and Cooke and Messrs. Cooley, Ford, and Boyer, with narrations by Steven Cole and Shannon Eubanks, as well as the **180-voice Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus and full orchestra**. The composer utilizes texts from philosophy, science, religion, poetry, and literature to explore the creative process in the multimedia production, which premiered in 2015 by Spano, the ASO, ASO Chorus, and soloists. Collaborating artists include Daniel Arsham and James Alexander, who created stage environment installations with a focus on light and texture, with color schemes evolving to fit the work's movements. Christopher Theofanidis is a member of ASO's Atlanta School of Composers, a select group of composers nurtured and commissioned by the ASO and Mr. Spano over the course of several years.

**[Atlanta Symphony Orchestra: Creation Stories](#)**

**Thursday, March 30, 2017, 6:00 p.m.**

**National Gallery of Art, West Garden Court - Washington DC**

[Jessica Rivera](#), soprano

[Sasha Cooke](#), mezzo-soprano

[Thomas Cooley](#), tenor

[Nmon Ford](#), baritone

[Evan Boyer](#), bass

[Steven Cole](#), narrator

[Shannon Eubanks](#), narrator

[Robert Spano](#), music director

**[Creation/Creator by Christopher Theofanidis](#)**

**Friday, March 31, 2017 at 8:00 PM**

**The Kennedy Center - Washington DC**

[Jessica Rivera](#), soprano

[Sasha Cooke](#), mezzo-soprano

[Thomas Cooley](#), tenor

[Nmon Ford](#), baritone

[Evan Boyer](#), bass

[Steven Cole](#), narrator

[Shannon Eubanks](#), narrator

[Robert Spano](#), music director

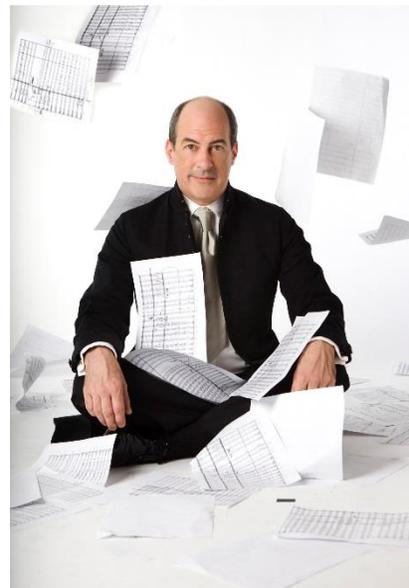
[Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus](#)

[Atlanta Symphony Orchestra](#)

**About Robert Spano**

Conductor, pianist, composer, and pedagogue Robert Spano is known worldwide for the intensity of his artistry and his distinctive communicative abilities, creating a sense of inclusion and warmth among musicians and audiences that is unique among American orchestras. Currently in his 16th season as Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, this imaginative conductor has been responsible for nurturing the careers of numerous celebrated composers, conductors, and performers and enjoys collaborations with composers and musicians of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. As Music Director of the Aspen Music Festival and School, he oversees the programming of more than 300 events and educational programs, including the Aspen Conducting Academy.

The Atlanta School of Composers reflects Spano's commitment to American contemporary music. He has led ASO performances at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Ravinia, Ojai, and Savannah Music Festivals. Guest engagements have included orchestras such as the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics, San Francisco, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago and Philadelphia symphony orchestras, along with Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, BBC



Symphony and Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. His opera performances include Covent Garden, Welsh National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, and the 2005 and 2009 Seattle Opera productions of Wagner's Ring cycles.

Mr. Spano began the 2016-2017 season with "cloth field: an art place of life," a conceptual collaboration between Spano and choreographer Lauri Stallings, involving dancers and sculptural elements with an original score composed by Mr. Spano in 2014 for the Atlanta-based dance troupe, *glo*. In addition to his leadership of the ASO, Spano has recently returned to his early love of composing. His most recent works include *Sonata: Four Elements* for piano, premiered by Spano in August at the Aspen Music Festival, as well as the *Hölderlin-Lieder* song cycle written for soprano Jessica Rivera, both recorded for release on the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's ASO Media label. Spano opened the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's season with an all-Tchaikovsky program with guest soloist Joshua Bell. Later concerts featured pianists Garrick Ohlsson, Pedja Muzijevic, and Stephen Hough. An avid interpreter of opera and oratorio, Mr. Spano recently conducted John Adams's *Nixon in China* at Houston Grand Opera, will lead Christopher Theofanidis's *Creation/Creator* at the Kennedy Center's 2017 Shift Festival, featuring singers Jessica Rivera, Sasha Cooke, Thomas Cooley, Nmon Ford, Vinson Cole, and Evan Boyer, the ASO and ASO Chorus, and will conduct and record Gluck's *Orfeo* with the ASO and ASO Chamber Chorus.

With a discography of critically acclaimed recordings for Telarc, Deutsche Grammophon, and ASO Media, Robert Spano has won six Grammy™ Awards with the Atlanta Symphony. Spano is on faculty at Oberlin Conservatory and has received honorary doctorates from Bowling Green State University, the Curtis Institute of Music, Emory University and Oberlin. Maestro Spano is one of two classical musicians inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame, and lives in Atlanta.

**MEDIA LINKS:**

[Official Website of Robert Spano](#)  
[Digital Press Kit for Robert Spano](#)

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

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Image of Mr. Spano by Angela Morris