USC THORNTON ORIANA WOMEN’S CHOIR AND APOLLO MEN’S CHORUS

FRIDAY | OCTOBER 28, 2016 | 8:00PM
NEWMAN RECITAL HALL

ORIANA WOMEN’S CHOIR
IRENE APANOVITCH  conductor
MICHAEL DAWSON  co-conductor
ASHLEY RAMSEY  co-conductor
HANBO MA  accompanist

APOLLO MEN’S CHORUS
ERNEST H. HARRISON  conductor
SCOTT RIEKER  co-conductor
DA’JON JAMES  co-conductor
LUIS REYES  accompanist

USC Thornton
School of Music
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**PABLO CASALS (1876–1973)**

*Eucaristica*

Catalonian composer Pablo Casals (1876–1973) became interested in music at an early age learning to play the piano, organ, violin and cello. At age seventeen, he studied at the Madrid Conservatory and later became the principal cellist at the Gran Teatro de Liceo and a professor of music at la Escuela Municipal de Música in Barcelona, Spain. Casals spent many years after that touring throughout Europe giving solo cello recitals. He was seen as somewhat of a political activist because of his refusal to tour in Spain, Germany, and Italy while Franco, Hitler, and Mussolini were in power. In 1955, he traveled to Puerto Rico, where he founded the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra and the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music.

While many of Casals’s choral works are Latin motets, *Eucaristica*, written in Catalan with text by Joan Llongueras (1880–1953) and later translated by Philip L. Miller, was written in 1934 for communion service at the Montserrat monastery in Spain. The melody is chant-like with a free tempo sung by a unison women’s choir for the first two verses while Casals uses three-part divisi in the last verse. The keyboard serves as choral support throughout the chant with interspersed contrasting continuous motion in the introduction and interludes representing church bells. The composition concludes with “My way shall be a path of lilies, the path on which I walk beside Him” representing the Lord’s comfort and guidance.

**CHARLES IVES (1874–1954)**

“At the River” from 114 Songs

Charles Ives did not follow a traditional career path as a composer. He did not spend his entire life writing music and perfecting his craft. Rather, Ives spent over a third of his life working at an insurance company and composing music as a hobby. Although he was formally trained as a composer, his works were largely unknown until the emergence of his Symphony No. 4. Today, he is actually considered a pioneer of American art song—a reputation he built by setting original and folk melodies to avant–garde piano accompaniment.

*At the River* belongs to a volume of art songs, 114 Songs, which was published in 1922. Ives’ treatment of the traditional American melody is somewhat unconventional: instead of presenting the melody as it is known, he alters its phrase endings to include deceptive shifts in harmony that would not normally be heard. Combined with clusters of seemingly out-of-place chords in the piano accompaniment, Ives’ *At the River* is stripped of its anthem-like character and instead plunge the listener into an atmosphere of wonder and uncertainty.

**RANDALL THOMPSON (1899–1984)**

“A Girl’s Garden” from Frostiana

As one of America’s best-known composers, Randall Thompson has produced an abundance of excellent choral music as part of his compositional output. Thompson studied at Harvard University. He traveled to Europe to study composition, eventually winning the prestigious Prix de Rome prize for his work. When he returned to the U.S., Thompson enjoyed a very successful career as a professor of composition, teaching at several institutions including the Curtis Institute, Princeton University and the University of California, Berkeley. He eventually moved back to Cambridge to teach composition at his alma mater.
“A Girl’s Garden” comes from a seven-movement song cycle, titled *Frostiana*. Scored for three-part treble chorus with piano, “A Girl’s Garden” features the poetry of America’s literary icon and personal friend of Thompson’s, Robert Frost (1874–1963). The poem depicts a young girl who asks her father for a plot of land to build a garden. When she begins building, she learns what it actually takes to be a farmer and loses interest. Frost’s cunning narrative effectively reflects on the experience of acquiring independence and transitioning to adulthood. Thompson set the text using primarily unison writing, creating an optimal setting for the singers to tell the story of the young girl. The piano accompaniment animates the unison melody with spirited, accented chords and running sixteenth notes. The light-hearted, folk-like nature of Thompson’s music frames Frost’s take on this universal life lesson within a timeless musical genre.

MICHAEL MCGLYNN (b. 1964)

*The White Rose*

Michael McGlynn, director of the internationally acclaimed ensemble Anúna, is Ireland’s most well-known living composer. His works have been recorded and performed internationally by groups such as Rajaton, the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, the Dale Warland Singers, Conspirare, the BBC Singers, Kansas City Chorale, Cantus, Phoenix Chorale, Chanticleer and New York Polyphony. McGlynn also has a keen interest in music education. Each year he runs the Anúna Summer School and presents choral workshops around the world.

In the White Rose, McGlynn creates a macaronic (text set in two languages) version of the poem *Suil a ghrá* using Irish and English. The song is about a woman lamenting her lover who has gone off to war. She hands him a white rose, a symbol of her loyalty and support in the hope that he may return unharmed. The form is traditionally Irish, opening with the ‘tune’ (‘A’ section), which is then followed by a higher ‘B’ section called the “turn.” During the ‘B’ section, intensity builds as all voice parts rise, echoing the woman’s cry for her lover to return.

GIDEON KLEIN (1919–1945)

*Bachuri Le’an Tisa*

Born in Přerov, Moravia (Czech Republic), Gideon Klein (1919–1945) was responsible for much of the choral life in Theresienstadt, a concentration camp located in the city of Terezín, Czechoslovakia, where the Nazis imprisoned prominent artists and musicians. Born to Jewish parents and raised in a traditional Jewish home, Klein proved to be a talented musician from a young age. He began taking piano and musicology lessons with Růžena Kurzová (1880–1938) and Vilém Kurz (1872–1945) at Charles University in Prague. After his studies, he continued to live in Prague giving private concerts and composing under the pseudonym Karel Vránek. In 1941, he was sent to Theresienstadt and remained there for three years. He was transported to Auschwitz and then to the Fürstengrube, where he worked in the coal mines until his death.

Klein composed a number of works in his short lifetime including twenty-five original compositions and approximately ten arrangements of folksongs, most of which were written in Theresienstadt. *Bachuri Le’an Tisa* was written in 1942 for three-part treble chorus and is the only women’s choir work from the camp that was preserved. First performed along with other arrangements of folksongs, it is likely that *Bachuri Le’an Tisa* is also a folksong arrangement. Klein’s sister, however, thought it an original composition and published it in the first version of the complete edition of his works. In this setting, the text is repeated at the return of the melody and the rest of the work is sung on “la.” The original manuscript suggests additional texts, but the only phrases Klein set were, “Bachuri lean tisa?” (My son, where are you going?), and “chamudah kvar pasa” (my sweetheart, it’s all over).
**EUGENE SUCHON** (1908–1993)

*Bodaj by vás čerti vzali*

Eugen Suchoň is considered by many to be the most important Slovakian composer of the twentieth-century. His career began in 1923 as a performer and improviser, partly for silent films. He studied piano, theory and conducting at the Slovak Academy, Bratislava Academy of Music and Drama and composition at Prague Conservatory. As he matured, his compositional style changed. Initially influenced by Impressionism and European musical traditions he later took inspiration from Paul Hindemith (1895–1963), Béla Bartók (1881–1945) and Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951) and denied authorship of his earlier works. This was followed by a period dominated by folk music’s diatonism and modality that eventually incorporated chromaticism and complex harmony.

The story of *Bodaj by vás čerti vzali* is expressed through the lens of a woman who feels insulted that a boy did not ask her to dance. Structurally the composition consists of a number of accusatory statements followed by suggestions of what the boy has missed by not asking her to dance. The melody migrates across the voice parts while the accompanying background voices seem to be gossiping. The playful music is playful based on a well-known Slovakian folk song.

**MICHAEL MCGLYNN, arr. (b. 1964)

*Song for Jerusalem*

*Song for Jerusalem* was first published in 1684 in a book entitled *A Small Garland of Pious and Godly Verse* by Bishop Luke Wadding. The melody is a traditional English tune and although the origin of the text is obscure, Bishop Wadding likely wrote it. The song was adopted in the early 17th century for the carol singing tradition of the small town of Kilmore, in County Wexford on the southeast coast of Ireland. *Song for Jerusalem* is one of eight surviving songs that were assimilated into a book of thirteen carols published in 1728 by Fr. William Devereux. Each of the carols is to be sung on a particular day during the Christmas season, with *Song for Jerusalem* to be sung on the eleventh day.

This setting is a re-imaging by Michael McGlynn. His version of *Song for Jerusalem* draws on the stylistic technique of heterophony meaning ‘not together’ to weave its hypnotic texture. Dissonances are achieved by the simple means of a unison line reiterated in quick succession by the various voices, creating a mesmerizing oscillation between cluster chords and single voices.

**SRUL IRVING GLICK** (1934–2002)

“Psalm 23” from *Psalm Trilogy for Children’s Chorus*

Srul Irving Glick is considered by many to be one of Canada’s best-known Jewish composers. Born in Toronto to a musical family, Glick stated at the age of fifteen that he wanted to become a composer. He pursued this goal with determination, completing an undergraduate degree in composition at the University of Toronto and studying in Europe with several established composers, such as Max Deutsch (1892–1982). Deutsch encouraged Glick to disregard trends in composition that were considered avant-garde at the time and write music that was natural to him.

“Psalm 23” exemplifies Glick’s natural disposition toward writing simple and beautiful melodies. The third composition included in his *Psalm Trilogy for Children’s Chorus*, “Psalm 23” opens with an unadorned, almost minimalist invocation on the words “Mizmor L’David,” which means “The Psalm of David.” Glick then introduces the main melody on which the composition is based. Simple but memorable, this melody features an effective balance of restrained, stepwise movement and poignant, intervallic leaps. Glick’s use of unadorned, straightforward harmonization of the melody facilitates clear delivery of the psalm text.
OSCAR PETERSON  (1925–2007)
SEppo HOVI, arr. (b. 1946)
*Hymn to Freedom*

Canadian pianist, Oscar Peterson, is considered by many to be one of the nation’s most important jazz musicians to date. Born in Montreal, Quebec, Peterson spent most of his life in Toronto, Ontario. He studied classical piano as a child and transitioned to jazz music as a teenager. In 1949 Peterson’s jazz career took off when he was asked to perform at Carnegie Hall as part of the Jazz in the Philharmonic concert series. Soon thereafter, he put together his own jazz trio (piano, guitar, double bass) that went on to record an album and tour North America.

*Hymn to Freedom* was originally written for Peterson’s jazz trio. In 1962, Peterson’s producer encouraged him to set the jazz standard for voice using a poem by Harriette Merolla. The poem presented a simple but powerful message of unity and peace that was quickly adopted by the American Civil Rights movement. In 1986, *Hymn to Freedom* was performed at the closing celebrations of an international children’s choir festival in Finland. The three-part treble version of the song is heard today. Seppo Hovi’s arrangement begins by presenting the main melody in unison, painting the poem’s message in musical terms. As homage to the composition’s jazz roots, he indicates that the work should be sung in “Gospel” style and asks performers to “swing” the eighths notes.

MICHAEL COX (b. 1948)

*Praise him!*

American composer Michael Cox received his Bachelor of Music Degree in Piano Performance from Oklahoma Baptist University, his Master of Music in Orchestral Conducing from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and Doctor of Music in Composition from Florida State University in Tallahassee. Cox is a former associate professor of music at Oklahoma Baptist University where he served as the director of the Bison Glee Club. *Praise him!* was composed in 1988 for the choir’s fiftieth anniversary.

Cox’s treatment of Psalm 150 in *Praise him!* features three sections in ABA form. Each begins quietly and builds excitedly to a celebratory forte. The ‘A’ section features syncopated rhythms that are sung homophonically while in the contrapuntal ‘B’ section, the melody is sung by the tenors over a continuously rising ostinato in the bass voices on the text “Praise Him.” In sections with long held notes, the composer continues the feverish pace of the work with constantly running eighth notes in the piano accompaniment.

MXOLISI MATYILA  (1938–1985)
SIDUMO NYAMEZELe, arr. (b. 1974)

*Bawo Thixo Somnadla*

Due to the racial conflict created by the apartheid, South African choral conductor and composer Mxolisi Matyila was dismissed from his teaching job. In a fit of passion and anger he wrote the words for *Bawo Thixo Somnadla* on his blackboard before leaving his school for the final time. The song, for which Matyila would later compose the melody, is written in Xhosa, the main African language of the Eastern and Western Cape spoken by over eight million South Africans. The song was eventually passed throughout communities as a song of protest under which many united to fight the apartheid. South African music educator Sidumo Nyamezele arranged the version being performed at this concert.
Nyamezele sets *Bawo Thixo Somnadla* with a mixture of polyphony and homophony. The bass section introduces the first theme, with the second and third themes introduced polyphonically by the tenors and baritones respectively. Although each theme consists of its own line of text, the phrase *Bawo Thixo Somandla* (Father, God Almighty) is always sung homophonically, expressing the desire for a single figure or idea that can bring unity in troubled times.

**AARON COPLAND** (1900–1990)

*Simple Gifts*

Aaron Copland spent three formative years learning composition from the acclaimed Parisian pedagogue, Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979). Unlike other teachers of the time, Boulanger insisted that her students find their own unique compositional voice in the music of their cultural heritage. This began Copland’s lifelong quest to create authentically “American” music. He wanted American composers to look for inspiration in our own vibrant society rather than looking to Europe, which he considered too tied to its past. His revolutionary modernist *Piano Concerto* (1926) and his sprawling *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942) have become icons of the “American sound.” However, Copland also drew on America’s folk tradition as another source of inspiration.

Copland sets the nineteenth century Shaker song, *Simple Gifts*, from his *Old American Songs*, (1950) with typical understatement. The text speaks of the importance of living an uncomplicated life for personal and religious happiness, especially pertinent in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and the Great Awakening. Using only two vocal lines and a piano, Copland interweaves the melody and a surprisingly dissonant harmony with unexpectedly placed chords in the piano. A modern incarnation of the polyphony from four centuries prior, each of Copland’s vocal line sings as its own sort of melody, and dissonances only appear when the lines combine. The piano comments upon the vocal lines with spacious chords of both simple and complex harmonies—which often occur at metrically unorthodox times—and provides a simple motif comprised of the first eight notes of the melody, which serves to unify the arrangement. The apparent simplicity of *Simple Gifts* masks the incredibly complex harmonic and rhythmic interplay that lie just below the surface of this masterful composition.

**ROBERT SHAW** (1916–1999)

**ALICE PARKER** (b. 1925)

*Blow the Man Down*

California scion Robert Shaw attained international fame as conductor of the Robert Shaw Chorale and, later, the Atlanta Symphony. His recordings of both folk song arrangements and masterworks are still considered the “gold standard” by much of the musical world, and his pedagogical technique focused on rhythmic precision undergirding choral rehearsal practice throughout the world. Alice Parker graduated from Smith College with a major in music performance and composition, then received her master’s degree from the Juilliard School, where she studied choral conducting with Robert Shaw. Her arrangements with Robert Shaw of folksongs, hymns and spirituals form an enduring repertoire for choruses all around the world. It is perhaps ironic that these arrangements from Parker and Shaw (and later by Parker alone) have endured, as their creation and recording on seventeen separate albums was initially designed to fund the Robert Shaw Chorale’s recordings of “serious” music, like Brahms’ *Ein deutsches Requiem*. 
The text and tune for **Blow the Man Down** derive from an English sea shanty, which Grove describes as “A work song used by sailors to coordinate effort and lighten labour aboard ships powered only by human muscles and the natural elements. Shanties consisted mainly of solo leads and roaring choruses said to be audible up to a mile away...the word is obscure in origin and dates from the 1850’s.” This particular shanty considers three highlights of a sailor’s life: women, drinking, and fighting. The title itself references the punches (blows) that would knock an opponent down in the quest for love and liquor. Shaw and Parker stay true to the genre, providing the solo and chorus alternation, complete with those “roaring choruses.” Simple harmonies, rollicking rhythms, and boisterous lyrics combine in a quintessentially virile arrangement.

**ROBERT SHAW** (1916–1999)
**ALICE PARKER** (b. 1925)

**Vive L’Amour**

Alice Parker and Robert Shaw were important contributors to the “Golden Age” of choral music that occurred roughly between 1950 and 1970 in the United States. Shaw had the idea to create accessible music for all and recruited Parker, one of his students and a composer, to assist him. Shaw-Parker arranged 223 choral works, most of which were performed by the Robert Shaw Chorale. After Shaw’s death, Parker has continued to compose, teach, and conduct workshops in conjunction with her non-profit organization, Melodious Accord, whose goal is to bring musicians and listeners together in the creation of music.

**Vive L’Amour** is a song about camaraderie and brotherhood and a staple of men’s choir repertoire around the globe. There are many versions of the tune with different lyrics. Shaw created a list of nineteen points that he wanted to keep in mind when arranging songs, one of them being “a wide variety of dynamics and articulation, often with sudden contrasts.” This work in particular contains many terraced dynamics, adding another layer of entertainment and surprise. Different from the fading love in *The Water is Wide*, the brotherly love in *Vive L’Amour* is meant to last forever, “Should time or occasion compel us to part these days shall forever enlighten the heart.” Let your heart be enlightened by Apollo Men’s Chorus.

**MATTHEW ARMSTRONG** (b. 1974)
**SHELLY ARMSTRONG** (b. 1977)

**The Water is Wide**

Matthew and Shelly Armstrong both received their Bachelors of Music Education degrees from Wartburg College. Shelly earned her second Bachelors in Music Therapy and is currently pursuing a Master of Music in Education from the University of Northern Iowa. Matthew earned his Masters in Music Education from VanderCook College of Music and is currently pursuing a doctor of musical arts in choral conducting at the University of Nebraska. The Armstrong’s arranged *The Water is Wide* for Dr. Peter Eklund and the Nebraska University Varsity Men’s Chorus. Both of the Armstrong’s have taught K-12 and collegiate ensembles and have been selected to perform at regional and national American Choral Directors Association Conferences.

*The Water is Wide* is a Scottish folk song also known as “O Waly, Waly.” The lyrics take the listener through the journey of love. The narrator yearns for a love that is endless and unbreakable but knows that love “grows old and waxes cold, and fades away like morning dew.” The Armstrong’s set the text by starting with a simple piano and vocal line; in mm. 35-39 the first feelings of uncertainty are heard with a haunting 9-8 suspension, and in mm. 48, the composers open the flood gates with a *forte* a cappella cry when the couple falls out of love.
JOHN FARMER (fl. 1591–1601)

*Fair Phyllis*

English Renaissance composer John Farmer (fl. 1591–1601) provides an early example of the “one-hit-wonder” phenomenon. Initially a minor ecclesiastical composer who showed exceptional facility with canons built over a *cantus firmus*, Farmer became widely performed in 1599 with the publication of his *The First Set of English Madrigals* for four voices. He followed in 1601 with *Madrigals for six voices* and also contributed in the same year to Morley’s *The Triumphes of Oriana* in honor of Queen Elizabeth I. Aside from his *Cedipa Pavin* and *Cedipa Galliard* in Rosseter’s *Lessons for Consort* (1609), nothing is known about Farmer after 1601, not even the year of his death.

*Fair Phyllis*, from Farmer’s 1599 set of four-voice madrigals, has become one of the standards of English madrigal repertoire. Its light-hearted tone belies the vitality of the contrapuntal writing and the unexpected voyeurism of the text. Farmer uses micro-rhythmic alliteration (on the letter ‘f’) and text painting to underscore *double sens* in the tale of Fair Phyllis the shepherdess and her stalwart lover, Amyntas, where Phyllis wanders off and Amyntas hastens “up and down” (a lot) until they fall “a-kissing.” The madrigal would remain only a vaguely ribald tale, except for the first phrase: “Fair Phyllis I saw…” Who is the narrator and why is he/she watching Phyllis and Amyntas’s amorous escapades? Like many a popular artist today, Farmer intrigued the world with his sensual hit and then faded into obscurity, leaving only a catchy song to linger in our cultural consciousness.

AARON COPLAND (1900–1990)
IRVING FINE, arr. (1914–1962)

*The Dodger*

*The Dodger*, originally a nineteenth century American folk song, was later adapted as a campaign song for Grover Cleveland (1837–1908) that made fun of his republican opponent. The song was arranged by American composer Aaron Copland in 1950 and published in his collection of *Old American Songs*. Famed American composer Irving Fine, a member of the Boston six, a group of lauded American composers residing in Boston that included Copland and Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990), arranged tonight’s version of the song. Fine’s rendition was arranged in 1952 during his tenure at Brandeis University.

Fine’s arrangement of *The Dodger* captures the comedic satire intended both in its original construction as an attack song for a campaign and as an entertaining folk song as arranged by Copland. *The Dodger* is set strophically with the verse sung by a soloist and the matching refrain sung by the chorus. Each verse features corresponding vocal accompaniment from the chorus poking fun at the character being addressed be it a humming choir singing behind the soloist who criticizes the crooked preacher, or “oohs” placed high in the tessitura of the treble voices mocking the doe eyed “lover” whose intentions may not be as noble and wholesome as they seem.

PAUL BASLER (b. 1963)

*Sing To the Lord*

Paul Basler (b.1963) received his Bachelor of Music degree from Florida State University and his Master of Music, Master of Arts, and Doctorate of Musical Arts degrees from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He is currently an Associate Professor of Music at the University of Florida. *Sing to the Lord* was originally composed for the 2011 Florida TTBB All State Chorus.
In *Sing to the Lord*, Basler’s setting of Psalm 98 creates an entire landscape that matches and magnifies three distinct moments in the scripture. The work, in ABCA form, begins homophonically as the voice of King David calls to his people to sing unto the Lord. Section ‘B’ begins with a melody that moves back and forth between the tenors and basses in a call and response. In the ‘C’ section, the trumpets are announced with *forte* and syncopated rhythms; the harps with a sweeping melody; and the sea and mountains clapping and resounding His name with punctuated rhythm and legato passages respectively. The chorus returns to an even more triumphant A section to issue their final cry to the people to “Sing to the Lord.” Basler’s use of horn and piano accompaniment serve to further the fantastic display as the piano’s galloping eighth note motive races forward and the responsive cries of the horn echo back to the chorus.

**STEPHEN SONDHEIM** (b. 1930)
**ERNEST H. HARRISON, arr.** (b. 1987)

*Sondheim*

Excerpts from *Into the Woods* (1987) and *Sweeney Todd* (1979)

Stephen Sondheim is one of the most well known American composers and lyricist of his generation and is known for his haunting melodies, unexpected harmonies, and intricate lyrics. These elements are featured in two of his pivotal works, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (1979), an operatic depiction of the frightening tale of murder and cannibalism and *Into the Woods* (1987), a dark musical interpretation of several Brothers’ Grimm fairy tales. Arranger, Ernest Harrison is a recent graduate of the University of Missouri where he received his Masters in Choral Conducting. Presently, Mr. Harrison is a graduate student at the University of Southern California, pursing a doctoral degree in choral music.

Harrison’s SATB arrangement uses text and themes from “No One is Alone” from *Into the Woods* and “Nothing’s Gonna Harm You” from *Sweeney Todd* to capture the image of a character who is dealing with loss or depression. The unison entrance of the melody on “no one’s here to guide you now you’re on your own” reflects the hopelessness of the character. This sentiment lessens as voices are added with the reminder that “you are not alone.” In the polyphonic second verse, each line represents the voice of a loved one meant to encourage in times of need. The polyphony intertwines, builds to a high point and suddenly falls away at the homophonic statement, “I am on your side.” The song ends with an ascending scale in the women’s voices and a descending scale in the men’s creating a twelve-note chord representing the supporting arms of loved ones. In the final moment of the song, five notes of the melody from a third song, *Children Will Listen*, are played by the accompanist and represent surrender to the surrounding love.
PABLO CASALS (1876–1973)

Eucharistica

Porto Jesús dins el meu cor
i es el meu cor una Hostia Santa
per ai xò avui la resplandor
que m’asserena el viure és tanta.
El cor em salta d’alegria
Bondat fa avui ma pena lleu
i els angels tinc per companyia.
Dins el meu cor porto Jesús
i veig la llum del cel tan clara
que per a sempre ferm refus
del mal obscur jo faig des d’ara
Jesús jo porto cor endins
li vull portar tota la vida
I vull seguir dels serafins
La veu d’amor que el cel em crida.
De lliris blancs i gessamins
Avui al mon quina florida

Deep in my heart I bear my Lord
My heart is a sacred Host to Jesus
Therefore in my heart, the light
that gives serenity is every glorious.
My heart leaps joyfully within me.
Goodness today makes sorrow light,
And I have angels for my companions.
Deep in my heart I bear my Lord
and ever see the light of heaven
That keeps me always from the ways
of darkness and evil doing.
Deep in my heart I bear my Lord
and all my life He will be with me.
I want my voice to speak of love
As does the seraph that proclaims Him.
My way shall be a path of lilies
The path on which I walk beside Him.

EUGEN SUCHON (1908–1993)

Bodaj by vás čerti vzali

Bodaj by vás, vy mládenci, čerti vzali,
keď ste vy mňa na ten tanec nepozvali,
ja by bola tancovala, aj na cimbal niečo
dala,
aj vás všetkých pobozkala.

May the Devils take you, young boys,
when you didn’t invite me to dance.
I would have danced, gave something to the
dulcimer
and kiss you all.

MXOLISI MATYILA (1938–1985)

SIDUMO NYAMEZELE, arr. (b. 1974)

Bawo Thixo Somnadla

Father, God Almighty,
What have I done wrong?
What have we done in your eyes, God?
What have we done to you my Lord, Father, God Almighty?
On this earth we carry a heavy burden.
Let this be over. (Thy will be done)
My heart is guilty.
I vow forever!
Let this be over. (Thy will be done)
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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Irene Apanovitch

Irene Apanovitch is a DMA candidate in Choral Music at USC Thornton School of Music, currently in her second year of studies. In addition to being the Lead Conductor of Oriana Women’s Choir, she is also a Teaching Assistant Fellow with USC’s Center for Excellence in Teaching. In her research, Irene explores perspective-taking and empathy in choral ensemble settings. Initially trained as a pianist, Irene holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of Toronto and a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Alberta. Her master’s thesis, “The Passion in Latin America: Examination of three choral movements from Golijov’s La Pasión según San Marcos,” received a national award for Outstanding Thesis/Dissertation from Choral Canada. In 2014, Irene was selected as the Apprentice Conductor of the National Youth Choir of Canada. She has conducted choirs of all levels and ages, including a recent post as Interim Professor of Music at King’s University in Edmonton, Alberta. Irene’s passion for choral music was fostered by many teachers, including Debra Cairns, Leonard Ratzlaff, Maria Guinand, Simon Carrington, and Doreen Rao. She is currently studying with Dr. Jo-Michael Scheibe, Dr. Cristian Grases, Dr. Nick Strimple, and Dr. Tram Sparks.

Michael Dawson

Born in 1989, Michael Dawson is a singer, multi-instrumentalist and conductor from Dublin Ireland. Michael graduated top of his class with a First Class Honours degree in music from National University of Ireland, Maynooth in 2011 and holds a Masters degree in Ritual Chant and Song from the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance. Michael began conducting Maynooth University Chamber Choir in 2011 and since then has toured five state in the U.S most notably performing in the Leighton Concert Hall, Notre Dame University (2013), won two gold diplomas at the Canta en Primavera – Malaga International Choral festival and became the first Irish choir and youngest conductor to lift the coveted Pavarotti Trophy as “Choir of the World” at the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod in Wales. Following this win the choir went on its first ever world tour performing across the U.S and China. Before moving to the U.S to study the DMA degree at USC Michael had founded three choirs in Ireland, Fingal Children’s Choir, Fingal Youth Choir and St. Michaels College Choir and conducted Enchiridais Chamber Choir weekly. As a singer Michael spent five years touring with the Internationally renowned choral group Anúna singing in China, Holland, Sweden, Norway and Germany. He regularly facilitates workshops with choirs around Ireland and has adjudicated in Ireland and at the Belarus International Choral Festival. In addition to choral music Michael also has a keen interest traditional Irish and Scottish music and plays the Low whistle, Bagpipes and Uilleann pipes.

Ashley Ramsey

Originally from Mesquite, Texas, Ashley Ramsey moved to Los Angeles to pursue her Master’s Degree in Choral Music at the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Music Education from Centenary College where she studied choral conducting and music education under Dr. Julia Thorn. After earning her BM degree, Ashley taught choral music at Greenacres Middle School and Bossier High School in Bossier City, Louisiana and elementary and middle school music at Notre Dame Academy in Los Angeles. She currently serves as Music Director and West Los Angeles United Methodist Church where she directs the adult, children, and handbell choirs.
Ashley is in the second year of her Master’s program where she currently holds the position of assistant conductor of Oriana Women’s Choir and previously held the position of alto section leader in the University Chorus. She is studying choral conducting and choral literature with Dr. Jo-Michael Scheibe, Dr. Tram Sparks, Dr. Christian Grases, and Dr. Nick Strimple.

Hanbo Ma

Pianist Hanbo Ma has made appearance in solo recitals as well as being featured with orchestra throughout North America, establishing herself as one of today’s promising emerging artists. Her career starts by giving a performance of Balakirev’s Islamey in Severance Hall at the age of 17, the piece is considered one of the most challenging piano repertoires in the world. She has received prizes from Russian Music International Competition, St. Andrews International Piano Competition, and was the only recipient of 2013’s Cobos Piano Prize given by Eastman School of Music. Hanbo is pursuing Doctoral of Musical Arts in Piano Performance now with Daniel Pollack at USC Thornton School of Music.

Ernest H. Harrison

Ernest Harrison is a recent graduate of the University of Missouri where he received his Masters degree in Choral Conducting. He received his Bachelor’s degree in Music Vocal Performance from Auburn University in 2014 and studied with world-renowned composer Dr. Rosephanye Powell and world-renowned choral conductor William Powell. Mr. Harrison, also a graduate of Tuskegee University with a Bachelor’s degree in English Liberal Arts, studied voice with Dr. Wayne Barr, Head of Choral Activities. Presently, Mr. Harrison is a Graduate Student at USC Thornton School of Music, pursing a Doctoral degree in Choral Music and studies choral conducting under Dr. Jo-Michael Scheibe.

While at Auburn, he performed leading roles or as soloist in several opera productions and oratorio performances, including Handel’s Messiah, Menotti’s Amahl and the Night Visitors, a role he will be revisiting at MU, Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Pirates of Penzance, and Guillot’s Marriage by Lantern Light. At the University of Missouri he conducted, composed, and arranged for the jazz vocal a cappella ensemble “Hitt Street Harmony” and studied conducting under Dr. R. Paul Crabb. In his first year of study at USC Thornton School of Music Mr. Harrison was the lead conductor of Apollo Men’s Chorus.

Scott Rieker

Scott Rieker is a second-year Doctoral student in Choral & Sacred Music at the University of Southern California, the Choir Director at Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church in Canoga Park, California, Music Ministry Intern at the USC Caruso Catholic Center, Co-Conductor of the USC Apollo Men’s Chorus, and board member of the Santa Monica Youth Orchestra. Prior to these positions, Scott directed the Big Red Singers show choir and was assistant director of the Varsity Men’s Chorus at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he earned a Masters Degree in Choral Conducting. Before coming to UNL, Mr. Rieker taught music in the Des Moines, Iowa, Public Schools, where he spent five years teaching at Meredith Middle School and three years at Hoover High School, followed by two years at Pleasant Hill and Phillips Traditional Elementary Schools.
Scott served as the Director of Music at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Grand Island (Nebraska), where he was responsible for arranging, rehearsing, and directing the music for the ordination of Bishop Joseph Hanefeldt; only the second time an episcopal ordination has occurred in Grand Island since 1978. Previously, Scott served as Director of Music at the Basilica of St. John in Des Moines for seven years, coordinating a choir of more than 50 singer, instrumentalists, and cantors. The choir recorded a CD in 2011 and was one of four selected to perform at the American Guild of Organists’ Convention in Des Moines in June, 2011.

As President Elect and President of the Iowa Music Educators Association, Mr. Rieker regularly traveled to Washington, DC to advocate to Iowa’s congressional delegation, as well as testified before the Iowa House and Senate. Scott is now a Past-President of the Iowa Music Educators Association.

Da’Jon James

Da’Jon James, Jersey City native, is excited to get started at Grace First. DJ graduated from Syracuse University this past year and starts his Masters in Choral Music at University of Southern California in the Fall. DJ has been the director of Tenuto, the young men’s choir of Syracuse Children’s Chorus, for 3 years and has grown the choir by 157% during his tenure. Previously he was the co-director of the Jersey City Summer Youth Choir, a group that focused on keeping children involved in school during the summer months through music and performance. DJ is an avid arranger of choral music and loves to pretend to know how to play drums in his free time.

Luis Reyes

A native of Asunción, Paraguay, Luis Reyes has performed extensively both as a violist and pianist throughout South America and the U.S. As a violist, he has played and toured with numerous ensembles, including the Camerata Miranda, Orquesta de la Universidad del Norte, the Arkansas Philharmonic Orchestra, the Symphony of Norwest Arkansas and the Ohio Light Opera. As a keyboard player, he has collaborated with the USC Symphony, Young Musicians Foundation’s Debut Orchestra, Kaleidoscope Ensemble, National Orchestral Institute, Maryland Sinfonietta, University of Maryland Symphony Orchestra, University of Maryland Wind Orchestra, and The Aspen Festival and Philharmonic Orchestras. Luis spent three summers at the Aspen Music Festival and School as a full scholarship student in the collaborative piano program. He has been a two year–winner of a fellowship for graduate studies awarded by the National Fund of the Arts and Culture of Paraguay. Luis is currently pursuing a Doctoral degree in Keyboard Collaborative Arts at the USC Thornton School of Music under the guidance of Dr. Alan Smith.
We are grateful to the following individuals who have made contributions to the USC Thornton Department of Choral and Sacred Music since July 1, 2012.

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