

Bloomberg

Ravaged Pakistan Gets Beethoven for Aid



George Mathew conducts Mahler for Children of Aids at Carnegie Hall in New York. Mathew returns to the concert hall tonight to lead top musicians from 40 orchestras to raise funding for his charity for the victims of last year's flood in Pakistan. Photographer: Chris Lee/Cohn Dutcher Associates via Bloomberg

George Mathew conducts Mahler for Children of Aids at Carnegie Hall in New York. Orchestra members, including from the New York Philharmonic and Metropolitan Opera, will gather to raise about \$100,000 for the victims of last year's flood in Pakistan. Photographer: Chris Lee/Cohn Dutcher Associates via Bloomberg



By Patrick Cole - Jan 31, 2011

Conductor [George Mathew](#) will use Beethoven to aid rebuilding efforts in [Pakistan](#) after last year's floods left millions injured and homeless.

"Relief work is very important, but perhaps some sustainable work could be done to help economic development," said Mathew, 46, founder and artistic director of Music for Life International. He started the charity in 2008 to bring classical musicians together for humanitarian causes.

Mathew asked top musicians from [New York](#) and nearby cities to come together for "Beethoven for the [Indus Valley](#)," a charity concert at Carnegie tonight to assist victims of the Pakistan floods. The concert seeks to net about \$100,000, Mathew said. The musicians will perform Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 free, and the proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to the [Acumen Fund](#). The New York-based nonprofit has invested more than \$11 million in housing, water and agricultural projects in Pakistan since 2002.

Mathew's 90-person orchestra includes artists from about 40 ensembles, including the [New York Philharmonic](#) and the [Metropolitan Opera](#), as well as the Philadelphia, Orpheus Chamber and [American Symphony](#) orchestras. Standouts include [Glenn Dicterow](#), the [New York Philharmonic](#)'s concertmaster, and [Eugene Drucker](#), a violinist with the Grammy Award-winning Emerson String Quartet.

Chorus and Images

The Ninth's choral finale will be performed by the [Dessoff Symphonic Choirs](#), a New York ensemble. They will be joined by a quartet of rising stars from the [Metropolitan Opera](#) headlined by tenor [Sean Panikkar](#) and bass [Morris Robinson](#). Images of Pakistan and people affected by the disaster will be projected on the Isaac Stern Auditorium's wall behind the orchestra, Mathew said.

"Music is a statement of an individual, and in this symphony Beethoven's music becomes an utterance of a civilization," Mathew said. "At the end of the day, we are trying to bring humanitarian support to a community which is in need."

The concert's honorary advisory board and supporters include London Symphony Orchestra President Sir Colin Davis; Alexander Bernstein, president of the Leonard Bernstein Family Foundation; and Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town Desmond Tutu.

Mathew, who was raised in [India](#), was traveling there last summer when the disaster struck Pakistan. Although there have been constant tensions between the two nations, he sees a prospect for less discord. "The wonderful thing about making music is that more often than not, our identities melt away, and we try to match notes, match rhythms and be in harmony," he said. "Music has the potential for changing the way we deal with each other."

"Beethoven for the Indus Valley" is at 8 p.m. tonight at [Carnegie Hall](#)'s Stern Auditorium. Information: +1-212-247-7800 or <http://www.carnegiehall.org/>