



SAN FRANCISCO  
*Lyric*  
*Chorus*

10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON 2005-2006

# an English Christmas

music director Robert Gurney



celebrating  
the 500<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of

Tallis  
Missa Puer Natus Est Nobis  
Vaughan Williams  
If Ye Love Me  
Fantasia on Christmas Carols  
the Blessed Son of God  
No Sad Thought  
His Soul Affright  
Holst  
Hymn to the Virgin  
Britten  
Mathias  
Sir Christmas

**| TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH | DECEMBER 3 (SAT. 8PM) & 4 (SUN. 5PM) |**

# San Francisco Lyric Chorus

ROBERT GURNEY, MUSIC DIRECTOR

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Welcome to the Fall 2005 Concert of the San Francisco Lyric Chorus.

Since its formation in 1995, the Chorus has offered diverse and innovative music to the community through a gathering of singers who believe in a commonality of spirit and sharing. The debut concert featured music by Gabriel Fauré and Louis Vierne. The Chorus has been involved in several premieres, including Bay Area composer Brad Osness' *Lamentations*, Ohio composer Robert Witt's *Four Motets to the Blessed Virgin Mary* (West Coast premiere) New York composer William Hawley's *The Snow That Never Drifts* (San Francisco premiere) and San Francisco composer Kirke Mechem's *Christmas the Morn, Blessed Are They*, and *To Music* (San Francisco premieres).

With this concert, we begin the exciting celebration of our tenth anniversary year. We have had a wonderful year. For our Spring 2005 program, we explored the music of two Austrian master composers, presenting Joseph Haydn's joyous *Harmoniemesse*, the last major composition of this graceful and ebullient composer, and Anton Bruckner's rarely performed *Mass No. 1 in D Minor*, a work of great depth and deep passion. In June 2005, we were invited to participate at a special celebration in Grace Cathedral, honoring the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations. We joined Lawrence Kohl and the Pacific Chamber Symphony in performing Arizona composer James DeMars' *Anthem for the United Nations*, as well as performing Simon and Garfunkel's *Bridge over Troubled Waters* with noted soprano Lisa Vroman. In Summer 2005, we performed the incomparable Brahms *Requiem*, one of the most profound and beloved works in choral literature.

We invite you to celebrate with us as we present *An English Christmas*. We mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Thomas Tallis, one of the major English Renaissance composers with probably his most well known work, the lovely anthem, *If ye love me*, and his extraordinary seven-part Christmas Mass, the *Missa puer natus est nobis*. We then leap to wonderful 20<sup>th</sup>-century holiday music, embodied in the lush Romanticism of Ralph Vaughan Williams. We will sing two chorales from his cantata, *Hodie*, as well as his joyous *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. We celebrate the talent of Benjamin Britten with his gentle double chorus anthem, *Hymn to the Virgin*. We explore the works Gustav Holst, an English composer who arranged the medieval Latin Christmas song, *Personent hodie*, and Welsh composer William Mathias, whose sparkling composition, *Sir Christëmas* (from his song cycle *Ave Rex*), is based on a 15<sup>th</sup>-century English text.

*Please sign our mailing list, located in the foyer.*

*The San Francisco Lyric Chorus is a member of Chorus America.*

# Program

*If ye love me* Thomas Tallis

*Missa puer natus est nobis* Thomas Tallis

## Intermission

*Sir Christèmas* William Mathias

*Personent hodie* Gustav Holst

*Hymn to the Virgin* Benjamin Britten

*The blessed son of God* Ralph Vaughan Williams

*No sad thought his soul affright* Ralph Vaughan Williams

*Fantasia on Christmas carols* Ralph Vaughan Williams

Kevin Baum, Soloist

David Hatt, Organ

We are recording this concert for archival purposes

### **Please observe the following rules:**

Turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before the concert

No photography or audio/video taping during the performance.

No children under five

Help us to maintain a distraction-free environment.

Thank you.

## Program Notes

We present to you today beautiful holiday music from the British Isles. We begin with Thomas Tallis, the father of English church music, as we honor his 500<sup>th</sup> birth. Tallis' music, created during 16<sup>th</sup>-century political strife and social upheaval, had a great influence on composers who came after. The two works we present today—the anthem, *If ye love me*, and the *Missa puer natus est nobis*—demonstrate well the musical response to the conflicts which beset England in Tallis' time. Welsh composer William Mathias' energetic, syncopated setting of *Sir Christemas*, incorporates modern rhythms and a sense of jazz, but turns to the past in his choice of a 15<sup>th</sup> century text. Gustav Holst's simple setting of the medieval Latin song, *Personent hodie*, is influenced by his involvement with the British folksong movement. Young Benjamin Britten's early composition, *Hymn to the Virgin*, is an example of his tremendous compositional gifts. The three selections by Ralph Vaughan Williams display his warm, lush Romanticism, while showing his special feeling for and sensitivity to the British folksong.

### SAN FRANCISCO LYRIC CHORUS DISCOVERY SERIES

Our Winter Concert 1996 inaugurated a new aspect of the San Francisco Lyric Chorus' desire to feature unusual and innovative programming. The Discovery Series identifies compositions or composers that are not well known, but which are exceptional and of special interest.

### THOMAS TALLIS (CA 1505-1585)

We celebrate today the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Thomas Tallis, considered the father of English church music. A Catholic, he was born around 1505, at the end of the reign of Henry VII, possibly in the county of Kent, England. The 16<sup>th</sup> century in England was a time of tremendous political and religious turmoil and intrigue, a time that drastically altered life and culture, not only in England, but also in all of Europe. This century of upheaval greatly affected English music, art, drama and literature, resulting in some of the most profound cultural legacies in Western history.

Tallis lived under the reign of five monarchs: Henry VII (1457-1509), a Catholic; Henry VIII (1491-1547) a Catholic, until his difficulties with the Pope in the 1530s; Edward VI (1537-1553), a Protestant; Mary Tudor (1516-1558), a Catholic; and Elizabeth I (1533-1603), who steered a middle road between Protestantism and Catholicism. Various issues faced England during Tallis' lifetime, many affecting the composition and performance of music. England vied for political power with France and Spain. The power and authority of the Catholic Church was being challenged in part by the ideas and philosophies of German theologian Martin Luther (1486-1546) and French theologian John Calvin (1509-1564). When Pope Clement VII would not grant Henry VIII an annulment in 1534 to his sonless marriage with his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, Henry and the English Parliament passed statutes which allowed Henry to divorce her and to be acknowledged as the Head of the Church of England, changing some of the worship practices, but not changing the basic set of beliefs.

Not much is known about Tallis' early years. He might have been a choirboy in an English cathedral, but nothing is known of his family, his schooling or musical training. His first documented appearance is in 1530-1531, when he is listed as the organist of the humble Benedictine Priory of Dover. Henry VIII began dissolving many monasteries and other Catholic religious organizations, and the Dover Priory was dissolved in 1535. By 1537-1538, Tallis was employed at the church of St. Mary-at-Hill in London, although it is not known if he was a singer or the organist. In 1538, he took a position as a member of the Lady Chapel choir at Waltham Abbey in the county of Essex. Unfortunately, Henry VIII dissolved Waltham Abbey in 1540, the last monastery to be so treated. Tallis returned to the county of

Kent, taking a position as a singer at Canterbury Cathedral, which had been changed from a Benedictine monastery to a secular cathedral.

Around 1543, Tallis became a Gentleman (singer) of the Chapel Royal, the chapel serving the royal household. He served as a member of the Chapel Royal until his death. In 1570, Tallis was designated organist of the Chapel Royal, although he probably served in that position much before that time. The organist might have taught singing and composition to the boy choristers, in addition to playing the organ. One of the boy choristers at that time was William Byrd, who would become the most gifted English composer of the Elizabethan era and Tallis' business partner.

Although it is not known when Tallis began composing, he was an active composer in the 1520s. His earliest surviving works are three Latin motets: *Ave Dei patris*, *Ave Rosa* and *Salve intemerata*, which appear to date from the late 1520s-early 1530s. When Henry VIII assumed a major role in religious affairs, he changed worship practices, which, in turn, changed music practices. Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the compiler/author of the *Book of Common Prayer*, required that church services be held in English and that service music be set in English. He believed that music for the Latin/Catholic service was much too complicated, and that each syllable of text should be attached to a note, rather than the more elaborate musical systems used in the Catholic service. Tallis was one of the first composers to set church music in English under these new regulations. His most beloved and well-known anthem, which we sing today, *If ye love me*, was composed around 1547-1548.

After Henry VIII's death, and the death of his son, Edward VI, Mary Tudor ascended to the throne, which meant a return to setting music for the Catholic service. The *Missa puer natus est nobis* is a good example of the more elaborate music for the Roman rite. It is the only Tallis work that can be dated with certainty. Upon Mary's death in 1558, Elizabeth gained the throne, bringing back much of the Protestant ritual, but also leaving room for Latin settings of music as well. One of Tallis' last works, and probably his most spectacular, is the monumental 40-voice imitative motet, *Spem in alium*, written somewhere between 1567 and 1572. The work is scored for eight choruses of five voices each.

Tallis' former student, William Byrd, joined the Chapel Royal in 1572, and in 1573, Tallis and Byrd petitioned Queen Elizabeth for a source of additional income. In 1575, Elizabeth granted them an exclusive 21-year license to print, publish and sell music and lined paper, one of the first such licenses in England. One of Tallis and Byrd's first efforts was the jointly produced *Cantiones sacrae*, a volume of 34 Latin motets for 5-8 voices, with each composer contributing 17 compositions. Tallis lived in Greenwich during his later years. He died in 1585 and was buried in the chancel of the parish church of St. Alfege. His gentle epitaph there reads:

Entered here doth ly a worthy wight,  
Who for long tyme in music bore the Bell;  
His name to shew was Thomas Tallys hyght;  
In honest virtuous lyff he did excel.  
He served long tyme in Chapell with grate prayse,  
I mean King Henry and Prynce Edward's dayes,  
Quene Mary and Elizabeth our Quene.

He maryed was, though children he had none,  
And lived in Love full three and thirty Yere,  
With loyal Spowse, whose name yclipt was Jone,  
Who here entomb'd now company him bears.

As he did lyve, so also did he dy,  
In mild and quyet sort, O! happy man.  
To God ful oft for mercy did he cry,  
Wherefore he lyves, let Death do what he can.

Thomas Tallis composed in all musical genres known in 16<sup>th</sup> century England: Latin motets (short, unaccompanied sacred choral compositions), masses, music for the English service, anthems (the English version of the Latin motet), a few secular part songs, keyboard music, both based on liturgical and non-liturgical sources, and music for instrumental consorts. He created many of the musical forms used in the Anglican/Episcopal church today, call and responses, the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* structure, the prototype English hymn and Anglican chant. He was a significant influence on later English church music. Ralph Vaughan Williams was so inspired by one of the Tallis psalm tunes that he composed his beautiful orchestral work, *Fantasia on a theme by Thomas Tallis*.

## IF YE LOVE ME

*Anthems* and *motets* are not liturgical works, although in this period, they are sacred texts. The *anthem* is the English version of the Latin *motet*. These compositions are not part of the formal service and service text, but usually a part of the service where the choir sings *a cappella* or accompanied on a text appropriate to the topic of the service. This *anthem*, written in 1547 or 1548, is one of the first to demonstrate the new, English style of music. *If ye love me* is harmonic in structure, and has one syllable to each note, except for a few passing notes here and there. It is in ABB structure, with the first section sung once, and the second section repeated. Tallis demonstrates his characteristic use of imitation in the second section.

If ye love me,  
keep my commandments,  
and I will pray the Father,  
and he shall give you another comforter,  
that he may bide with you forever,  
e'en the spirit of truth.

*John 14: 15-17*

## MISSA PUER NATUS EST NOBIS

*San Francisco Lyric Chorus Discovery Series*

The seven-part *Missa puer natus est nobis* was composed somewhere around 1554, during Mary Tudor's reign, when she married Philip II of Spain. It was meant to celebrate the Christmas season, as well as her pregnancy (which turned out to be a false pregnancy.) With no royal birth, the *Mass* disappeared for centuries. In 1928, it was first published in the Tallis volume of *Tudor Church Music*. Only three sections were published, with blank lines left for the missing voice parts.

In 1960, most of the missing *Mass* sections were found at the British Museum by University of California, Berkeley musicologist Joseph Kerman. They were on loan from the library of the Madrigal Society, their original home. In his essay titled "The *Missa puer natus est* by Thomas Tallis," Kerman notes that the fragments which he found were known only from copies of the *Mass* made fifty years after its creation by Edward Paston, an English music copyist. Kerman comments that the advanced style of composition is relatively late, and that the *Mass* is a "full" mass, not broken into chamber chorus and full chorus sections, as were most other contemporary festive Tudor masses. Sally Dunkley and David Wulstan took the extant fragments and created the absent parts, editing the whole into the work we sing today. The *Mass* has no *Kyrie* and only a brief fragment of the *Credo* remains.

Latin masses of this period often were written on a *cantus firmus*, a recognizable sacred or secular melody woven throughout the composition. The *Missa puer natus est nobis* is such a mass, preceded by the Gregorian chant *Puer natus est nobis* (*unto us a son is born*) on which it is based. In this case, that chant is a short, rather unusual text, composed in an archaic form.

This *Mass* begins with the *Gloria*, and the intonation, *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. The chorus responds, bursting into a contrasting seven-part structure on the text *et in terra pax...* One can look at this *Mass* as three pairings of voices: Sopranos 1 and 2, Altos 1 and 2, and Basses 1 and 2, ornamenting a melody thread--the main tune sung by the tenors. The paired voices often imitate each other, e.g., Sopranos 1 and 2 having similar lines a measure or so apart. At times, voices from one 'section' will pair with voices from another section, such as Soprano 2 and Alto 2. Tallis uses a lot of imitation throughout the work. The power of the composition comes together in a section, such as the '*qui sedes*,' where all voices come together in harmony, and then return to a more polyphonic texture. Often, voices may be paired in threes or fours, as in '*Quoniam tu solus*, which starts with the four lower voices, and then is answered by the three upper voices. These patterns occur in the other movements. Tallis also makes great use of thirds, fourths, and fifths in his harmonic structure, as well as repeated notes.

The *Credo* is the central section of a *Mass*. In this case, only a fragment remains, but we felt it was important to share the beauty and complexity of Tallis' writing. Just two phrases demonstrate his amazing abilities: '*Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum*' and '*Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen*' are filled with complex rhythms and harmonies. The first phrase features all voices but Soprano 1, singing in 3/2 time. The second phrase features all voices, singing in 6/4 time. Although it is only a fragment, this section is one of the most unusual in the *Mass*. The end of the *Credo* is the most elaborate ending of all the sections.

The *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* follow the same structure as the *Gloria*. Tallis ends the *Agnus Dei* with voices that sound like distant bugles.

The texture of this *Mass* is somewhat thicker than the usual, soaring English style, and scholars surmise that Tallis wrote the composition for an important performance by members of Mary Tudor's Chapel Royal Choir, which would have had many treble singers, in combination with the members of Philip's Flemish Chapel Choir, which would have had more lower voices. One can notice the more elaborate phrasing and dense sound of the *Mass*, in contrast to the more simple structure of *If ye love me*.

## Introit

*Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis:  
cujus imperium super humerum ejus:  
et vocabitur nomen ejus, magni consilii angelus.  
Cantate Domino canticum novum:  
quia mirabilia fecit.  
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto  
sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in  
saecula saeculorum.  
Amen.*

A boy is born and a son is given unto us:  
and the government rests up his shoulders;  
and his name shall be called the Angel of  
great council.  
Sing unto the Lord a new song:  
for he has done marvelous things.  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to  
the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever  
shall be, world without end.  
Amen.

## The Mass

### Gloria

*Gloria in excelsis Deo*

*et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.*

*Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te,  
glorificamus te.*

*Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam  
tuam.*

*Domine Deus, rex coelestis,*

*Deus Pater omnipotens,*

*Domine fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.*

*Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, filius patris.*

*Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.*

*Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem nostram.*

*Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nobis.*

*Quoniam tu solus sanctus,  
tu solus Dominus,  
tu solus altissimus,*

*Jesu Christe,*

*cum Sancto Spiritus*

*in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.*

### Credo

*Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum*

*Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen*

### Sanctus

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus*

*Dominus Deus Sabaoth*

*Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.*

*Osanna in excelsis.*

*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.*

*Osanna in excelsis.*

### Agnus Dei

*Agnus Dei*

*qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.*

*Agnus Dei*

*qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.*

*Agnus Dei*

*qui tollis peccata mundi  
dona nobis pacem.*

### Gloria

Glory to God in the highest.

And on earth peace to all those of good will.

We praise thee. We bless thee.

We worship thee. We glorify thee.

We give thanks to thee  
according to thy great glory.

Lord God, Heavenly King,

God the Father almighty.

Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son.

Lord God, Lamb of God,

Son of the Father.

Thou who takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

Thou who takest away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.

Thou who takest away the sins of the world,  
Have mercy upon us.

For Thou alone art holy.

Thou alone art the Lord.

Thou alone art the most high, Jesus Christ.

With the Holy Spirit

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### Credo

I await the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy,

Lord God of Hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the  
Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

### Agnus Dei

Lamb of God,

who takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God,

who takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God,

who takest away the sins of the world,  
grant us peace.

## WILLIAM MATHIAS (1934-1992)

One of the most important Welsh composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, William Mathias was born in Whitland, Pembrokeshire, South Wales in 1934. An only child of a deputy school headmaster and a piano teacher/organist, Mathias exhibited musical talent at an early age, transcribing music that he heard on a pianola, a type of player-piano. He began studying piano with a local teacher at age five and was performing publicly by the time he was seven. From a young age, he wanted to become a composer. He attended the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth between 1952 and 1956. In 1956 he received a composition scholarship to London's Royal Academy of Music, where he studied composition with Lennox Berkeley and piano with Peter Katin. Mathias was a gifted pianist. He married professional singer Margaret Yvonne Collins in 1959, the same year he took a position as lecturer at the University College of North Wales, Bangor. He held this position until 1968, composing in addition to his teaching. The music community noticed his musical skills and abilities, and he was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Music in 1965. In 1966, he received his Doctorate in Music from the University of Wales. He was a Professor of Music at the University College of North Wales, Bangor from 1970 to his retirement in 1987. He received many honors and awards during his career, including the Arnold Bax Society composition prize (1968), the John Edwards Memorial Award from the Guild of the Promotion of Welsh Music (1982) and an honorary Doctorate of Music by Princeton's Westminster Choir College (1987). He also was active in many music and music-related organizations, including the Music Advisory Committee of the British Council (1974-1983), the BBC Central Advisory Committee (1979-1986), the Composers Guild Council (1982 until his death), Vice President of the Royal College of Organists (1985-1986), and Founder and Director of the North Wales Music Festival (1972 until his death). In 1990, illness halted his activities, and he died in 1992.

Mathias was one of the few Welsh composers to gain international recognition. He was an active and prolific composer, exploring almost every genre of music. He composed one opera, *The Servants* (1980), chamber music, symphonies, other orchestral music tone poems, choral music, both sacred and secular, accompanied and *a cappella*, eleven concertos for various instruments, songs, music for various solo instruments and music for keyboard. His music is always innovative and is characterized by rhythmic energy. He is known especially for his choral and church music, and received many commissions from American churches. He visited the United States regularly for festivals and performances of his music. Notable compositions include his works for chorus and orchestra, especially *Ave Rex* (1969), *This Worlde's Joie* (1974), *Lux Aeterna* (1982) and *World's Fire* (1989). His *First String Quartet* (1967), *Piano Concerto No. 3* (1968) and his *Symphony No. 3* (1991) are good examples of his instrumental skills. He received a CBE (Commander of the British Empire) award for his anthem, *Let the people praise thee, O God* (the *Royal Wedding Anthem*), written for the 1981 wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana.

## SIR CHRISTÈMAS

*Sir Christèmas* is one of four anonymous medieval carols Mathias sets in his 1969 Christmas composition, *Ave Rex*. The text is *macaronic*, i.e., written in two languages, here English and French. Mathias' setting is a wonderful example of his energy, sense of melody, and joy in exciting rhythm.

Nowell, nowell.  
Who is there that singeth so,  
Nowell, nowell?  
I am here, Sir Christèmas.  
Welcome, my lord Sir Christèmas!

Welcome to all, both more and less!  
(both great and small!)  
Come near, come near, come near,  
Nowell, nowell.

*Dieu vous garde, beaux sieurs,*  
(*God keep you, fair gentlemen,*)  
tidings I you bring;  
A maid hath borne a child full young,  
Which causeth you to sing:  
Nowell, nowell.

Christ is now born of a pure maid,  
born of a pure maid;  
In an ox-stall he is laid,  
Wherefore sing we at a brayde:  
(‘brayde’ means to start, here all at once):  
Nowell, nowell.

*Buvez bien, buvez bien (Drink well)*  
*par toute la compagnie. (through all the*  
*company.)*  
Make good cheer and be right merry,  
And sing with us now joyfully  
Nowell, nowell.

## GUSTAV HOLST (1874-1934)

Composer and teacher Gustavus Theodore von Holst was born in Cheltenham, England, in 1874. He came from a musical family. His great grandfather, Matthias, a composer and pianist of German ancestry, was a harp teacher to the Imperial Russian court at St. Petersburg. Born in Riga, Latvia in 1769, Holst’s great grandfather fled to England in 1799. Gustav Holst’s grandfather and father were also musicians. His father, Adolph, a pianist and organist, married one of his piano students. Although young Holst’s father taught him piano, the boy suffered from neuritis, which prevented him from preparing for a career as a concert pianist. He first studied the violin, and later the trombone, practicing the latter in the hopes that it would cure his asthma. When he was 12, he was required to learn a poem for a class at school. The poem so inspired him that he set it to music—and thus began his career as a composer. During his teen years, he also helped his father prepare music for church services. He was gifted enough that as a teenager he became a choirmaster and organist for TWO Cotswold area villages at the same time. By 1891, he had had a number of local performances of his vocal and instrumental compositions, including an 1892 operetta, *Lansdown Castle*. He studied counterpoint with George Sims, organist at Merton College Oxford, and in 1893, was admitted to the Royal College of Music. He studied counterpoint with Charles Villiers Stanford, one of 19<sup>th</sup> century England’s most prestigious composers. He also took classes with another major English composer, C. Hubert Parry.

In 1895, Holst met Ralph Vaughan Williams, who was to become his closest and life-long friend, as well as a major influence on his music. As a young man, Holst thought highly of the music of Richard Wagner, and some of his early works demonstrate Wagner’s influence. In 1896, he published his first work, a part song titled *Light Leaves Whisper*. Holst and Vaughan Williams admired the philosophy and poetry of Walt Whitman, as well as the work of English poet, artist and social reformer, William Morris. In 1896, he was asked to become conductor of the Hammersmith Socialist Choir, which rehearsed at Morris’ house. While studying composition and trombone at the Royal College of Music, he began playing trombone as a freelance musician. At this time, he also became interested in Hindu literature, philosophy and religion, and studied Sanskrit at University College, London. That interest influenced his 1907-1909 setting of his own translation of *Hymns from the Rig Veda* and his 1903 chamber opera, *Savitri*, based on a story from the *Mahabharata*.

As a professional trombonist, Holst joined various orchestras between 1897 and 1900. In 1901, he married one of the Hammersmith Choir sopranos, Isobel Harrison. At the end of 1903, realizing he could not support his family as a musician, he gave up his career, becoming a music teacher at James Allen’s Girls’ School in Dulwich. He added to his teaching load in 1905, taking a position as Head of Music at St. Paul’s Girls’ School in Hammersmith, a

position he held to the end of his life. In 1907, the Holsts had a daughter, Imogen, who was to become a well-known English conductor, composer and writer.

Between 1907 and 1924, Holst was Director of Music at Morley College. He became quite fond of amateur/student musicals, and in 1911 supervised the first performance since 1695 of Henry Purcell's opera, *The Fairy Queen*. Because of his teaching commitments, Holst composed only on weekends, school holidays and in the summer. By 1916, he was becoming well known as a composer. In 1917, he composed one of his most important works, the *Hymn of Jesus*, a work for chorus and orchestra. Between 1914 and 1916, he composed his most popular work, the orchestral suite, *The Planets*. It was an immediate success upon its premiere in 1918, leading to performances of his other works. Because of World War I, Holst removed the 'von' from his name in 1918. After 1925, Holst continued to teach, although he devoted more time to composing. He came to the United States twice, to lecture at the University of Michigan, and to teach at Harvard, where Elliot Carter was one of his students. He died in 1934.

Gustav Holst composed in a variety of genres: music for the stage, choral works, music for orchestra and band, chamber music, music for solo instruments, and songs for voice and piano. He was known especially for his fine choral writing. He was considered an excellent and supportive teacher. Both he and Vaughan Williams were part of the English folksong revival, as well as the 20<sup>th</sup> century development of the English hymn. The two friends also were influenced by music of earlier times, such as the Tudor period. Holst was innovative in form, and was well aware of music by such contemporaries as Schönberg, Bartók and Stravinsky.

## PERSONENT HODIE

*Personent hodie* is one of 74 late medieval Latin songs found in the 1582 compilation, *Piae Cantiones*. Jaakko Suomalainen, Headmaster of the Turko Cathedral School in Finland, created this remarkable collection of songs that were sung in Finnish cathedral schools. The songs were of Bohemian, German, French and English origin, used in the classroom, as well as familiar to adults. In the case of English carols, this collection is particularly important in the preservation of many familiar tunes, because in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Puritans banned the celebration of Christmas and the singing of carols. The collection includes some familiar works: *Personent hodie*, *Gaudete*, *Resonet in laudibus*, *In dulci jubilo*, *Puer nobis nascitur*, and *Tempus adest floridum*. The latter spring song was relatively unknown until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when John R. Neale borrowed the tune to set his newly-written text, *Good King Wenceslas*.

In 1916-1917, Gustav Holst arranged *Personent hodie*, a 1360 German carol, publishing it in 1924. Most likely, it was written to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Innocents (December 26), which commemorates the boys slain by King Herod as he searched for the baby Jesus. Holst set at least two other Christmas works, the 15th century English text, *Lullay my liking* and Christina Rossetti's beautiful poem, *In the bleak midwinter*.

### Personent hodie

*Personent hodie*  
*voces puerulae,*  
*laudantes iucunde*  
*qui nobis est natus,*  
*summo Deo datus,*  
*et de vir, vir, vir, et de vir, vir, vir,*  
*et de virgineo ventre procreatus.*

### On This Day Earth Shall Ring

*free translation by Jane M. Joseph (1894-1929)*

On this day earth shall ring  
with the song children sing  
to the Lord, Christ our King,  
born on earth to save us;  
him the Father gave us.

*In mundo nascitur, pannis involvitur  
praesepe ponitur stabulo brutorum,  
rector supernorum.  
Perdidit, dit, dit, perdidit, dit, dit,  
perdidit spolia princeps infernorum.*

*Magi tres venerunt, parvulum inquirunt,  
parvulum inquirunt, stellulam sequendo,  
ipsum adorando,  
aurum, thus, thus, thus, aurum thus, thus, thus,  
aurum thus, et myrrham ei offerendo.*

*Omnes clericali, pariter pueri,  
cantent ut angeli: advenisti mundo,  
laudes tibi fundo.  
id-e-o-o-o-o, id-e-o-o-o-o,  
Id-e-o gloria in excelsis Deo!*

His the doom, ours the mirth;  
when he came down to earth,  
Bethlehem saw his birth;  
ox and ass beside him  
from the cold would hide him.

God's bright star, o'er his head,  
Wise Men three to him led;  
kneel they low by his bed,  
lay their gifts before him,  
praise him and adore him.

On this day angels sing;  
with their song earth shall ring,  
praising Christ, heaven's King,  
born on earth to save us;  
peace and love he gave us.

## BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976)

Considered by many as the most important 20<sup>th</sup>-century English composer, Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft, England. His mother was an amateur singer, and he began composing at the age of five. English composer Frank Bridge noticed the talented youth at the 1924 Norwich Festival, and accepted young Britten as a pupil. Bridge helped Britten to develop excellent compositional technique, and introduced him to the music of other composers, from England as well as from abroad.

In 1930, Britten entered the Royal College of Music. There, he studied piano with Harold Samuel and Arthur Benjamin as well as composition with noted composer John Ireland. In 1935 he began composing music for documentary films created by England's General Post Office. It was during this period that Britten met and began collaborating on works with poet W. H. Auden. In the late 1930s Britten moved to the United States with his partner, the well-known tenor, Peter Pears. In 1942, he read an article about the English poet George Crabbe and, realizing that he missed his home, returned to England. The ship taking him and Pears home stopped in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where Britten bought a book of English poetry. The book inspired him to compose *A ceremony of carols* on board the ship.

The period 1936-1945 was a fruitful one for Britten, with a varied outpouring of music, including the song cycle with orchestra *Our hunting fathers*, the opera *Paul Bunyan*, and *Rejoice in the Lamb*, which was published in 1943. During the war years, Britten and Pears, both conscientious objectors, gave many public concerts as their contributions to the community in those dark days.

During and after the war Britten continued his compositional activities in a wide variety of genres, including opera, instrumental music, music for children, and choral music. His 1945 opera *Peter Grimes*, based on characters in the poems of George Crabbe, led to Britten's consideration as the most important English musical dramatist since Henry Purcell. In the 1940s and 1950s he composed many of his most familiar works, including the cantata *St. Nicholas*, the *Spring Symphony*, the *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* and *Noye's Fludde* (the latter two for children),

Benjamin Britten's creative work continued in the 1960s and 1970s. The 1960s brought the composition of his choral parable *Curlew River*, his opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and

his monumental 1962 *War Requiem*, setting to music poems by the young World War I poet Wilfred Owen for the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral. In 1970, he wrote the opera *Owen Wingrave* for BBC Television, and his opera *Death in Venice* was produced in 1973. Thereafter he wrote no more large-scale works, concentrating on smaller instrumental, choral, and song compositions until his death in 1976.

## HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

In September 1928, young Britten left home to attend Gresham's, a public school at Holt in northern Norfolk. His two years at the school were musically fruitful, as he was able to compose a variety of works. The 16-year-old youth composed *Hymn to the Virgin* on July 9, 1930, when he spent several hours in sickbay at the school. Set to an anonymous 13<sup>th</sup> century text, this gentle *a cappella* work for large chorus and chamber chorus has a wonderful antiphonal sense of comment and answer, as the large chorus asks a question or makes a statement, and the chamber chorus responds. The *Hymn* is one of Britten's earliest published works. He revised it in 1934, and transposed it down a semi-tone, publishing it in 1935. The text is *macaronic*, here English and Latin. The large chorus sings the English, and the small chorus answers in Latin.

Of one that is so fair and bright  
*Velut maris stella, (Like the star of the sea,)*  
 Brighter than the day is light,  
*Parens et puella: (Parent and maiden:)*  
 I cry to thee, thou see to me,  
 Lady, pray thy Son for me  
*Tam pia, (So tender,)*  
 That I may come to thee.  
*Maria! (Mary!)*

All this world was forlorn  
*Eva peccatrice, (Eve was a sinner,)*  
 Till our Lord was y-born  
*De te genetrice. (Of you, his mother.)*  
 With ave it went away ('ave'= 'hail').  
     Eve's sins went away when Jesus was  
     hailed as the Savior. Eve's name in Latin  
     is Eva, 'ave' spelled backwards. This line  
     makes a play upon words.)  
 Darkest night, and comes the day  
*Salutis; (Of salvation;)*  
 The well springeth out of thee.  
*Virtutis. (Of virtue.)*

Lady, flow'r of ev'rything,  
*Rosa sine spina, (Rose without thorns,)*  
 Thou bare Jesu, Heaven's King,  
*Gratia divina: (By divine grace:)*  
 Of all thou bear'st the prize,  
 Lady, queen of paradise  
*Electa: (Chosen)*  
 Maid mild, mother es Effecta.  
*Effecta. (You are fulfilled.)*

## RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)

Composer, teacher, writer and conductor Ralph Vaughan Williams is one of the giants of 20<sup>th</sup>-century English music. Considered the most important and beloved English composer of his generation and the first major English composer since the 17<sup>th</sup> century's Henry Purcell, he was a crucial figure in the revitalization of 20<sup>th</sup>-century English music. Born in Gloucestershire in 1872, he was encouraged to study music as a child, learning piano, violin, organ and viola. He came from a distinguished family. His father was a minister, and the Vaughan Williams' were

well-known lawyers. His mother's grandparents were Josiah Wedgewood III and a sister of Charles Darwin. He married Adeline Fisher, his first wife, in 1897. She died in 1951, and in 1953, he married the poet Ursula Wood, who wrote his definitive biography.

Vaughan Williams became interested in composition at an early age, and looked toward composition as a career. He attended the Royal College of Music in London, studying with well-known composers Charles Villiers Stanford and Hubert Parry. He also enrolled in Trinity College, Cambridge, where he received both his Bachelor's degree (1894) and Doctorate in Music (1901). At Trinity, he met composer Gustav Holst, with whom he formed a close, life-long musical friendship. Another classmate, philosopher Bertrand Russell, introduced him to the poetry and ideas of Walt Whitman. Vaughan Williams felt the need of further musical education, so he studied with Max Bruch in Berlin (1897) and Maurice Ravel in Paris (1907). After his return from abroad, he became interested in English folksongs, as well as in music of the Tudor and Jacobean periods. He was editor of *The English Hymnal* from 1904-1906, and rediscovered old tunes, adapting some from folksongs and writing some himself. He also was a major contributor to the *Oxford Book of Carols*. In 1919, he became a Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music while being in demand as a conductor and composer. In 1921, he was appointed conductor of London's Bach Choir, a position he held until 1928, when he moved to the village of Dorking. For many years, he was involved in the Leith Hill Musical Festival, a competitive festival for village/town choruses in the Leith Hill area of Surrey, England. His later life was devoted to composition, conducting and occasional lectures. He visited the United States several times, lecturing at Bryn Mawr, Cornell, Indiana University, Yale, the University of Michigan and UCLA. He died in 1958.

Ralph Vaughan Williams composed in a wide variety of genres, including works for stage, opera, symphonies, smaller works for orchestra, works for chorus or orchestra, *a cappella* choral music, songs, arrangements of English folksongs, arrangements of carols, chamber music, music for the theatre, music for films and music for radio programs. He was gifted in composing vocal music for choruses as well as for solo voice. He is recognized for his settings of English language poetry (including that of Walt Whitman, whose poetry he used in both the *Sea Symphony* and the *Dona Nobis Pacem*.) Among his better known works are *A Sea Symphony*, *Serenade to Music*, *the Fantasia on Greensleeves*, the operas *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Sir John in Love*, the *Mass in G Minor*, *Hodie*, *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* and the *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*.

## **BLESSED SON OF GOD and NO SAD THOUGHT (from HODIE)**

Composed in 1953-1954 when he was 82, Vaughan Williams' Christmas cantata, *Hodie (This Day)*, is a joyful and expressive work for soprano, tenor and baritone soloists with chorus, boys' chorus, organ and orchestra. The composer sets a variety of texts, including selections from the *Bible*, the *Book of Common Prayer*, carols, and such English poets as John Milton, George Herbert and Thomas Hardy. It is a mature work, with stylistic diversity, including chorales and solos, and a wide variety of moods. *The Blessed Son of God* and *No Sad Thought* are two original chorales composed for the work, rather than chorales based on extant melodies.

In *The Blessed Son of God*, Vaughan Williams sets to music the words of Miles Coverdale (1488-1569), an English cleric who made the first complete English translation of the *Bible*. Coverdale's 1539 revision had a great influence on the translators of the 1611 *King James Version* of the *Bible*. This chorale comes fairly early in *Hodie*, and is a calm, gentle hymn-like work, similar to those composed by Bach for his *Passions*.

The blessed son of God only  
In a crib full poor did lie;  
With our poor flesh and our poor blood  
was clothed that everlasting good.  
Kyrieleison.

The Lord Christ Jesu, God's son dear,  
Was a guest and a stranger here;  
Us for to bring from misery,  
That we might live eternally.  
Kyrieleison.

All this did he for us freely,  
For to declare his great mercy;  
All Christendom be merry therefore,  
And give him thanks for evermore.  
Kyrieleison.

*Miles Coverdale, after Martin Luther*

*No Sad Thought* appears just before the end of the work. It, too, is a calm work, but it contains much more chromaticism and dissonance. The author of the first verse of *No sad thought* is anonymous. The second verse was written by poet Ursula Wood Vaughan Williams, Vaughan William's second wife.

No sad thought his soul affright  
Sleep it is that maketh night;  
Let no murmur nor rude wind  
To his slumbers prove unkind:  
But a quire of angels make  
His dreams of heaven, and let him wake  
To as many joys as can  
In this world befall a man.

Promise fills the sky with light,  
Stars and angels dance in flight;  
Joy of heaven shall now unbind  
Chains of evil from mankind,  
Love and joy their power shall break,  
And for a new born prince's sake;  
Never since the world began  
Such a light such dark did span.

## FANTASIA ON CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Written in 1912, the *Fantasia* reflects Vaughan Williams' interest in both English folk songs and the soaring lines of Tudor music. In this work, Vaughan Williams deftly interweaves four beautiful English carols—*The Truth From Above*, *The Somerset Carol*, *On Christmas Night*, and *There Is A Fountain*, together with fragments of other well-known carols.

This is the truth sent from above,  
The truth of God, the God of Love:  
Therefore don't turn me from your door  
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing which I will relate  
Is that God did man create,  
The next thing which to you I'll tell,  
Woman was made with man to dwell.

Then, after this, 'twas God's own choice  
To place them both in paradise,  
There to remain, from evil free,  
Except they ate of such a tree.

And they did eat, which was a sin,  
And thus their ruin did begin,

Ruined themselves, both you and me  
And all of their posterity.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes.  
Till God the Lord did interpose,  
And so a promise soon did run,  
That he would redeem us by his Son.

Come all you worthy gentlemen that may be  
standing by,  
Christ our blessed Saviour was born on  
Christmas day,  
The blessed Virgin Mary unto the Lord did  
pray  
O we wish you the comfort and tidings of  
joy!

Christ our Blessed Saviour now in the  
manger lay,  
He's lying in the manger, while the oxen feed  
on hay.  
The blessed Virgin Mary unto the Lord did  
pray  
O we wish you the comfort and tidings of  
joy!

On Christmas night all Christians sing  
To hear the news the angels bring;  
News of great joy, news of great mirth,  
News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before thy grace  
Then life and health come in its place,  
Angels and men with joy may sing,  
All for to see the new-born King

God bless the ruler of this house, and long  
may he reign,  
Many happy Christmases he live to see  
again!

God bless our generation, who live both far  
and near  
And we wish them a happy New Year  
Both now and evermore. Amen.



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**Program notes by Helene Whitson.**



# The Artists

## ROBERT GURNEY, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Founder and Music Director Robert Gurney is Organist-Choir Director at San Francisco's historic Trinity Episcopal Church, Organist at Marin County's Temple Rodef Sholom, and one of the Museum Organists at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor.

A resident of San Francisco since 1978, he has been an active church musician, organ recitalist, vocal coach, and has served as Assistant Conductor-Accompanist for the San Francisco Choral Society, the Sonoma City Opera and the Contra Costa Chorale.

A native of Ohio, he received his education at Youngstown State University and the Cleveland Institute of Music, studying conducting with William Slocum. At Youngstown, he served as Student Assistant Conductor of the Concert Choir which won first place in a college choir competition sponsored by the BBC. In Summer 1997, he was invited to participate in an international choral music festival *Music Of Our Time*, held in Parthenay, France, and directed by John Poole, Conductor Emeritus, BBC Singers. He studied again with Maestro Poole in a June 2003 workshop sponsored by the San Francisco Lyric Chorus.

Robert Gurney has directed the San Francisco Lyric Chorus in innovative performances of little-known works by composers of exceptional interest. The Chorus' *Discovery Series* has introduced an eight-part Ave Maria by Tomás Luis de Victoria, the West Coast premiere of *Four Motets To The Blessed Virgin Mary*, by Robert Witt, music of Amy Beach, including her monumental *Grand Mass in E Flat* and the *Panama Hymn*, written for San Francisco's 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition, and premieres of works by San Francisco composer Kirke Mechem.

## KEVIN BAUM, TENOR/BARITONE

Kevin Baum is a 16-year veteran of the ensemble *Chanticleer*. He is currently tenor section leader at Church of the Advent, a cantor at St. Ignatius Church, and a member of the ensembles *Schola Adventus* and *AVE*. Mr. Baum was the tenor soloist in the San Francisco Lyric Chorus Fall 2004 performance of Charpentier's *In nativitate Domini canticum, H314* and the Spring 2005 performance of Haydn's *Harmoniemesse* and Bruckner's *Mass No. 1 in D Minor*.

## DAVID HATT, ORGAN

David Hatt is the Assistant Cathedral Organist at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco. Born and educated in the West, he seeks to continue the independent musical tradition of his mentor, polymath composer Barney Childs.

He obtained a Master of Arts in Music Degree from the University of California, Riverside, following organ study with Raymond Boese and Anthony Newman and composition study with Childs. In 1976 he became briefly famous for two events, a solo piano performance of Eric Satie's *Vexations*, followed a few months later by a Master's Recital of 20th-century music on five keyboard instruments which was over 5 1/2 hours long.

With percussionist Gino Robair, he has presented programs which include virtuoso duo improvisations. He is also a regular participant in the recital series of St. Mary's Cathedral, the Shrine of St. Francis, and Trinity Episcopal Church, Reno, and is a former Dean of the San Jose Chapter of the AGO. Mr. Hatt has served as organ accompanist in the San Francisco Lyric Chorus' performances of the Brahms *Requiem*, Fauré *Messe Basse*, Vaughan Williams *Five Mystical Songs*, Verdi *Four Sacred Pieces*, Vierne *Messe Solennelle*, Dvorák *Mass in D*,

Kodály *Laudes Organi*, Widor *Mass, Op. 36*, Jongen *Mass, Op. 130*, Dufay *Gloria ad modum tubae*, Charpentier *In nativitatem Domini canticum, H314*, Franck *Psaume 150*, Berlioz *L'adieu des bergers* from *L'enfance du Christ*, selections from Honegger's *Une cantate de Noël*, Haydn *Harmoniemesse* and Bruckner *Mass No. 1 in D Minor*. On November 4, 2004, he presented at St. Mary's Cathedral the opening concert of the National Convention of the College Music Society.

## **LEO KAN, REHEARSAL ACCOMPANIST**

Introduced to the piano at the age of five by his mother, a concert pianist, Leo Kan was a student of Eleanor Wong at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts before moving to the United States in 1996. A Meinig Family National Scholar, Mr. Kan studied with fortepiano expert Malcolm Bilson at Cornell University and received his bachelors in music magna cum laude in 2003. He also holds a Licentiate in Piano Performance from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and an Associate from the Trinity College in London. He has won a host of prizes, including the Tom Lee Music Scholarship and Granite State Auditions, and has performed as soloist at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and Hong Kong City Hall.

Fueled by a passion for choral music, Mr. Kan wrote an honors thesis on boychoirs while at Cornell. After graduation, he joined the San Francisco Boys Chorus as artistic intern and accompanist by the invitation of Ian Robertson and soon became an integral member of the faculty, leading the choristers in the San Francisco Ballet's all-new productions of the Nutcracker in 2004. He sings with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus and Menlo Park Presbyterian Church Chancel Choir, and in addition maintains a small piano studio and directs a children's choir in San Jose. Mr. Kan performed with the Peninsula Women's Chorus last season and was a featured pianist at the Ip Piano School 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Concerto Concert in Boston in April 2005.

# Acknowledgements

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The San Francisco Lyric Chorus is chartered by the State of California as a non-profit corporation and approved by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a 501c(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible as charitable contributions.

The San Francisco Lyric Chorus is a relatively young chorus, and we have grown tremendously in musical ability during our few short years. We will continue to provide beautiful and exciting music for our audiences, and look forward to becoming one of San Francisco's premiere choral ensembles. We would like more often to perform works with chamber orchestra and other combinations of instruments, hire an accompanist for rehearsals, and occasionally perform in other sites. Continued growth and development, however, will require us to find increased financial support from friends, audiences and other agencies.

Monetary gifts of any amount are most welcome. All contributors will be acknowledged in our concert programs. For further information, e-mail [rgurney@sflc.org](mailto:rgurney@sflc.org) or call (415) 775-5111. Donations also may be mailed to the following address: San Francisco Lyric Chorus, 950 Franklin Street, #49, San Francisco, California 94109.

### ADOPT-A-SINGER

For as little as \$20, you can support the San Francisco Lyric Chorus by adopting your favorite singer. For \$100, you can sponsor an entire section (soprano, alto, tenor, or bass!) For \$150, you can adopt our esteemed Music Director, Robert Gurney.

## 10th Anniversary Commission Fund

In order to celebrate our anniversary in a special way, we have engaged Illinois composer Lee R. Kesselman to compose a three-minute secular choral work for chorus and keyboard, to be premiered on our Spring 2006 concert, April 22 and 23, 2006. The San Francisco Lyric Chorus performed Mr. Kesselman's delightful *Shona Mass* in its Spring 1998 concert. He is Director of Choral Activities at the College of DuPage, Glenn Ellyn, a suburb of Chicago, where he directs the DuPage Chorale and College of DuPage Chamber Singers. In addition, he is Founder and Music Director of the New Classic Singers, a professional choral ensemble. A native of Milwaukee, he holds undergraduate degrees in piano and composition from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a master's degree in conducting from the University of Southern California. In addition to teaching and composing, Mr. Kesselman is active as a conductor, pianist, clinician and lecturer. He is music director for a variety of opera and musical theatre productions.

We invite you to become a partner in this special activity. In order to raise the \$3000 commission fee, we have created a special 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commission Fund. Everyone who donates \$100 or more to this Fund will be invited to a special reception honoring the composer, Lee Kesselman, at a private home in San Francisco shortly before the Spring 2006 concert, and will be listed and honored in our concert programs over the next year. In addition, a group of donors has pledged a Challenge Grant of up to \$1500, to be used to match all contributions to the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commission Fund, effectively doubling the value of each contribution. This commission is a rare opportunity for you, our friends and supporters, to make a gift that will launch a new choral work into the world of music. Thank you for considering such a gift.

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adopts the Second Sopranos	the Tallis Mass
“because they need a lot of love!”	Neil Figurelli
	adopts Nanette Duffy

# *Trinity Episcopal Church, San Francisco*



Trinity Episcopal Church, founded in 1849, was the first Episcopal congregation west of the Rocky Mountains. Some of the parish pioneers were among the most prominent San Franciscans of their day: McAllister, Turk, Eddy, Austin, Taylor, and many others.

The parish's significant role in the history of San Francisco continues today. Notable among Trinity's many community and social programs is the founding of Project Open Hand by Ruth Brinker in 1985.

The present church structure, built in 1892, was designed by Arthur Page Brown, who was also the architect of San Francisco City Hall and the Ferry Building. Inspired by the Norman-Romanesque architecture of Durham Cathedral, it is built of rough-hewn Colusa sandstone and features a massive castle-like central tower.

The Trinity organ was built in 1924 by Ernest M. Skinner and is one of the finest remaining examples of his artistry. Built after his second trip to Europe, it reflects the influence of his long, creative association with the great English builder Henry Willis, III. The instrument's four manuals and pedal contain many of the numerous orchestral imitative voices perfected by Skinner. Among them, the Trinity organ contains the French Horn, Orchestral Oboe, Clarinet, Tuba Mirabilis, and eight ranks of strings. This wealth of orchestral color provides a range of expressiveness evocative of a symphony orchestra.

The newly restored historic 1896 Sohmer nine foot concert grand piano is used occasionally in Lyric Chorus performances. This fine instrument, built during an era of experimentation in piano building, boasts some unique features, suggesting that this instrument was a showpiece for the Sohmer Company. The entire piano is built on a larger scale than modern instruments. There are extra braces in the frame for increased strength. Each note has an additional length of string beyond the bridge to develop more harmonics in the tone. The treble strings are of a heavier gauge and thus stretched under higher tension than modern pianos, and there are additional strings at the top that do not play--added solely to increase the high harmonic resonance in the treble (producing that delightful "sparkle").

Due to its superb acoustics, magnificent organ, and the commitment of a long succession of musicians, Trinity has presented a wealth of great music to the City. The San Francisco Lyric Chorus has become a part of this tradition, thanks to the generous encouragement and nurturing of this vibrant congregation.

# Advertisements

## *San Francisco Lyric Chorus Thank-you's*

*The listed choristers wish to thank those individuals who have inspired our efforts and have supported our singing commitment to the Lyric Chorus. They have shown patience, have shared their expertise and have given motivation and encouragement to us as we come together to make music.*

*Sushi Frausto*

Thanks, Alexis, for letting me practice at your apartment when I could not practice I mine... I'm just a beginner but you never complained once! And much thanks to all of my fellow choir members for their help and support.

*Jim Losee*

Thanks to Carolyn & Dylan Losee, and to Christine Colasurdo!

*Leo Kan*

Thanks to Robert Gurney and Helene Whitson!

*Jill Antal*

Thanks to my English language students at Transworld for showing your support and singing so beautifully in class!

*Anna Barr*

Thanks, Jeff, for picking me up from rehearsals. You're a lifesaver! Love, Anna

*Bill Whitson*

Thanks to Helene for her musical passion, her vision, determination and indefatigable enthusiasm. Thanks to Robert for his special musical sensitivity, and for leading us through the musical realization of so many wonderful choral works over the years. Thanks to everyone in the Chorus for being such a congenial group of friends and choral colleagues, and for making this music possible!

Thanks to Emily Claassen for being such a good sport about being the "anchor person" of the cleanup crew, faithfully wielding the vacuum cleaner when everyone else has finished...

*Helene Whitson*

With our Fall 2005 concert, we begin the celebration of our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. For the last ten years, the San Francisco Lyric Chorus has been bringing a wide variety of exciting choral music to the Bay Area. We could not have had this opportunity without the caring and talent of our Music Director, Robert Gurney, Bill Whitson's planning and technological skills, our dedicated Board of Directors, our helpful volunteers, our generous donors and contributors, our wonderful audiences, our vocal coaches and teachers, our friends and families, and especially, our marvelous choristers. No singers, no song! I am grateful to all of you for helping to create one of the major joys of my life. I want to give a special thanks to Trinity Episcopal Church and the Trinity family for allowing the San Francisco Lyric Chorus to call Trinity 'home' and to create music in this beautiful place.

*In Loving Memory of  
Marilyn "Lola" Winslow  
A Lyric Chorus Devotée  
Nanette Duffy*

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AT THE

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LINCOLN PARK

SAN FRANCISCO

Saturday, December 31, 4pm  
(with the San Francisco Lyric Chorus):  
Johann Strauss, Jr.  
Leroy Anderson  
holiday favorites

Saturday, January 14 and  
Sunday, January 15, 4 pm:  
Johann Sebastian Bach  
Louis Claude Daquin, Cole Porter

Saturday, February 11 and  
Sunday, February 12, 4 pm:  
Richard Purvis, Scott Joplin  
Ennio Morricone

Saturday, March 11 and  
Sunday, March 12, 4 pm:  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
John Philip Sousa, Richard Rodgers

Saturday, April 8 and  
Sunday, April 9, 4pm:  
Johann Sebastian Bach  
Marcel Dupré, Johann Strauss, Jr.

Saturday, May 13 and  
Sunday, May 14, 4pm:  
Dietrich Buxtehude  
César Franck, Scott Joplin

Saturday, June 10 and  
Sunday, June 11, 4 pm:  
Felix Mendelssohn  
George Gershwin, John Philip Sousa

# San Francisco Lyric Chorus

JOIN US!

Sing this Spring 2006 with the *San Francisco Lyric Chorus* in our 10<sup>TH</sup> anniversary season as we present



## MUSIC BY AMERICAN MASTERS

Ernest Bloch *Sacred Service*  
(*Avodath Hakodesh*)

*commissioned in 1930 for San Francisco's own Congregation Emanu-el*

Charles Ives *Psalm 67*

*San Francisco composer*  
Kirke Mechem

*Give Thanks Unto the Lord*

*and the WORLD PREMIERE of a commissioned work by*

Lee R. Kesselman

*with text by John Muir*

## REHEARSALS BEGIN MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2006

Rehearsals: Monday, 7:15-9:45 pm  
Trinity Episcopal Church  
Bush & Gough Streets, San Francisco

## PERFORMANCES:

Saturday, April 22, 2006, 8 pm  
Sunday, April 23, 2006, 5 pm



Auditions

For audition and other information,  
call Music Director Robert Gurney at 415-775-5111 or email [rgurney@sfc.org](mailto:rgurney@sfc.org)

Website: <http://www.sfc.org>

We are a friendly, SATB, 35-voice auditioned nonprofessional chorus dedicated to singing beautiful, interesting classical choral music with passion, blended sound and a sense of joy and fun!

# San Francisco Lyric Chorus

10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON 2005-2006

*Ten years of making a difference*

## ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S POPS CONCERT

Robert Gurney, Organ  
with the

San Francisco Lyric Chorus

Saturday, December 31, 2005, 4 pm

California Palace of the Legion of Honor

Lincoln Park, San Francisco

Choruses from *Die Fledermaus*, by Johann Strauss, Jr.,

*San Francisco*; holiday favorites



## 2006 SPRING CONCERT

### AMERICAN MASTERS

Ernest Bloch *Avodath Hakodesh (Sacred Service)*

Charles Ives *Psalm 67*

Kirke Mechem *Give Thanks Unto the Lord*

Lee R. Kesselman WORLD PREMIERE OF COMMISSIONED WORK

Saturday, April 22, 2006

Sunday, April 23, 2006

Trinity Episcopal Church

Bush & Gough Streets

San Francisco



## 2006 SUMMER CONCERT

### REFLECTIONS

Ralph Vaughan Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem*

Michael Haydn *Requiem*

Saturday, August 26, 2006

Sunday, August 27, 2006

Trinity Episcopal Church

Bush & Gough Streets

San Francisco

# *San Francisco Lyric Chorus*

## **SOPRANOS**

Susan Alden  
Patricia Alexander  
Jill Antal  
Didi Boring  
Evelyn Chen  
Emily Claassen+  
Cassandra Forth\*  
Sushi Frausto  
Cristina K.Gerber  
Lois Kelley  
Andrea Ogarrio#  
Kathryn Singh  
Peggy Trimble  
Helene Whitson#

## **ALTOS**

Anna Barr#+  
Christine Colasurdo  
Shirley Drexler  
Jane Goldsmith  
Barbara Greeno\*+  
Susan Hendrickson  
Jane Regan  
Sonia Runyon  
Elisabeth Zurlinden

## **TENORS**

Kevin Baum+  
Cyril Chong  
Nanette Duffy  
Leo Kan  
Rob Litchfield  
Jim Losee\*  
Wylie Sheldon#

## **BASSES**

Albert Alden  
Tom Baynes  
Michael Morris  
Jared Pierce\*+  
Bill Whitson#

#Board of Directors  
\*Section Representative  
+Britten Chamber Chorus



*10<sup>th</sup>* ANNIVERSARY SEASON  
2005-2006