



CHORAL CONCERT



Featuring the Transcendental Music of:

Verdi

Four Sacred Pieces

Ešenvalds

Stars

Eric Whitacre

Sainte-Chapelle

Lux Nova

Glow

Ola Gjeilo

Northern Lights

The Ground

Robert Gurney, Music Director

Saturday, August 12, 2017 7pm

Sunday, August 13, 2017 5pm

Mission Dolores Basilica

San Francisco, California

SAN FRANCISCO LYRIC CHORUS

Robert Gurney, Music Director

Helene Whitson, *President*

Bill Whitson, *Treasurer*

Julia Bergman, *Secretary*

Nora Klebow, *Director*

Monica Ricci, *Director*

Welcome to the Summer 2017 Concert of the San Francisco Lyric Chorus! We present exciting music of the present and the past. Ola Gjeilo, Eric Whitacre, and Ēriks Ešēnvalds are three of the most popular contemporary choral composers, creating music that inspires and delights. Giuseppe Verdi is beloved for his passionate compositions. His rarely performed *Four Sacred Pieces* have all the drama and expression of his great operas and his dynamic *Requiem*.

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), San Francisco composer Kirke Mechem's *Christmas the Morn, Blessed Are They, To Music* (San Francisco premieres), and selections from his operas, *John Brown* and *The Newport Rivals*, our 10th Anniversary Commission work, the World Premiere of Illinois composer Lee R. Kesselman's *This Grand Show Is Eternal*, Robert Train Adams' *It Will Be Summer—Eventually* and *Music Expresses* (West Coast premieres), as well as the Fall 2009 World Premiere of Dr. Adams' *Christmas Fantasy*. We are especially proud of our Summer 2015 performance of classical choral music performed at the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, including the first American performance of Camille Saint-Saëns' oratorio, *The Promised Land*, since its American premiere and only American performance, which was given at the PPIE.

Please sign our mailing list, located in the foyer. The San Francisco Lyric Chorus is a member of Chorus America. We are recording this concert for archival purposes. Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices. Please, no photography or audio/video taping during the performance. Please, no children under 5. Please, help us to maintain a distraction-free environment. Thank you.

CONCERT PROGRAM

Northern Lights Ola Gjeilo

The Ground Ola Gjeilo

Lux Nova Eric Whitacre

Cassandra Forth, *Soprano*

Sainte-Chapelle Eric Whitacre

Glow Eric Whitacre

Stars Ēriks Ešēnvalds

Antoinette Catalla, *Alto*

INTERMISSION

Quattro Pezzi Sacri (Four Sacred Pieces) Giuseppe Verdi

Ave Maria

Stabat Mater

Laudi alla Vergine Maria

Te Deum

Cassandra Forth, *Soprano*

David Hatt, Piano and Organ

PROGRAM NOTES

This Summer 2017, we invite you to join us as we share a Summer of Light, a summer of peace, love and harmony expressed through the transcendental music of the incomparable Giuseppe Verdi, as well as contemporary composers Eric Whitacre, Ola Gjeilo, and Ēriks Ešenvalds.

Ola Gjeilo (1978-)

Dynamic young composer and pianist Ola Gjeilo was born in Oslo, Norway, in 1978. A talented child, he began to play piano by ear when he was three or four. He began taking formal piano lessons when he was seven, as well as studying jazz and composition. He loved improvising and playing piano by ear, so he didn't learn to read music immediately. He can't even remember when he began composing. At times, he would write down his improvisations as formal compositions. He had a number of different piano teachers. By the time he reached junior high school, he had one teacher who finally forced him to concentrate on his technique. He also studied composition with Wolfgang Plagge. In addition, he began studying organ when he was 17. By 1999, he began to concentrate on composing concert music.

Gjeilo studied at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo from 1999 to 2001, and received his Bachelor's degree. He then attended the Royal College of Music in London from 2002-2004, where he received a Bachelor's degree in composition. In 2001, he began studying composition with Robert Beaser at the Juilliard School of Music. He returned to studying at Juilliard from 2004-2006, receiving a Master's degree in composition. He composed a variety of works while at Juilliard, and received the Gretchaninoff Memorial Prize, as well as winning the 2005 Juilliard Composers' Orchestral Work Competition.

In 2006-2007, he moved to Los Angeles to study film composition/scoring at the University of Southern California, following up his interest in film and film music. During this time, he also worked in Los Angeles as a freelance composer and concert recording artist. In 2006-2007, he and fellow composer Asmund Skuterud created a film music company called Nordic Screen Music, based in Oslo and New York. A lover of film, he has created a number of film scores for short films, although no feature-length ones. In addition to film music, he is interested in electronic music and synthesized sounds.

Gjeilo returned to New York soon after 2007, performing as a pianist and continuing his composition work. In 2009-2010, he was the first Composer-in-Residence for the Grammy-award winning Phoenix (Arizona) Chorale, conducted by Charles Bruffy. That association led to the Phoenix Chorale's album *Northern Lights*, which is devoted entirely to Gjeilo's choral music. Gjeilo is the pianist on that recording, which was named the Best Classical Album of 2012 by iTunes, and was Chandos Records' top-selling album in the United

States in 2012. He currently lives in Manhattan with his wife, soprano and Georgia Tech Assistant professor of Music, Dr. Laura Inman. He is a full-time, free-lance composer. He currently is composer-in-residence with the British professional choral group, Voces8. He also is composer-in-residence with DCINY (Distinguished Concerts International New York). His residency with the latter began with a June 2017 Lincoln Center concert of his compositions for choir, piano, and string quartet.

Ola Gjeilo has composed over 30 published choral works, both a cappella and accompanied, that have been performed world-wide. He also has composed music for solo piano, instrumental ensembles, and orchestras. He composes jazz, as well as classical music. He has received a number of commissions, from various artists and groups, including American soprano Barbara Bonney, the Phoenix Chorale, Philip Brunelle, the Edvard Grieg Society, St. Olaf College, Ensemble Mendelssohn, the Choral Arts Ensemble, and Voces Nordicae. His choral music has been performed by the Kansas City Chorale, Conspirare, the World Youth Choir, VocalEssence, Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir, Brigham Young University Singers, Norwegian Soloists' Choir, the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation's Radiokören, and Voces8. His choral music has been recorded by such groups as the Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, the Choir of Royal Holloway, the Flemish Radio Choir, and Voces8.

Gjeilo's music has been performed in over 30 countries, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, France, and Belgium. His music also has been featured on PBS in the United States, and the major Scandinavian television channels. As a performer himself, Gjeilo has performed all over the world. Many times, he has performed with choral groups presenting his music.

Ola Gjeilo continues to have success as a composer. In May 2014, the Manhattan Chorale (a new professional chorus), Symphonic Chorus, and New York City Chamber Orchestra performed his *Sunrise Mass* in Carnegie Hall, in an all-Gjeilo program that also featured the world premiere of his work, *Dreamweaver*. The composition, based on a Norwegian medieval ballad similar to Dante's *Divine Comedy*, is scored for chorus, piano, and string orchestra. Poet Charles Anthony Silvestri, often a frequent collaborator with composer Eric Whitacre, did the translation. In 2015, the King's College Choir performed his *Serenity (O Magnum Mysterium)*, as part of their annual Lessons and Carols Service. He also performed in concert with composer and pianist Morten Lauridsen, along with the Bay-Atlantic Symphony. He was the recipient of the 2016 Brock Commission, for which he composed *The River*, a work for choir, piano, and string quartet, which was performed at all seven of the American Choral Directors Association Division 2016 conferences. Voces8 also commissioned him to write a work for voices, string quartet, and pianist.

Ola Gjeilo has his own voice and musical language, influenced by classical, jazz, and folk music. He is especially interested in composing vocal, orchestral, and piano music. He notes that he has been influenced especially by Keith Jarrett, Thomas Newman, Howard Shore, Philip Glass and John Adams. To him, the piano often is an equal partner in his compositions. In addition, he also enjoys doubling voices with a string quartet. As he comments in the introduction to his composition, *Dark Night of the Soul*, “I just love the sound of voices singing chords on ‘Ooh’ or ‘Mmm’”. It creates a sound that can be so amazingly evocative and warm, especially when doubled by a string quartet”. Freddie Coleman, Music Director of the Seattle Choral Company (in his comments for the performance of Gjeilo’s *Sunrise Mass* in the December 2016 concert *Wintertide: A Concert Fantasy For The Holidays*), notes that Gjeilo is interested in creating an atmosphere or mood through his music. Gjeilo especially likes the sound of a symphony orchestra, and creates choral works in which he may choose the words/texts more for their vowel sounds, rather than for their literal meaning.

In a recent interview with *The Music Room* blog, Gjeilo commented on the emergence of significant new choral composers and the popularity of choral music. He noted that there are a huge number of people singing in choruses today—amateur, as well as professional and school ensembles. Those people also are interested in listening to choral music. He said, “...I think, also, there is a difference with some of the younger composers like Eric [Whitacre], in that they have a connection to younger listeners. Eric, for example, came to choral music having started out as a rock musician. Kind of the same thing with me, in that I came out of improv, and doing a lot of more cross-over stuff and being very influenced by film music. So I think a lot of us have a strong connection to today’s pop culture and popular music. And I think that’s something that perhaps speaks to a lot of people because, ultimately, a majority of people listen to popular music of some kind. So I think a lot of younger composers have really started to tap into that in a natural, organic manner, not in a sort of contrived attempt to be ‘hip’, but we grew up with that kind of music and it’s a natural part of our style and sphere reference”.

Northern Lights

Ola Gjeilo comments: “Northern Lights is my most Norwegian production in years; composed in an attic outside of Oslo at Christmas time in 2007, it’s one of the few works I have written in Norway since I moved to New York in 2001. The US is my home now, so I guess my work has been increasingly reflecting my love for American music, writing and scenery. Most of all, this piece and its text is about beauty. About a ‘terrible’, powerful beauty, although the music is quite serene on the surface.

Looking out from the attic window that Christmas in Oslo, over a wintry lake under the stars, I was thinking about how this ‘terrible’ beauty is so profoundly reflected in the northern lights, or aurora borealis, which having grown up in the southern part of the country, I have only seen once or twice in my life. It is one of the most beautiful natural phenomena I’ve ever witnessed, and has such a power, electric quality that must have been both mesmerizing and terrifying to people in the past, when no one knew what it was and when much superstition was attached to these experiences.”

Gjeilo’s text is taken from the *Song of Solomon, Chapter 6:4-5*. He divides the work into three sections. Section 1 describes the beauty of the beloved, with a pulsating intensity, repeating the phrase *pulchra est* (thou art beautiful) over and over, sometimes quietly subtle, other times expressed in more extended lines. Section 2, which begins with *terribilis ut castrorum* and ends with *avolare fecerunt*, is slower, calmer. Section 3 is a return to the intensity of Section 1, reiterating the comment, *pulchra est*. The intensity lessens gradually, resolving finally with a soft, slow, *pulchra est*.

<i>Pulchra est amica mea,</i>	Thou art beautiful, O my love,
<i>suavis et decora filia sicut Jerusalem,</i>	sweet and comely as Jerusalem,
<i>terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.</i>	terrible as an army set in array.
<i>Averte oculos tuos a me</i>	Turn away thy eyes from me,
<i>Quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.</i>	For they have made me flee away.
<i>Pulchra est amica mea,</i>	Thou art beautiful, O my love,
<i>suavis et decora filia, sicut Jerusalem,</i>	sweet and comely as Jerusalem,

The Ground

The Ground is based on a chorale in the last movement of Gjeilo’s *Sunrise Mass for Choir and String Orchestra* (2008), using the text of the concluding part of his Mass: *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei*. Gjeilo’s Mass is in four movements: *The Spheres* (Kyrie), *Sunrise* (Gloria), *The City* (Credo), and *Identity* (*Sanctus*) & *The Ground* (*Benedictus/Agnus Dei*).

The Ground is divided into three sections, using the same melodic structure, but changing keys and increasing in intensity from section to section. The composition ends with a quiet setting of the plea for peace, *Dona Nobis Pacem*. Gjeilo comments, “The chorale, beginning at *Pleni sunt caeli* in that movement is the culmination of the Mass, and it’s called *Identity* & *The Ground* because I wanted to convey a sense of having ‘arrived’ at the end of the Mass; to have reached a kind of peace and grounded strength, after the long journey of the Mass, having gone through so many different emotional landscapes.”

The Ground

<i>Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Osanna, Osanna in excelsis.</i>	Heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
<i>Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Benedictus qui venit. Osanna, Osanna in excelsis.</i>	Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is He who comes. Hosanna in the highest.
<i>Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,</i>	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,
<i>Dona nobis pacem.</i>	Lamb of God, grant us peace.

Eric Whitacre (1970-)

Born in Reno, Nevada in 1970, composer, conductor, and lecturer Eric Whitacre is one of today's best-known choral composers. He did not grow up with a classical music background. He took piano lessons as a youth, but did not like to practice. He played trumpet in his junior high school marching band, but did not like the strict regimen of the band. He wanted to be a rock musician and played synthesizers in a teen band. After high school, he attended the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, as a music education major, even though he did not read music.

At UNLV, he studied composition with Ukrainian composer Virko Baley and choral conducting with David Weiller. His experience in the university chorus changed his life. Meurig Bowen, in her annotations for the recording, *Eric Whitacre: Cloudburst and Other Choral Works*, records his comments:

"I was sort of tricked into joining the choir (there were a lot of cute girls in the soprano section) and on the first day of class we started rehearsing the Kyrie from the Mozart Requiem. My life was profoundly changed on that day, and I became a choir geek of the highest order."

This recording was a 2007 Grammy award nominee for Best Choral Performance.

Whitacre published his first choral work, *Go, Lovely Rose*, when he was 21. He also composed music for band, and when he was 23, he wrote the *Ghost Train* triptych for concert band, which has become a very popular work, especially for high school and college bands. After graduating from UNLV, he was admitted to Juilliard for his Master's of Music degree, studying composition

with John Corigliano and conducting with David Dimond.

Eric Whitacre is a full-time composer, conductor, and lecturer/work-shop leader. His musical/opera *Paradise Lost: Shadows and Wings*, won the ASCAP Harold Arlen award, as well as the Richard Rodgers Award for most promising musical theater composer. He has received commissions from the Kings Singers, BBC Proms, Chanticleer, Tallis Scholars, and London Symphony Orchestra, among others. In 2001, he received the American Choral Directors Association Raymond C. Brock Commission, a prestigious award. In 2011, he collaborated with film composer Hans Zimmer in composing the *Mermaid Theme* for the film, *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*. In September, 2011, he conducted the winning entries in the Abbey Road 80th Anniversary Anthem Competition. His recording, with the Eric Whitacre Singers, *Eric Whitacre: Light and Gold*, received the 2012 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance. That year, he was named Alumnus of the Year by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. In January 2013, he was a speaker at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, leading a discussion on the role of arts in society and the impact of technology on the arts. In May 2013, he and the Eric Whitacre Singers performed at a ceremony honoring Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu. In November 2013, he spoke at the Ciudad de las Ideas "Brilliant Minds" conference, a gathering celebrating innovative ideas in science, business and culture. Whitacre conducted the Eric Whitacre Singers at the 2014 iTunes Festival. In June 2014, he conducted a Kennedy Center Flag Day massed chorus of 400 singers in a celebration of the 200th anniversary of *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

Eric Whitacre has received composition awards from the Barlow International Composition Competition, the American Choral Directors Association, and the American Composers Forum. He has appeared as a conductor, both here and abroad, conducting his music in Japan, Australia, China, Singapore, South America, and Europe. He also lectures and gives seminars, especially to high school and college/university music students. In 2010, he founded the Eric Whitacre Singers, a professional choir. In 2016, he was appointed the Swan Family Artist-in-Residence with the Los Angeles Master Chorale, after completing a five year (2011-2015) Composer-in-Residence appointment at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge University.

In March 2011, Whitacre gave a speech at the TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) conference, describing the origins of his *Virtual Choir*: http://www.ted.com/talks/eric_whitacre_a_virtual_choir_2_000_voices_strong.html

The *Virtual Choir* began in 2009, when a young soprano fan of Whitacre's music shared with him on YouTube a video of herself singing one of the soprano lines from his popular composition, *Sleep* (which the Lyric Chorus sang in 2008). Whitacre was impressed by her performance, and contacted

his other online fans, asking them to purchase a particular recording of *Sleep*, videotape themselves singing their line along with the recording, and upload it to YouTube. He had the idea of creating a chorus of individual videos playing simultaneously on YouTube. A volunteer, Scott Haines, offered to piece the various recordings together: <http://ericwhitacre.com/blog/the-virtual-choir-how-we-did-it>.

Whitacre then wondered if he could create a virtual choir—a choir of recorded individuals all following his direction, all linked together and making music. He recorded a video of himself silently conducting another one of his compositions, *Lux Aurumque*, and asked singers to record themselves following his directions. He received 185 responses from 12 countries, which were fashioned into *Virtual Choir 1*. *Virtual Choir 2*'s recording of *Sleep* featured 2052 contributions from singers in 58 countries. *Virtual Choir 3*, released April 2, 2012, features 3746 singers from 73 different countries singing *Water Night*. *Virtual Choir 4*, released in 2013, used the song *Fly to Paradise*, a selection from his musical, *Paradise Lost*. The choir had 5905 singers from 101 countries, singing in a sophisticated, animated video.

Whitacre is one of the best-known and most successful contemporary American composers. His music has charmed and moved audiences all over the world. There are even festivals in his name, both in this country and abroad. Whitacre composes in a variety of genres, including choral works (both accompanied and *a cappella*), works for concert bands, brass ensembles, string ensembles, and musical works for the stage. He also composes in many different styles.

Charles Anthony Silvestri (ca. 1965-)

Poet, lyricist, painter, neo-medieval illuminator, calligrapher, speaker, and teacher Charles Anthony Silvestri is a native of Las Vegas, Nevada. He received his B.A. degree in 1987 from Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, with a major in history and minor in art history. In 1992, he received a Master's degree in history and in 1995, a Ph.D in Roman and medieval history, with a minor in church history, both from the University of Southern California. He is best known for his choral collaborations with Eric Whitacre, creating the texts for *Sleep*, *Lux Aurumque*, *Her Sacred Spirit Soars*, and *Leonardo Dreams of his Flying Machine*. He and Eric Whitacre often give joint master classes to choruses concerning the creative collaboration between a poet and a composer, the impetus for, history and meaning of these works, the relationship between text and music, and the creative process and the lyricist's art. He accepts commissions for both choral texts and art works. He has been commissioned to write texts for compositions by Ola Gjeillo, Dale Jergenson, Dan Forrest, Costas Dafnis, and Udo Marx. He also has written texts on com-

missions from such groups as The King's Singers, the San Francisco Gay Men's chorus, the Houston Opera, Westminster Choir College, and Westminster Abbey. A widower, he and his children live in Lawrence, Kansas. He has taught students from kindergarten through college and at present is a Lecturer in History at Washburn University, Kansas.

Lux Nova: 'Lux Aurumque' Reimagined

Published in 2001, *Lux Aurumque* (light and gold) is one of Eric Whitacre's most popular and iconic choral works, demonstrating his use of 'cluster chords'. It was the subject of his first Virtual Choir. Whitacre sets the words of poet Edward Esch (who may—or may not—have existed. Kudos to the scholar who some day locates him.) Whitacre does not recall where he found the poem. He asked his oft-collaborator, the gifted American poet Charles Anthony Silvestri, to translate it into Latin. Whitacre comments: "I was immediately struck by its genuine, elegant simplicity. A simple approach was essential to the success of the work, and I waited patiently for the tight harmonies to shimmer and glow."

Whitacre notes: "A few years after I composed *Lux Aurumque* I began work on a musical called *Paradise Lost*. The central theme of the story is about an angel without wings who longs to fly, and at the climax of the show the onstage angels sing the word "paradise" over and over—a glorious, cathartic anthem. The song, the big finale in the show, is called *Bliss*.

"When I made the wind symphony transcription of *Lux [Aurumque]* in 2005 I decided to replace the existing middle material with fourteen measures from *Bliss*. Partly, I wanted to take advantage of the forces of the wind symphony, letting the horns sing high and triumphant. But mostly I felt that the addition of the new middle material brought a greater dramatic arc to *Lux [Aurumque]*, and for me at least, greatly affected the way I heard the ending of the piece. With the addition of those fourteen bars the sonic colors of the last twelve measures felt shinier and more, well, *golden*.

Now the circle is complete: I've taken the wind symphony version and reimagined it as a choral work. I love both versions and can't decide which should be out in the world, so with deep humility and gratitude I offer them both..."

*Light,
warm and heavy as pure gold
and the angels sing softly
to the newborn babe.*

Sainte-Chapelle

The Tallis Scholars, a world-renowned British professional choral group specializing in music of the Renaissance, commissioned Eric Whitacre to compose a work in honor of their 40th anniversary, which occurred in 2013. Whitacre notes that he went on a trip to Spain and visited Barcelona's Gaudi Cathedral, which inspired a composition for the Scholars. After hearing them sing through it, he found that it didn't suit them at all, and he discarded most of the work, except for one utterance: *Sanctus (Holy)*. He later went to Paris and visited Sainte-Chapelle, a Gothic-style chapel, built between 1238-1248. The chapel is famous for its stained glass windows. He noticed the brilliant light that came through the windows into the room, refracting into many different colors and bathing the person in that light. That experience was the inspiration for *Sainte-Chapelle*.

Whitacre turned to his friend and colleague, the poet Charles Anthony Silvestri, and asked Silvestri to craft a text in Latin, describing the experience of being in that chapel space, surrounded by the colored light. He asked that Silvestri use the word/thought, *Sanctus* somewhere in the work. Silvestri created a narrative in which a young girl enters a chapel (Sainte-Chapelle) to pray, and hears the angels in the stained glass windows singing praise to God (*Hosanna in excelsis*). She responds with "*Sanctus*". The light (*Lux*) comes through the glass and beams down upon her. The angels continue singing and praising God (*Hosanna in excelsis*). The young girl's voice joins the light coming in through the windows, and she sings *Sanctus* again, also praising God.

Sainte-Chapelle is composed of elements quite suited to the Renaissance style of the Tallis Scholars. It begins with the tenors and basses describing the entry of the girl into the chapel and the angels singing in a Gregorian chant-like style. The full chorus responds as the voice of the girl, "*Sanctus*". That utterance is repeated three times throughout the composition, with slight variation, followed by the phrase *angeli cantaverunt* (the angels sang). Throughout the compositions, one or more of the voices will pick up threads of the initial chant melody, weaving it in and out. At times, one voice will sing a snippet in one rhythm, while another voice sings the same melody in a different rhythm. The entire work has a quiet, meditative quality, evoking the feeling of other-worldliness one might have after entering a space such as Sainte-Chapelle.

We do not have permission to reprint the Silvestri text for *Sainte-Chapelle*.

Glow

Eric Whitacre composed *Glow* for the 2013 World of Color Honor Choir, part of the Disneyland (Anaheim) Winter Dreams program. The text was written by the elusive poet, Edward Esch. The music evokes the feelings, colors, and atmosphere of winter—snow, morning light, white, birdsongs, and rejoicing in the season. As a contrast to the Renaissance spareness of *Sainte-Chapelle*, or the more familiar Whitacre 'cluster chords' of *Lux Nova*, *Glow* shows the romantic, lyrical side of Eric Whitacre.

Softly falls the winter snow,
whispers to the sleeping world below:
"Wintertide awakes,"
morning breaks and sets the earth aglow.

In gentle tones of warmest white,
proclaim the glory of Aurora's light.
Sparrow sings in a clear clean voice,
A sweet, silver carol for the season born.

Radiant wings as the skies rejoice,
rise and illuminate the morn.

Softly falls the winter snow,
Whispers to the sleeping world below:
"Glow, like the softly falling snow."
Glow.

Ēriks Ešenvalds (1977-)

Born in Priekule, Latvia, while the country was still under Soviet control, Ēriks Ešenvalds began his musical education at an early age. His father was an ambulance driver, and his mother was the music teacher in the local primary school. She taught him musical basics, as well as children's songs. Priekule also had a Children's Music School in which Ešenvalds studied from age seven to fourteen. He learned piano (solo and duo), music theory, voice, and music history.

Ešenvalds also took chorus, and it was in this class that he was inspired to write down his first 'composition'—eight bars of music. He showed his work to the chorus teacher, who played it on the piano and who encouraged him to try composing something simple, e.g., a song. In an interview with Andrea Angelini, Ešenvalds notes that he did just that. When he was about ten, he wrote several songs, inspired by the music of American popular singer Whitney Houston. Her recordings were available in the Soviet Union, but her sheet music was not. So, he learned those songs by ear and played them on the piano.

When Ešenvalds was 14, the Soviet Union collapsed, and Latvia became a free, independent country. Another musical avenue opened, because churches now were allowed to operate. Ešenvalds became a Christian, joining the Baptist Church in Priekule. The church hymnal had good lyrics, and he could set them to the melodies he was composing. His first composition was performed by the church choir.

At age 15, Ešenvalds changed direction. He decided to study mathematics and physics, and dropped out of the Music School. When he was 17, he enrolled as a psychology student at the University of Latvia in Riga. After a while, he decided that psychology was not for him, and withdrew. By that time, all the other academic institutions had closed their enrollments. In 1995, he enrolled in the one open institution—the Latvian Baptist Theological Seminary. After two years, he realized that music was the major driving force in his life and withdrew from the Seminary.

In 1997, Ešenvalds enrolled in the Latvian Academy of Music as a composition student. He studied at the Academy for seven years, taking a variety of courses. During that time, he was able to take composer master-classes abroad with a number of composers, including Michael Finnissy, Jonathan Harvey, Phillipe Manourty, Klaus Huber, and others. Between 1998 and 2002, he taught at Riga's High School No 31. He also served as Music Minister at Riga's Vilande Baptist Church. He received his Bachelor's degree in 2002 and his Master's degree in 2004, studying composition with Selga Mence.

A tenor, Ešenvalds was a member of the Latvian State Choir from 2002-2011. From 2011-2013, he served as Fellow Commoner in Creative Arts in Trinity College, Cambridge University. At present, he is a professor of composition at the Latvian Academy of Music. He also is in demand worldwide as a composer, creating works for orchestra, chamber groups, and choruses. He has composed two operas: *Joseph Is A Fruitful Bough* and *The Immured*, as well as the film score for the 2016 Latvian film *Mellow Mud*, a story about a Latvian girl's coming of age.

Ešenvalds' music has been performed all over the world by such groups as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the King's Singers, Trinity College Choir, Cambridge University, Polyphony, The Crossing, the Latvian Radio Choir, and the Latvian State Choir, and many more. His music has been performed by Bay Area groups, including the Golden Gate Men's Chorus, Valley Concert Chorale, as well as choral groups from California State University, East Bay, San Jose State University, and Hayward's Mt. Eden High School.

Ešenvalds has served as an adjudicator at various choral and composer competitions. His music also is popular at international music festivals, and has been performed in festivals in Austria, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Canada, the UK, the United States, and Latvia. Ešenvalds composed the anthem for the 2014 World Choir Games in Riga. Livermore's Valley Concert Chorale sponsored an Ēriks Ešenvalds Choral Festival in May, 2017. Ešenvalds was artist-in-residence, and several Bay Area choruses participated in concerts of Ešenvalds' music given in Hayward and here in Mission Dolores Basilica. Ešenvalds spoke at those concerts. San Francisco Lyric Chorus Music Director Robert Gurney was the organist for performances of Ešenvalds' *Trinity Te Deum*.

Much in demand, Ešenvalds has received commission requests from such groups as the Yale Glee Club, Saint Louis Chamber Singers, California's Cabrillo Chorus and Monterey Chamber Orchestra, Germany's Rundfunk Chor Berlin, the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain, the New Zealand Youth Choir, the South Dakota Chorale, and many more. His music has been recorded by such labels as hyperion Records, Decca Classics, Deutsche Grammophon, and Delphian Records. He has won numerous awards and honors, including the Latvian Grand Music Award (2005, 2007, 2015), the International Rostrum of Composers first prize, for *The Legend of the Walled-in-Woman* (2006), and the Philadelphia Inquirer's Year's New-Composer Discovery (2010).

Most of all, Ešenvalds is concerned with the feelings, emotions, and passion expressed in music. To him, the human voice creates some of the most beautiful sounds. He has a special affinity for the poetry of Sara Teasdale and would love to compose music for a film about her life.

Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

American lyric poet Sara Teasdale was born in St. Louis, Missouri, to an established, religious family of means. Her father owned a successful wholesale business selling dried fruit, nuts, and beans. Her parents were in their 40s when she was born, and her sister, her nearest sibling, was 17 years older. She was what is known as a 'delicate' child, and suffered from poor health all her life. Her parents were concerned and were quite protective. She wasn't allowed to go to school or play with other children her age and had a nurse-companion to help her if needed. She was home-schooled by her sister until she was nine. She was an incredibly gifted, creative, imaginative child, especially because she spent so much time on her own. She loved to read, learn, and memorize stories and poems. Contrary to many who seek companionship, she did not mind having time to herself.

When she turned nine, Teasdale was sent to Mrs. Ellen Dean Lockwood's school for boys and girls on the next block. She enjoyed her time at that school, and flourished. In 1898, when she reached eighth grade, she was sent to Mary Academy, one of the best girls' schools in St. Louis. Her crowded but trip to the school tired her, so in 1899, her parents transferred her to Hosmer Hall, an exclusive private girls' school with a far less stressful bus ride. The school prided itself on preparing young women for entry into some of the leading women's colleges of the day. Many talented future women artists, writers, photographers, etc., attended the school.

Sara Teasdale made many friends at Hosmer, friends she would keep all her life. A group of the girls formed an artistic/literary society called The Potters. They created a hand-crafted monthly publication called *The Potter's Wheel*, for which they submitted poetry, stories, art work, etc. Sara Teasdale's poems first appeared in this publication.

In 1903, Teasdale graduated from Hosmer Hall. In 1905, she and her mother went on a three-month tour of the Holy Land, Egypt, and parts of Europe. In 1907, Teasdale's first published poem appeared in *Reedy's Mirror*, a St. Louis newspaper. Her first book of poetry, *Sonnets to Duse, and Other Poems*, appeared the same year. She continued writing at a steady pace. Her second book, *Helen of Troy and Other Poems*, was published in 1911. Her fame grew, and Teasdale began to meet prominent figures in the East Coast artistic/library world.

Dynamic, passionate, young Sara Teasdale had a number of suitors, including poet Vachel Lindsay (1897-1931) and businessman Ernst Filsinger (1880-1937). Lindsay was madly in love with Teasdale and desperately wanted her to marry him, but he did not have the funds to support her. Although she cared for him, she chose Filsinger, and they were married in 1914. In 1915, the

Filsingers moved to New York City, where Sara would live for the rest of her life. That same year, her next book of poems, *Rivers to the Sea*, was published.

Teasdale continued to write, and her collection, *Love Songs*, was published in 1917. In 1918, she won the Columbia University Poetry Society prize (the first Pulitzer Prize for Poetry), as well as the Poetry Society of America prize for *Love Songs*. In 1919, she published *Flame and Shadow*, and in 1926, published another collection, *Dark of the Moon*.

Filsinger and Teasdale loved each other, but his business career blossomed and he often was away on business trips abroad for several months at a time. Teasdale was very lonely, and often did not feel well. The couple gradually grew apart. Teasdale divorced Filsinger in 1929. They remained friends, but their marriage was unworkable. In 1930, Teasdale published a book of poetry for children, *Stars To-night*. The poem, *Stars*, is in that collection.

After her divorce and because of her health, Teasdale became more reclusive, staying in her hotel apartment and writing. In 1932, she felt well enough to go abroad by herself, but developed double pneumonia and had to come home. She could not seem to get well. Her illness left her weak, tired, and dispirited. Since she felt she had no chance of recovery, she took her own life in January 1933. Her final book of poetry, *Strange Victory*, was published posthumously in 1933.

Stars

Sara Teasdale loved to look up at the night sky and see the stars, whether she was in New York, California, Arizona, or abroad. The light and the sparkling inspired her. Ešenvalds also acknowledges the magic and mystery of the heavens.

Alone in the night

On a dark hill

With pines around me

Spicy and still,

And a heaven full of stars

Over my head,

White and topaz

And misty red;

Myriads with beating

Hearts of fire

The aeons

Cannot vex or tire;

The dome of heaven

Like a great hill,

I know I

Am honored to be

Witness

Of so much majesty.

Teasdale's original poem, with changed words in bold-italics

Alone in the night
On a dark hill
With pines around me
Spicy and still,

And a heaven full of stars
Over my head,
White and topaz
And misty red;

Myriads with beating
Hearts of fire
That aeons
Cannot vex or tire;

Up the dome of heaven
Like a great hill,
**[I watch them marching
Stately and still],**

And I know **that** I
Am honored to be
Witness
Of so much majesty.

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

One of the 19th century's major opera composers, Giuseppe Verdi, was born in 1813 to a family of small landowners in Roncale, Italy. At age three, he began keyboard studies with the local organist and several years later was sent to the nearby town of Busseto for his basic education, including music. A local merchant/music patron recognized Verdi's talent and would have supported his studies at the Milan Conservatory, but Verdi was not admitted and instead studied privately with a Milan composer. In 1835, he returned to Busseto as the town music master, where he gave music lessons, taught music, conducted concerts of the philharmonic society, and composed.

In 1839, he resigned his position in Busseto and moved to Milan, where his first opera, *Oberto*, was produced successfully at La Scala. His third opera, the Biblical drama, *Nabucco*, produced in 1842, was an outstanding success and its famous Slaves' Chorus resonated well with the Italian public in a time of political turmoil. Verdi himself was an independent, patriotic individual and many passages from his early operas were taken by the Italian public as support for Italian liberation. In fact, "Viva Verdi," became a popular exclamation at the time, with the double meaning of "Viva **V**ictor **E**mmanuel, **R**e **D**'Italia." He was honored by being elected variously to the Italian Chamber of Deputies and the Italian Senate, although he rarely participated in either.

For the next 29 years, Verdi's international reputation grew as he composed opera after opera—*Macbeth*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Don Carlos*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Aïda*. Verdi's use of dramatic settings, and his ability to bring his characters to life through powerful music won him a world-wide following. In 1872, he composed his magnificent *Requiem* in memory of Alessandro Manzoni, composer and librettist, a man he revered. The *Requiem* contains all the fire, passion and melody of his operas, and some accused him of creating a work which was too theatrical and not sufficiently spiritual. Verdi, a non-believer, felt that there are some who need to believe in a supreme being and others who can be perfectly happy not believing in anything. Verdi created his last great musical works, *Otello*, 1887, *Falstaff*, 1893, and the *Quattro Pezzi Sacri*, 1898, near the end of his life. He also created and endowed a home for aged musicians in Milan, a project he considered his last great work. He died in 1901 and was mourned nationally.

Quattro Pezzi Sacri (Four Sacred Pieces)

The *Four Sacred Pieces* were published together in 1898, but were written separately over a number of years.

Ave Maria

Verdi composed the *Ave Maria* in 1889 for his own amusement, based on an enigmatic scale found in an article in an Italian music magazine. He did not want it to be performed. In spite of his consideration of the *Ave Maria* as an exercise, the work was performed. It consists of four sensitive and lush settings of a cantus firmus, or melody line. The melody appears first in the bass, next the tenor, the alto, and finally the soprano.

<i>Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum, Benedicta tu in mulieribus, Et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus.</i>	Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
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<i>Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, Ora pro nobis peccatoribus Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.</i>	Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.
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<i>Amen.</i>	Amen.
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Stabat Mater

The *Stabat Mater* is a 13th century Catholic hymn to Mary, describing her suffering while she is present at the Crucifixion. The exact author is unknown, but most likely is Franciscan friar Jacopone da Todi (ca. 1230-1306) or perhaps Pope Innocent III (ca. 1160-1216). A number of composers have been inspired to set this text, including Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (ca. 1525-1594), Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725), his son, Domenico (1685-1757), Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736), Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904), Karol Szymanowski (1882-1937), Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), Arvo Pärt (1935-), and, of course, Verdi.

Verdi composed the *Stabat Mater* in 1896-1897. He used all of his operatic abilities to set musically the drama of Christ's Crucifixion, mirroring the moods of the words with full chorus thundering anger at the Crucifixion. The mood changes at the end where the high voices sing an ascending pattern to a high B in the sublime closing *Paradisi gloria*."

Stabat Mater

<i>Stabat Mater dolorosa, Juxta crucem lacrymosa, Dum pendebat Filius. Cujus animam gementem Contristatam et dolentem Pertransivit gladius.</i>	A grieving Mother stood beside the cross, weeping, while on it hung her Son. Her sad soul, anguished and suffering, was pierced by a sword.
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<i>O quam tristis et afflicta Fuit illa benedicta Mater Unigeniti! Quae moerebat et dolebat Pia Mater, dum videbat Nati poenas inclyti.</i>	Oh, how sad and afflicted was that blessed Mother of the Only-Begotten. The loving Mother mourned and grieved as she saw the suffering of her glorious Son.
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<i>Quis est homo, qui non fleret, Matrem Christi si videret In tanto supplicio? Quis non posset contristari, Christi Matrem contemplari Dolentem cum Filio?</i>	Who is the man who would not weep, to see the Mother of Christ so distressed? Who could not be saddened if he saw the Mother of Christ suffering with her Son?
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<i>Pro peccatis suae gentis, Vidit Jesum in tormentis, Et flagellis subditum. Vidit suum dulcem Natum Moriendo desolatum, Dum emisit spiritum.</i>	She saw Jesus in torments and subjected to whipping for the sins of his people. She saw her sweet Son dying abandoned as he yielded up his Spirit.
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<i>Eja Mater, fons amoris, Me sentire vim doloris Fac, ut tecum lugeam. Fac ut ardeat cor meum In amando Christum Deum, Ut sibi complaceam.</i>	Oh, Mother, fountain of love, make me feel the depth of your grief, so that I may mourn with you. Make my heart burn with love for Christ, my God, so that I may be pleasing to him.
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<i>Sancta Mater, istud agas, Crucifixi fige plagas Cordi meo valide. Tui Nati vulnerati, Tam dignati pro me pati, Poenas mecum divide.</i>	Holy Mother, do this for me: fix the wounds of the Crucified One deeply in my heart. Share with me the pains of your wounded Son, who deigned to suffer so much for me. Make me devoutly weep with you,
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*Fac me tecum pie flere,
Crucifixo condolere
Donec ego vixero.
Juxta crucem tecum stare,
Et me tibi sociare
In planctu desidero.*

and suffer with the Crucified
as long as I shall live.
I desire to stand with you
beside the cross, and join you
in your lamentations.

*Virgo virginum praeclara,
Mihi jam non sis amara,
Fac me tecum plangere.
Fac, ut portem Christi mortem,
Passionis fac consortem,
Et plagas recolare,*

O Virgin peerless among virgins,
do not be harsh with me now;
let me mourn with you.
Grant that I may bear Christ's death;
make me share in His passion,
and contemplate his wounds.

*Fac me plagis vulnerari,
Fac me cruce inebriari,
Et cruore Filii.
Flammis me urar succensus,
Per te, Virgo, sim defensus,
In die judicii.*

Let me be wounded by His wounds,
cause me to be made drunk by the Cross
and by the blood of your Son.
So that I will not burn in flames,
may I, through you, O Virgin,
be defended on the day of judgment.

*Christe, cum sit hinc exire,
Da per Matrem me venire
Ad palmam victoriae.
Quando corpus morietur
Fac ut animae donetur
Paradisi gloria.*

O Christ, when I pass from here,
grant me that, through your Mother,
I will gain the palm of victory.
When my body dies,
grant that my soul be given
the glory of Paradise.

Amen.

Amen.

Lauda alla Vergine Maria

The *Laudi alla Vergine Maria*, written in 1890, is the only one of the sacred pieces set in Italian, rather than in Latin. Verdi chose verses from Dante Alighieri's *Paradiso*, Canto 33:1-21, a lovely paean to the Virgin Mary.

Dante Alighieri (ca. 1265-1321) is one of the greatest world poets, and has been called the "Father of the Italian language". Born in Florence in 1265, he died in Ravenna in 1321. His main work, the monumental *Divine Comedy*, is a three-part, allegorical, narrative poem, describing his journey through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. His guide through Hell and Purgatory is the Roman poet, Virgil (70-19 BC). His guide through Paradise is Beatrice Portinari (1266-1290), his real love, as well as an idealized one.

Verdi's gentle and melodic setting for unaccompanied treble voices emphasizes the tender, comforting and maternal qualities of the Queen of Heaven.

*Vergine madre, figlia del tuo Figlio,
Umile ed alta più che creatura,
Termine fiso d'eterno consiglio,*

Virgin mother, daughter of your Son,
more humble and exalted than any
creature,
fixed goal of the eternal design.

*Tu se' colei che l'umana natura
Nobilitasti sì, che'l suo Fattore
Non disdegnò di farsi sua fattura.*

You are she who so ennobled
human nature that the Creator
did not disdain to make Himself of
the same making.

*Nel ventre tuo si raccese l'amore,
Per lo cui caldo nell'eterna pace
Così è germinato questo fiore.*

Within your womb was rekindled the love
by whose warmth in eternal peace
this flower has thus blossomed.
Here you are a blazing noonday light
of love,
and down below, among mortals,
you are a living fountain of hope.

*Qui se' a noi meridiana face
Di caritate, e giusto, intra i mortali,
Se' di speranza fontana vivace.*

Lady, you are so great and so powerful
that whomever wants grace and does
not come to you
seeks to fly without wings.

*Donna, se' tanto grande, e tanto vali,
Che qual vuol grazia, ed a te non
ricorre,
Sua disianza vuol volar senz'ali.*

*La tua benignità non pur soccorre
A chi dimanda, ma molte fiate
Liberamente al dimandar precorre.*

Your loving kindness comes to help
not only to those who ask, but often
is given spontaneously before the
request is made.

Lauda alla Vergine Maria

In te misericordia, in te pietate, In te magnificenza, in te s'aduna Quantunque in creatura è di bontate.	In you is mercy, in you pity, In you generosity, in you is found the sum of all that is good in any creature.
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Ave. Ave.	Hail. Hail!
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Te Deum

The double chorus *Te Deum*, a hymn of praise published in 1895-1896, begins with a subdued plainchant by tenors and basses, which then opens into the full force of a double chorus exulting "Holy, holy, holy!" The composition is an array of textures including the soft and lyrical, strident and powerful, unaccompanied and accompanied, vocal and instrumental. Verdi was insistent that the entire composition be conducted in one tempo, all the more to show the contrast in mood and passion. The *Te Deum* meant so much to him that he wished to have its score buried with him.

<i>Te Deum laudamus,</i> <i>Te Dominum confitemur,</i> <i>Te aeternum Patrem omnis terra</i> <i>veneratur.</i>	We praise thee, O God: We acknowledge thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship thee: The Father everlasting.
<i>Tibi omnes Angeli,</i> <i>Tibi coeli et universae Potestates,</i> <i>Tibi cherubim et seraphim incessabili</i> <i>voce proclamant:</i> <i>Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus</i> <i>Deus Sabaoth.</i> <i>Pleni sunt coeli et terra majestatis</i> <i>gloriae tuae.</i>	To thee all angels cry aloud: The Heavens, and all the powers therein. To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy. Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory.
<i>Te gloriosus Apostolorum chorus,</i>	The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee.
<i>Te Prophetarum laudabilis numerus,</i>	The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee.
<i>Te Martyrum candidatus laudat</i> <i>exercitus.</i>	The noble army of Martyrs praise thee.
<i>Te per orbem terrarum sancta</i> <i>confitetur Ecclesia:</i> <i>Patrem immensae majestatis,</i>	The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee; The Father of an infinite Majesty;

Te Deum

<i>Venerandum tuum verum et unicum</i> <i>Filium,</i> <i>Sanctum quoque Paraclitum Spiritum.</i>	thine honorable, true, and only Son; Also the Holy Ghost: the Comforter.
<i>Tu Rex gloriae, Christe.</i> <i>Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius.</i>	Thou art the King of Glory: O Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
<i>Tu ad liberandum suscepturus</i> <i>hominem non horruisti Virginis</i> <i>uterum.</i> <i>Tu, devicto mortis aculeo,</i> <i>aperuisti credentibus regna</i> <i>coelorum.</i>	When thou took'st upon thee to deliver man: Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb. When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death: Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.
<i>Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes in gloria</i> <i>Patris.</i> <i>Judex crederis esse venturus.</i>	Thou sittest at the right hand of God: In the Glory of the Father. We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge.
<i>Te ergo quaesumus tuis famulis</i> <i>subveni, quos pretioso Sanguine</i> <i>redemisti.</i> <i>Aeterna fac cum Sanctis tuis in gloria</i> <i>numerari.</i>	We therefore pray thee, help thy servants: Whom thou hast re- deemed with thy precious blood. Make them to be numbered with thy Saints: In glory everlasting.
<i>Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine,</i> <i>et benedic haereditate tuae.</i> <i>Et rege eos, et extolle illos in aeternum.</i> <i>Per singulos dies benedicimus te,</i> <i>Et laudamus nomen tuum in</i> <i>saeculum seculi.</i>	O Lord, save Thy people: And bless thine heritage. Govern them: And lift them up forever. Day by day we magnify thee; And we worship thy Name, ever world without end.
<i>Dignare, Domine, die isto,</i> <i>sine peccatos nos custodire.</i> <i>Miserere, miserere nostri, Domine.</i> <i>Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super</i> <i>nos,</i> <i>quemadmodum speravimus in te;</i> <i>non confundar in aeternum.</i>	Vouchsafe, O Lord: To keep us this day without sin. O Lord, have mercy upon us. O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us: As our trust is in thee. O Lord, in thee have I trusted: Let me never be confounded.

Program notes by Helene Whitson

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PERFORMERS

Robert Gurney, Music Director

Co-Founder and Music Director Robert Gurney is Organist-Choir Director at San Francisco's historic Trinity Episcopal Church, Assistant Organist at San Francisco's St. Mary's Cathedral, and Organist at Marin County's Temple Rodef Sholom.

A resident of San Francisco since 1978, he has been an active church musician, organ recitalist, vocal coach, and has served as Interim Assistant Organist at Grace Cathedral, and Assistant Conductor-Accompanist for the San Francisco Choral Society, the Sonoma City Opera and the Contra Costa Chorale. For seventeen years he was Museum Organist at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, where he performed over 300 recitals on the museum's E.M. Skinner organ.

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 that 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, John Blow's 1684 St. Cecilia's Day Ode, *Begin the Song*, Georg Frideric Handel's *Te Deum in A Major*, Michael Haydn's *Requiem*, Canadian composer Srul Irving Glick's *The Hour Has Come*, Thomas Tallis' *Missa Puer Natus Est Nobis*, late 18th/early 19th century Afro-Brazilian composer José Mauricio Nunes Garcia's *Requiem*, Antonín Dvořák's *Six Moravian Choruses* (arranged by Janáček), the 1945 *Mass* by Belgian composer Joseph Jongen, premieres of works by San Francisco composer Kirke Mechem, including selections from his operas *John Brown* and *The Rivals*, and the San Francisco Lyric Chorus' 10th Anniversary commissioned work, *This Grand Show Is Eternal*, a setting of naturalist John Muir's texts, by Illinois composer Lee R. Kesselman. He conducted the San Francisco Lyric Chorus in

PERFORMERS

its special Summer 2015 20th anniversary concert, celebrating classical choral music at San Francisco's 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, and featuring Camille Saint-Saëns' oratorio, *The Promised Land*, which had not been performed in the United States since its American premiere and sole performance at the PPIE.

David Hatt, Piano and Organ

David Hatt has been Assistant Cathedral Organist at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco since 1998. He holds an M.A. degree from U. C. Riverside and studied organ with Raymond Boese and composition with Barney Childs. In 2004,

Dave presented the opening concert of the 47th Conference of the College Music Society. He has appeared three times with the San Francisco Symphony. His transcription of the David N. Johnson *Trumpet Tune in B-flat* has been published by Augsburg Fortress. Other compositions have been published by Wayne Leupold Editions and Darcey Press.

He is a former Dean of the San Jose Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and is also the founder of the Bay Area Reger Festival, which in 2008 sponsored Isabelle Demers in her first West-Coast appearances, and which celebrated the 2016 centennial of Reger's death with a series of 10 concerts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The San Francisco Lyric Chorus sends a warm, special thanks to: The SFLC Board of Directors, whose thoughtful and creative ideas, as well as dedicated work, have helped us to begin our 22nd year with new energy as we look forward to the future.

MUSIC DIRECTOR
Robert Gurney

CHORUS SECTION REPRESENTATIVES

Cassandra Forth, Sopranos
Julia Bergman, Altos
Jim Losee, Tenors
Jim Bishop, Basses

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Meri Bozzini

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Helene Whitson

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Ryan Putnam

PROGRAM DESIGN AND LAYOUT
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Bill Whitson

RECORDING
Bill Whitson

CHORUS WEBSITE DESIGN
Sophie Henry

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CHORISTERS WHO BROUGHT

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Claire Alexander
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San Francisco Lyric Chorus

thanks you for your support!

The San Francisco Lyric Chorus is a completely self-supporting independent organization, with a budget of about \$15,000 each 4-month season, or \$45,000 per year.

- ▶ 26% of our income comes from Chorus member dues
- ▶ 34% of our income comes from ticket sales
- ▶ But 40% of our income comes from contributions by choristers and by friends and supporters like you!

Please consider supporting us so that we can continue to expand the size of the choir, promote our concerts more effectively, reach more people with our beautiful music, and build new relationships with San Francisco schools and other cultural groups!

Donation envelopes are available at the box office.

They may be given to an usher, or mailed to:

Treasurer, San Francisco Lyric Chorus,
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You can also donate online to our Generosity campaign at
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All contributors will be acknowledged in our concert programs. For further information, e-mail info@sflc.org or call (415) 721-4077.

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 501(c)3 organization. Donations are tax-deductible as charitable contributions.

Adopt-A-Singer Programs

For as little as \$30, 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 very special Music Director, Robert Gurney.

CONTRIBUTIONS

(September 2016 - August 2017)

Fortissimo + (\$1000+)

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Helene & Bill Whitson

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Jim & Carolyn Losee adopt *the Tenor Section*

Julie & Al Alden adopt *the Bass Section*

John Hunt adopts *Bass section*

John Hunt adopts *Nanette Duffy*

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.

Barbara Greeno

Thanks, Cassandra, for driving every week!

Susie Williams

I am filled with gratitude for my husband, Adam, the epitome of love and support. Thanks also to my Milo, for the 2-armed hugs goodbye on Monday nights, and to my Henry, for napping in the pews during rehearsals and for giving me great suggestions, including not to "meow" the lyrics. Thank you to all the chorus members for your beautiful voices that surround me.

Helene Whitson

Thank you, Lyric Choristers, for singing with such dedication and making this Summer 2017 a summer of light and magical music! We certainly couldn't have done it without you!

Thank you, Robert, for your wonderful leadership, patient guidance, sense of humor, and sensitive teaching and conducting skills. You inspire and challenge us to be the very best we can, so that our community of singers can share the beauty of choral music with all who hear us.

Thank you, Bill for everything. You are bedrock, a foundation that helps the SFLC be the very best it can be. Thank you for all that you do for the chorus. You make an incredible difference!

We couldn't do what we do without the wonderful support, ideas, and work of our fabulous Board of Directors. We are so grateful to have such a dedicated group of volunteers, willing to share their time, knowledge, and expertise so that we can bring wonderful choral music programs to our audiences.

Thank you also to our dedicated Section Representatives. They are our eyes and ears, working with their sections and our Music Director to create beautiful music.

Thank you to our wonderful donors and contributors and our marvelous audiences, who make our concerts possible. We appreciate your confidence in us and in our music, and we look forward to sharing exciting music with you in the future.

Thank you to our valiant volunteers, who generously give of their time to help with our chorus tasks. All the work that you do makes a difference.

Thank you all for making the San Francisco Lyric Chorus the very special organization that it is Helene

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IN MEMORIAM

Keith Hudson

1935-2017

Founder of Handlo Music,
first Internet sheet music publisher

Choral Singer, Chemist, Environmentalist,
Information Technologist, Political Activist,
Author, Reader, Scholar, Humanist, and Friend

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IN MEMORIAM

Patricia Alexander

(1941-2017)

Soprano singer with San Francisco Choral Society & occasionally, San Francisco Lyric Chorus

Friend, enthusiastic SFLC audience member, and valuable colleague in organizing our 2012 Davies Hall Berlioz Requiem performance



SING WITH THE SAN FRANCISCO LYRIC CHORUS IN FALL 2017

San Francisco Lyric Chorus is an auditioned, medium-sized, mixed-voice chorus that performs a diverse repertoire with an emphasis on classical choral music and rarely performed works. We are an inclusive and welcoming community of singers, committed to excellent musicianship and creative programming.

What Cheer?



Francis Poulenc	<i>Gloria</i>
Ralph Vaughan Williams	<i>Fantasia on Christmas Carols</i>
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Sergei Rachmaninoff	<i>Bogoroditse Devo</i>
Stephen Jackson	<i>Noel Nouvelet</i>

Performances:

Saturday, December 2, 2017, 7 pm

Sunday, December 3, 2017, 5 pm

REHEARSALS and AUDITIONS BEGIN MONDAY, Sept. II, 2017

Rehearsals: Mondays, 7:15-9:45 pm

Trinity+St. Peter's Episcopal Church, St. Peter's Hall,
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For audition and other information, call Music Director Robert Gurney at 415-721-4077 or email rgurney@sflc.org Website: <http://www.sflc.org>



SAN FRANCISCO LYRIC CHORUS MEMBERS

Sopranos

Kathleen Auld
Alana D'Attilio
Cassandra Forth *••
Valerie Howard
Lois Kelley
Justina Lai ••
Abigail Millikan-States ••
Mary Lou Myers
Liz Podolinsky
Carmen Putnam
Monica Ricci
Beverly Schmidt
Helene Whitson #

Altos

Claire Alexander
Julia Bergman # * ••
Antoinette Catalla
Jane Goldsmith
Barbara Greeno
Nora Klebow #
Barbara Landt ••
Dorothy Read
Karen Stella
Susie Williams

Tenors

Kevin Cousins
David Diaz
Nanette Duffy
Ron Lee
Ken Lindahl ••
Jim Losee * ••
Reuben Schwartz ••
Benjamin Vogels ••

Basses

Jim Bishop *••
William Diebel ••
Sergey Khalikulov %
Lee Morrow
Thomas Wade %
Albert Wald
Bill Whitson #

••Glass player
#Board of Directors
*Section Representative
% Professional singer
