

Celebrating ★
150
Years

MENDELSSOHN
CHORUS
— OF —
PHILADELPHIA
~EST. 1874~

AS WE LIVE AND BREATHE
2023 - 2024

From the Echo of the Heavenly Harp

Artistic Director & Conductor Dominick DiOrio

Saturday • April 27, 2024 • 4pm

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
22 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue • Philadelphia, PA 19118

MCCHORUS.ORG

From the Board Chair

Seventeen years ago, I was introduced to Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia (MCP) via our first Mendelssohn Medley. I've always sung in choruses, in college, and for many years, in The Cecelia Chorus of NY. I missed singing, but realized my voice was no longer an asset to any chorus, so when I was approached to be on the Board of MCP, I was honored. Then Artistic Director Alan Harler was a persuasive recruiter: he touted the fact that we perform choral music ("a niche art"); a lot of new music (even more of a niche); and sing many new commissioned works. And, as Alan pointed out, MCP would be getting a "two-fer," with the unconditional support of my beloved husband Leif Magnusson. How could we resist?



After seven years on the Board, I was elected Chair. Now, after 10 years, as we celebrate our 150th Anniversary, it is time to pass the baton. As with any organization, we have had our challenges: periodic Board, artistic and executive turnover; the Covid pandemic; and the ever-changing arts grant environment. After a nationwide search for Artistic Director, we were fortunate to hire Dominick DiOrio in 2020 – the week the world shut down with Covid!

Under Dominick's artistic leadership, we revised our vision, mission and core values for MCP. The Chorus today is better, more diverse in makeup and repertoire and more "agile", performing in different ensembles and venues, while continuing to blend the old with the new.

As any singer will tell you, singing is hard work, but there are significant benefits to singing – physical, psychological, and emotional. There are benefits for audiences also: the opportunity to be moved, to be transported, to experience moments of peace, serenity, exhilaration, and yes, even sadness. When my beloved Leif passed away in May 2019, an MCP ensemble sang at his Celebration of Life. To honor Leif, I established the Leif Magnusson Operating Reserve, because operating funds are critical to an organization's day-to-day functioning.

Thank you for attending this performance. We are grateful for your ongoing support. It has been an honor and a pleasure to be part of this journey, and I leave knowing MCP has a strong foundation for a melodious future!

Charlotte Sibley
Outgoing Board Chair



Please use this QR code to access the full e-program, containing staff and donor lists as well as the program, texts, program notes and performer biographies. It is designed specifically for ease of use with your mobile device.

Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia
Dominick DiOrio, Artistic Director & Conductor

From the Echo of the Heavenly Harp

PROGRAM

Rejoice in the Lamb, Op. 30 (1943)

Benjamin Britten

Dominick DiOrio, conductor
Andrew Kotylo, organ

1. Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues
2. Let Nimrod, the might hunter
3. For I will consider my Cat, Jeoffrey

Ilene Miller, soprano
Ariel Alvarado, conductor

4. For the Mouse is a creature of great personal valour

Jenna Camacho, alto
Bailey Dean, conductor

5. For the Flowers are great blessings

Eric Rodríguez-López, tenor
Elizabeth Beavers, conductor

6. For I am under the same accusation with my Saviour
7. For H is a spirit and therefore he is God

Alex Varghese, bass

8. For the instruments are by their rhymes
9. For at that time malignity ceases
10. Hallelujah from the Heart of God

Like as the Hart (1941)

Herbert Howells

Maya Kociba, soprano
Andrew Kotylo, organ
Dominick DiOrio, conductor

Psaume 150 (1883)

César Franck
arr. Salomon Jadassohn

Andrew Kotylo, organ
Heather Mitchell, conductor

Intermission

Geistliches Lied, Op. 30 (1856)

Johannes Brahms

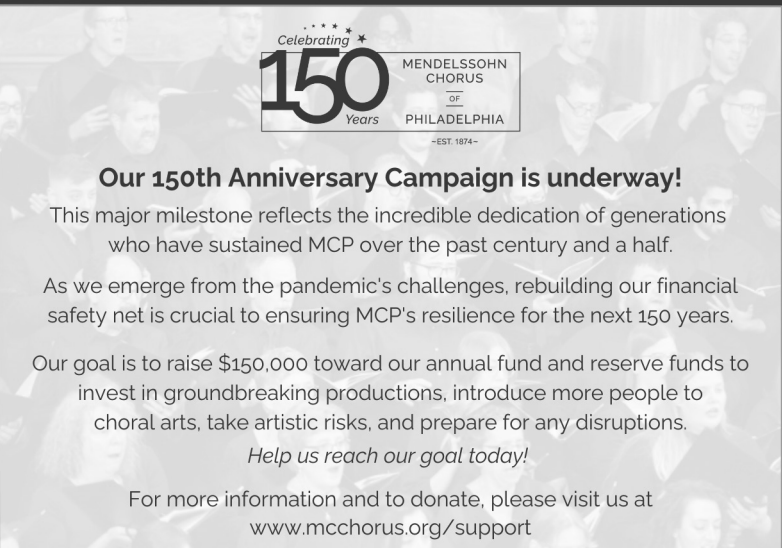
Andrew Kotylo, organ
Dominick DiOrio, conductor

Chichester Psalms (1965)

Leonard Bernstein

1. Psalm 108:2
Psalm 100
2. Psalm 23
Psalm 2:1-4
3. Psalm 131
Psalm 133:1

Origen Hungerford, treble
Barbara Berry, soprano
Shannon Rafferty, alto
Ian Martin, tenor
Jacob Lynn-Palevsky, baritone
Andrew Kotylo, organ
Erik Potteiger, percussion
Megan Hoeflicker, harp
Dominick DiOrio, conductor



Our 150th Anniversary Campaign is underway!

This major milestone reflects the incredible dedication of generations who have sustained MCP over the past century and a half.

As we emerge from the pandemic's challenges, rebuilding our financial safety net is crucial to ensuring MCP's resilience for the next 150 years.

Our goal is to raise \$150,000 toward our annual fund and reserve funds to invest in groundbreaking productions, introduce more people to choral arts, take artistic risks, and prepare for any disruptions.

Help us reach our goal today!

For more information and to donate, please visit us at www.mcchorus.org/support

Program Notes

The bookend pieces in this concert, Benjamin Britten's 1943 *Rejoice in the Lamb* and Leonard Bernstein's 1965 *Chichester Psalms*, were both commissioned by the remarkable Walter Hussey (1909–1985), Vicar of St. Matthew's, Northampton, and later Dean of Chichester Cathedral. Hussey had developed a taste for the contemporary fine arts during his studies, and became convinced that the Anglican church should be more active in sponsoring and supporting the arts. He had the opportunity to put his ideas into practice when he planned the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of St. Matthew's. The church was not particularly historic or important, but Hussey had a warm and disarming personality, boundless enthusiasm and tenacity, and was unafraid to dream big. In addition to commissioning a choral work from Britten, he arranged an organ recital, a national broadcast performance in the church by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Adrian Boult, and the commission of a sculpture by Henry Moore. The events generated a great deal of publicity, and Hussey was encouraged to continue a regular program of commissions at St. Matthew's which has lasted to this day. When he took up his position at Chichester Cathedral, he began a commissioning program there as well, starting with Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*. In addition to Britten and Bernstein, Hussey commissioned established composers like Walton, Finzi and Arnold, as well as a host of younger composers. He arranged recitals by the Wagnerian soprano Kirsten Flagstad. He commissioned paintings, iron work, sculpture, fabrics and tapestry, and poetry. His final commission was a stained-glass window by Marc Chagall.

Rejoice in the Lamb (1943)

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Britten was a precocious musical talent who began “trying out things” as soon as he could reach the piano keys and filling notebooks with musical ideas and compositions from the age of five. There must have been some good ideas in those notebooks. He later mined them for his 1934 *Simple Symphony*, and they convinced Frank Bridge to take him on as a 13-year-old composition student. Britten entered the Royal College of Music on a scholarship in 1930, studying composition with John Ireland, a somewhat infelicitous pairing, and he continued his private studies with Bridge. He won all the available composition and chamber music prizes at the RCM and had public performances of several of his works, the most notable being the 1933 choral variations *A Boy was Born*, written for and performed by the BBC singers.

Britten did not enjoy as much success after graduating from the RCM, and significant works like *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* and his *Piano Concerto* failed to gain much traction. He took a freelance job with the BBC, scoring documentaries with narrations written by poet W. H. Auden. He and Auden collaborated on several theatrical projects and he scored a few feature films and radio dramas. When Auden decided to relocate to America in 1939, Britten followed him a few months later. Britten was revitalized by the vibrant musical scene in New York. He made important connections, his music was performed to good success, and he wrote such significant pieces as the *Hymn to St. Cecelia*, the *Sinfonia da Requiem* and his *Violin Concerto*. The British consul had advised Britten to remain in American as a cultural ambassador, but Britten felt the need

to return to England and in 1942 took passage on a Swedish freighter, composing the *Ceremony of Carols* and sketching out the scenario for his opera *Peter Grimes* during the voyage.

Britten was contacted by Vicar Walter Hussey shortly after he returned to England with a commission to write a choral work for the 50th anniversary of the founding of St. Matthew's Church. He had an unusual text in mind, an 18th century poem by Christopher Smart called *Jubilate Agno* (*Rejoice in the Lamb*). Smart was a highly regarded poet, translator, essayist, playwright, and occasional drag actor in his own bawdy stage works, but he was a poor money manager and was chronically in debt. He suffered some sort of nervous breakdown in 1756 and became obsessed with religion and praying. He was confined to an asylum for six years, ostensibly for preaching in a public park and accosting passers-by to pray with him. He received no visitors and turned to writing religious poetry, composing two long poems, *A Song to David* and *Rejoice in the Lamb*. Upon his release, he published the first, but apparently took no further interest in *Rejoice in the Lamb*, and it was lost until an American diplomat turned Anglican clergyman turned literary historian discovered the manuscript and published it in 1939. Auden obtained a copy and showed it to Britten while they were in America.

Britten was attracted to the poem because of its eccentric and unconventional expressions of praise and faith, but he also empathized with Smart. The themes of social isolation and disenfranchisement run through Britten's operas, and reflect some of his own experience. When he returned to Britain, he applied for conscientious objector status, which was not approved despite his long and very public association with the pacifist movement, and he was forced to prove his bona fides at a public hearing before the approval was granted. And as a gay man in a Britain which would not decriminalize private homosexual acts until 1967, he faced the threat of arrest and worse on a daily basis.

Music critic Edward Sackville-West helped Britten create a workable libretto from the long, rambling poem. The resulting text is quirky, whimsical, exuberant, and profound by turns, featuring Smart's belief that all of creation, animate, inanimate, and even conceptual, offer their own ways to praise God. Britten's setting deftly matched both the feeling of the text and the cadence and inflection of the language. He created a roughly symmetrical setting, with Smart's eclectic hymns of praise flanking the more anguished words in which Smart reflects on his own situation. The musical language is also symmetrical, with Britten emphasizing the musical line rather than rich harmony in the outer sections, making extensive use of unison and two-part canons. The central section features angular lines and a very uncomfortable harmonization which matches the character of the text. He famously quotes Shostakovich's musical initials D-Eb-C-B (DSCH in European notation) in the words "Silly fellow." Although he never met Shostakovich, he was a great admirer of his. And the persistent dotted rhythms in the "Hallelujah" sections perhaps reference an orchestral interlude with the same rhythmic pattern in the second movement of *Symphony of Psalms* by Stravinsky, another composer Britten held in regard.

***Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks* (1941)**

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Howells began his music training with his father, who was organist at a local Baptist church, and by the age of 10 was already able to deputize for him. He began composing, optimistically (and unsuccessfully) asking to be sent home from school early to write music. He became a chorister and started private lessons at 12 with Herbert Brewer, organist at the Gloucester Cathedral, eventually becoming his articulated organ student. In 1910, he met Vaughan Williams at the Three Choirs Festival and heard the premiere of his *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. He was quite taken with the beautiful music and the concept of dressing a 16th century melody in 20th century harmonies.

He entered the Royal College of Music on scholarship in 1912 and immediately set to work on his a cappella *Mass in the Dorian Mode* completing it in two months. It was his first publicly performed work, given at Westminster Cathedral in November, 1912. He developed a reputation for writing quickly and decisively, and was considered the most talented of a rather stellar class.

Howells was diagnosed with a life-threatening auto-immune disease in 1915 and underwent two years of a grueling experimental therapy requiring injections of radium twice weekly. The treatment was unexpectedly successful, but his recovery was slow, and he obtained a job helping edit a multi-volume compilation of Tudor church music. His deep dive into the music of the English Renaissance informed much of his choral music, and he sometimes referred to himself as a reborn Tudor composer. In 1920, he joined the faculty of the RCM, and in 1925 succeeded Gustav Holst as Director of Music at St. Paul's Girls' School.

Like as the hart was written on January 8, 1941, one of a set of four anthems he intended to publish as *Anthems in Time of War*, but which eventually appeared under the more prosaic name of *Four Anthems*. The text is taken from the first three verses of Psalm 42, using the picturesque translation from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Howells is fundamentally a tonal composer, but his concept of tonality is a fluid one, accommodating digressions to distant tonalities and intervals. He uses the interval of a minor third several times to highlight key words like “desireth” and “God,” each example appearing in the context of a different, but always unexpected, harmonization. His writing is often lean and uncluttered, with long, chant-like melodic lines given to single voices. He uses devices common in English Renaissance music, like the lovely soprano descant for the reprise of the opening lines, and closes the work with a Picardy third, allowing the piece to end in a major key, which he emphasizes with the beautifully idiosyncratic three-chord cadence which closes the work.

***Psaume 150* (1883)**

César Franck (1822-1890)

When César-Auguste-Jean-Guillaume-Hubert Franck was born, his father expected greatness for him and was delighted when Franck showed an early aptitude for the piano. He was sent to the Royal Conservatory in Liège and gave his first public concerts at age 12, being marketed by his father as a prodigy along the lines of Mozart or Liszt. In 1835, they moved to Paris and larger audiences. César-Auguste was eventually enrolled in the Paris Conservatoire, where he studied pi-

ano, organ and composition, all the while maintaining a heavy concert schedule organized by his father. He was well-regarded as a pianist but rather less so as a composer, and his father's relentless marketing eventually backfired, antagonizing influential music critics and reviewers. César-Auguste withdrew from the Conservatoire in 1844, probably at his father's request. They moved back and forth between Belgium and Paris, but his concerts attracted little attention and less money, and the premiere of a large-scale oratorio, *Ruth*, was unsuccessful. He finally broke away from his father, dropped Auguste from his name, and reinvented himself as an organist and teacher. His timing was impeccable, and he was to gain considerable fame as both.

In the mid-19th century, France was entering a new age of organ practice. The decrepit instruments with their short, narrow pedalboards that the 16-year-old Mendelssohn had complained about during his 1825 visit to Paris had been rebuilt, many by Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, an amazing organ builder who made innumerable technical innovations and developed new stops mimicking orchestral instruments, providing a much richer sound. When Franck took up a position at Saint-Jean-Saint-François-au-Marais in Paris, he inherited a wonderful Cavaillé-Coll organ and gushed "Mon nouvel orgue, c'est une orchestre!" He began to consult with Cavaillé-Coll on organ design and traveled all over France giving inaugural concerts on newly installed Cavaillé-Coll organs, developing a considerable reputation for his improvisational skills. He championed the new (to France) German-style full, deep pedalboards, which allowed both heel and toe playing, even having a practice pedal board made so he could master the new playing technique at home. In 1858, he became *organist titulaire* (principal organist) at the new Basilica Sainte-Clothilde, supervised the installation of Cavaillé-Coll's largest and most advanced instrument at the time, and began to compose music to explore the unique organ's capabilities. In due time, he became professor of organ at the Conservatoire and a founding member of the Société Nationale de Musique, an organization dedicated to the promotion of music by French composers (Franck's Belgian origins apparently being forgiven.)

Franck composed his setting of Psalm 150 for the inauguration of a new Cavaillé-Coll organ at the *Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles* (National Institute for Blind Youth) in 1883. The Institute began offering organ classes in 1826 and had turned out many fine organists, including Franck's protégé Louis Vierne. In Psalm 150, God is praised through the music of a long list of instruments, including, in the French translation Franck used, the *orgue*, so the choice was a natural one. It is set for orchestra, organ, and mixed choir, somewhat unusual for such a short piece. An organ reduction was published in 1896 and is being used in this concert. This is a late work and represents Franck's mature compositional style, with harmonic flexibility, a strong chromatic flavor, and some flirtation between major and minor tonalities. For a short piece, it has a wealth of material packed in it. There are several main bits of thematic material: a rising instrumental line that first appears in the march-like alleluias that follow the instrumental opening, and which explores some unusual tonal ground; a stately anthem-like theme first presented by the basses and then later by the unison chorus; and a brilliant choral fanfare which unfolds as a short double canon.

Geistliche Lied, Op. 30 (1856)
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Discounting playing piano in dives, bars and brothels, Brahms' first professional gig, at age 17, was as accompanist to Hungarian violinist Ede Reményi, an association that lasted three years. Reményi introduced Brahms to Hungarian and Romani folk music, which Brahms would parlay into some of his most popular music, and to fellow Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim. Joachim had been a *wunderkind* who gave the second performance of Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto* at age 12, and his performance of the Beethoven *Violin Concerto* a few months later in London with Mendelssohn conducting was so electrifying that it reestablished that concerto's place in the repertoire. They were of a similar age, had similar tastes in literature, music and philosophy, and each recognized the other's musical genius. They quickly developed a close and lasting friendship.

In 1853, Joachim gave him a letter of introduction to Robert Schumann, composer, conductor and influential writer. Schumann was amazed at the music the 20-year-old Brahms had brought with him. He noted in his diary, "Met Brahms, a genius," and wrote an effusive article praising Brahms for his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (New Journal for Music), something which followed Brahms like an albatross over the next two decades. He was welcomed into the Schumann family, stayed with them for several weeks, and collaborated with Robert on the F-A-E Violin Sonata, a birthday gift for Joachim, the three notes representing Joachim's personal motto *Frei aber einsam* (free but alone; like Brahms, he identified with E. T. A. Hoffman's fictional violinist Kreisler, who became more socially isolated even as he became more acclaimed as a musician.)

Schumann had long suffered from bipolar disorder and his mental health deteriorated rapidly in the months after he met Brahms. After a failed suicide attempt, he asked to be admitted to an asylum, where he spent the last two years of his life. His wife Clara was not allowed to see him, and he himself only asked to see Brahms, who settled nearby to serve as an intermediary between Robert and Clara. A former child prodigy, Clara was one of the great pianists of her time, and she had managed to continue an extensive concert schedule after marrying Robert, even while running the household and bearing eight children. But she now needed to generate the kind of income that came from touring, and Brahms helped out as best he could while she prepared repertoire. With his own career temporarily on hold, he suggested that he and Joachim exchange exercises in counterpoint every two weeks and critique each other's efforts. The *Geistliches Lied* (Sacred Song), written in 1856, was one of these exercises.

Brahms lavished a great deal more effort on the *Lied* than what one might expect for an exercise. He decided on a choral setting with organ accompaniment, and selected a poem by the 17th century physician-diplomat-poet Paul Fleming, whose theme of acceptance and trust in God mirrors a Gospel account of one of Jesus's sermons. Brahms marked the score "double canon at the ninth." There are two separate melodies presented as rounds, or canons, one with sopranos and tenors and the other with altos and basses, and the imitative lines in each canon are separated by a ninth, an octave plus one note, a particularly difficult construction. Brahms also composed an independent organ accompaniment, with a long, arch-shaped line which at one point quotes a portion of the theme

from the last movement of Schumann's *Symphony No. 4*. None of this complex construction matters at all as Brahms weaves a beautiful tapestry with the interweaving melodic lines, the offset entrances of the canon emphasizing key words or phrases, and even honoring Fleming's clever use of internal rhymes. It is likely that Brahms meant the piece, with its themes of consolation and acceptance and its reference to Schumann's final symphony, for Clara, but it is not known if he ever had a chance to show it to her. She left on a tour of England shortly after Brahms is believed to have completed the work, and quickly returned three months later when she received word that Robert was failing, arriving just in time to see him for the first and only time during his confinement, two days before his death.

The *Geistliches Lied* is one of Brahms' earliest extant works, having survived his determined purge of as much of his early music as he could get his hands on. He finally published it as his Op. 30 in 1864.

Chichester Psalms (1965)

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

Composer, conductor and pianist, Bernstein was a seminal figure in American music. He was the first American-born conductor to lead a major symphony orchestra, achieved an international reputation for his interpretation of Mahler, and guest conducted and recorded with the great orchestras around the world.

He composed three symphonies, two operas, two masses, song cycles, and assorted works for orchestra and piano. But he is probably best known, and perhaps best represented, by his theatrical music, which include three ballets, his Oscar-nominated score for the movie *On the Waterfront*, incidental music for the plays *Peter Pan* and *The Lark*, and the Broadway shows *On the Town*, *Wonderful Town*, *Candide*, and *West Side Story*. There is something self-conscious about his classical compositions which contrasts with the freedom and verve of his theatrical music, where he gives full rein to his exceptional melodic and rhythmic gifts.

Bernstein was also a deeply committed social activist and humanitarian. He was an early civil rights activist and an outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War. He gave concerts in support of everything from AIDS research to Amnesty International. And he was tireless in using music to support his vision of world peace.

In December, 1963, Bernstein received a letter from the Very Rev. Walter Hussey, Dean of Chichester Cathedral, inquiring if he might write a choral work for the 1965 Southern Cathedrals Festival. It came at a very propitious time. Bernstein had started work on a musical version of Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth* with long-time collaborators Adolph Green and Betty Comden, but the project was not going well and was eventually abandoned. Hussey had suggested a setting of Psalm 2 (Why do the nations so furiously rage together), set for orchestra or organ or both, suitable for performance with a massed choir. Bernstein accepted the commission, but countered with a proposal for a suite of psalms, under the working title of *Psalms of Youth*. Hussey was happy to give the composer free rein, although he did mention that a touch of *West Side Story* in the music would be more than acceptable.

Bernstein completed the work, now retitled *Chichester Psalms*, in July, 1965. After consultation with Hussey, he decided that the psalms would be sung in Hebrew. His idea was that contrasting the rhythmic contours of the Hebrew text with Anglican church music choral traditions would speak to ecumenism. He envisioned the work with an all-male choir, the treble voices supplied by boys, but he himself conducted a preview of the work with a mixed choir. He was more adamant that the soloist should be a treble voice, meant to suggest the young David. And he was more than happy to recycle some unused music from *West Side Story* and the abortive *Skin of Our Teeth*. *Chichester Psalms* is buoyant, exuberant, lyrical and accessible, and has remained one of Bernstein's most popular works.

The work is in three sections, each of which are based on a pair of complementary or contrasting psalm texts. The first movement opens with an invocation from Psalm 108, "Awake the psaltery and the harp," set with the dissonance of a 7th chord, which not only suggests the clangor of an abrupt awakening but also honors the mystical significance of the number 7 in Jewish numerology. This leads into a wonderfully exuberant, dance-like setting of Psalm 100 (Make a joyful noise unto the Lord), propelled by its 7/4 meter (and another reference to 7). The beautifully lyrical setting of Psalm 23 (The Lord is my shepherd) for the treble solo, which opens the second section, is based on music from the abandoned *Skin of Our Teeth*. The sopranos and altos carry on the psalm text, but are interrupted by ferocious music from the basses and tenors, with text from Psalm 2. This is a prologue that was cut from *West Side Story*, and bears some resemblance to music from Berlioz's *Romeo et Juliette*, representing the enmity between the Capulets and the Montagues. The upper voices take up Psalm 23 again, "blissfully unaware of the threat" in Bernstein's directions, while the basses and tenors mutter ominously underneath. At the end of the movement, the Psalm 2 music is still heard in the instrumental accompaniment, like an ever-present threat of violence. The final movement begins with an instrumental introduction that reprises the opening melody of the piece, which dissolves into a gently flowing setting of Psalm 131 (Lord, my heart is not haughty,) again in an uneven rhythm (10/4). The work ends with a moving a cappella coda from Psalm 133 (How good it is for brethren to dwell in unity,) a sentiment which is both equally true and equally elusive today.

– Michael Moore

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The Texts

Britten: Rejoice in the Lamb

Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues;
Give the glory to the Lord,
And the Lamb.
Nations, and languages,
And every Creature
In which is the breath of Life.
Let man and beast appear before
him,
And magnify his name together.

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter,
Bind a Leopard to the altar
And consecrate his spear to the Lord.
Let Ishmael dedicate a Tyger,
And give praise for the liberty
In which the Lord has let him at large.
Let Balaam appear with an Ass,
And bless the Lord his people
And his creatures for a reward eternal.
Let Daniel come forth with a Lion,
And praise God with all his might
Through faith in Christ Jesus.
Let Ithamar minister with a Chamois,
And bless the name of Him
That cloatheth the naked.
Let Jakim with the Satyr
Bless God in the dance,
Let David bless with the Bear
The beginning of victory to the Lord,
To the Lord the perfection of
excellence.

Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist
inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly
harp
In sweetness magnificent and mighty.

For I will consider my Cat Jeoffry.
For he is the servant of the Living
God.
Duly and daily serving him.
For at the first glance
Of the glory of God in the East
He worships in his way.
For this is done by wreathing his body

Seven times round with elegant
quickness.
For he knows that God is his Saviour.
For God has bless'd him
In the variety of his movements.
For there is nothing sweeter
Than his peace when at rest.
For I am possessed of a cat,
Surpassing in beauty,
From whom I take occasion
To bless Almighty God.

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For – this is a true case –
Cat takes female mouse –
Male mouse will not depart,
but stands threat'ning and daring.
...If you will let her go,
I will engage you,
As prodigious a creature as you are.
For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For the Mouse is of
An hospitable disposition.

For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers have their angels,
Even the words of God's Creation.
For the flower glorifies God
And the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For the flowers are peculiarly
The poetry of Christ.

For I am under the same accusation
With my Savior –
For they said,
He is besides himself.
For the officers of the peace
Are at variance with me,
And the watchman smites me
With his staff.
For Silly fellow, Silly fellow!
Is against me,
And belongeth neither to me
Nor to my family.

For I am in twelve Hardships,
But he that was born of a virgin
Shall deliver me out of all,
Shall deliver me out of all.

For H is a spirit
And therefore he is God.

For K is king
And therefore he is God.

For L is love
And therefore he is God.

For M is musick
And therefore he is God.

For the instruments are by their
rhimes,

For the shawm rhimes are lawn fawn
and the like.

For the shawm rhimes are moon boon
and the like.

For the harp rhimes are sing ring and
the like.

For the harp rhimes are ring string
and the like.

For the cymbal rhimes are bell well
and the like.

For the cymbal rhimes are toll soul
and the like.

For the flute rhimes are tooth youth
and the like.

For the flute rhimes are suit mute and
the like.

For the bassoon rhimes are pass
class and the like.

Howells: Like as the Hart

Like as the hart desireth the
waterbrooks,
so longeth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul is athirst for God, yea, even
for the living God.

When shall I come to appear before
the presence of God?

For the dulcimer rhimes are grace
place beat heat and the like.
For the clarinet rhimes are clean seen
and the like.

For the trumpet rhimes are sound
bound soar more and the like.

For the Trumpet of God is a blessed
intelligence

And so are all the instruments in
Heav'n.

For God the Father Almighty plays
upon the Harp

Of stupendous magnitude and
melody.

For at that time malignity ceases
And the devils themselves are at
peace.

For this time is perceptible to man
By a remarkable stillness and serenity
of soul.

Hallelujah from the heart of God,

And from the hand of the artist
inimitable,

And from the echo of the heavenly
harp

In sweetness magnificent and mighty.

– Christopher Smart
text from *Rejoice in the Lamb*,
a song from *Bedlam*
W. F. Stead (1939)

My tears have been my meat day and
night,
while they daily say unto me, Where is
now thy God?

Psalm 42:1–3
Book of Common Prayer (1928)

Franck: Psalme 150

Alleluia.

Louez le Dieu, caché dans ses saints
tabernacles,

Louez le Dieu qui règne en son
immensité.

Louez-le dans sa force et ses
puissants miracles.

Louez-le dans sa gloire et dans sa
majesté.

Louez-le par la voix des bruyantes
trompettes.

Que pour lui le nébel se marie au
kinnor.

Louez-le dans vos fêtes au son du
tambourin,
sur l'orgue et sur le luth, chantez,
chantez encor.

Que pour lui dans vos mains résonne
la cymbale
aux accords éclatants et joyeux.

Que tout souffle vivant, tout soupir qui
s'exhale dise:
louange à Lui, louange au Roi des
cieux.

Alleluia.

Praise the Lord.

Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.

Praise him for his acts of power;
praise him for his surpassing
greatness.

Praise him with the sounding of the
trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,

praise him with timbrel and dancing,
praise him with the strings and pipe,

praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.

Let everything that has breath praise
the Lord.

Praise the Lord.

– Psalm 150

New International Version

Brahms: Geistliches Lied

Laß dich nur nichts nicht dauren mit
Trauren,
sei stille, wie Gott es fügt,
so sei vergnügt mein Wille!

Was willst du heute sorgen auf
morgen?

Der Eine steht allem für,
der gibt auch dir das Deine.

Sei nur in allem Handel ohn Wandel,
steh feste, was Gott beschleußt,
das ist und heißt das Beste.

Amen.

Do not be sorrowful or regretful;
Be calm, as God has ordained,
and thus my will shall be content.

What do you want to worry about from
day to day?

There is One who stands above all
who gives you, too, what is yours.

Only be steadfast in all you do,
stand firm; what God has decided,
that is and must be the best.

Amen

– Paul Fleming

Bernstein: Chichester Psalms

Movement 1

Psalm 108:2

Urah, hanevel, v'chinor urah!
A-irah shahar!

Psalm 100

Hari'u l'Adonai kol ha'arets.
Iv'du et Adonai b'simha
Bo'u l'fanav bir'nanah.
D'u ki Adonai Hu Elohim.
Hu asanu v'lo anahnu amo.
V'tson mar'ito.
Bo'u sh'arav b'todah,
Hatseirotav bit'hilah,
Hodu lo, bar'chu sh'mo.
Ki tov Adonai, l'olam has'do,
V'ad dor vador emunato.

Movement 2

Psalm 23:1-4

Adonai ro-i, lo ehsar.
Bin'ot deshe yarbitseini,
Al mei m'nuhot y'nahaleini,
Naf'shi y'shovev,
Yan'heini b'ma'aglei tsedek,
L'ma'an sh'mo.
Gam ki eilech
B'gei tsalmavet,
Lo ira ra,
Ki Atah imadi.
Shiv't'cha umishan'techa
Hemah y'nahamuni.

Awake, psaltery and harp!
I will rouse the dawn!

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all
ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before His presence with
singing.
Know that the Lord, He is God.
He made us, and we are his.
We are His people and the sheep of
His pasture.
Come unto His gates with
thanksgiving,
And into His court with praise.
Be thankful unto Him and bless His
name.
the Lord is good, His mercy
everlasting
And His truth endureth to all
generations.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not
want.
He maketh me to lie down in green
pastures,
He leadeth me beside the still waters,
He restoreth my soul,
He leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness,
For His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk
Through the valley of the shadow of
death,
I will fear no evil,
For Thou art with me.
Thy rod and Thy staff
They comfort me.

Psalm 2:1-4

Lamah rag'shu goyim
Ul'umim yeh'gu rik?
Yit'yats'vu malchei erets,
V'roznim nos'du yahad
Al Adonai v'al m'shiho.
N'natkah et mos'roteimo,
V'nashlichah mimenu avoteimo.
Yoshev bashamayim
Yis'hak, Adonai
Yil'ag lamo!

Why do the nations rage,
And the people imagine a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together
Against the Lord and against His
anointed.
Saying, let us break their bands
asunder,
And cast away their cords from us.
He that sitteth in the heavens
Shall laugh, and the Lord
Shall have them in derision!

Psalm 23:5-6

Ta'aroch l'fanai shulchan
Neged tsor'rai
Dishanta vashemen roshi
Cosi r'vayah.
Ach tov vahesed
Yird'funi kol y'mei hayai
V'shav'ti b'veit Adonai
L'orech yamim.

Thou preparest a table before me
In the presence of my enemies,
Thou anointest my head with oil,
My cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy
Shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the
Lord forever.

Movement 3

Psalm 131

Adonai, Adonai,
Lo gavah libi,
V'lo ramu einai,
V'lo hilachti
Big'dolot uv'niflaot
Mimeni.
Im lo shiviti
V'domam'ti,
Naf'shi k'gamul alei imo,
Kagamul alai naf'shi.
Yahel Yis'rael el Adonai
Me'atah v'ad olam.

Lord, Lord,
My heart is not haughty,
Nor mine eyes lofty,
Neither do I exercise myself
In great matters or in things
Too wonderful for me to understand.
Surely I have calmed
And quieted myself,
As a child that is weaned of his
mother,
My soul is even as a weaned child.
Let Israel hope in the Lord
From henceforth and forever.

Psalm 133:1

Hineh mah tov,
Umah nayim,
Shevet ahim
Gam yahad.

Behold how good
And pleasant it is,
For brethren to dwell
Together in unity.

The Performers

Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia

Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia has a rich and storied history as one of the nation's premiere choral ensembles and a vital part of Philadelphia's cultural environment. Founded in 1874 as an eight-voice male chorus and now in its 150th season, MCP is led by its 14th Artistic Director & Conductor Dominick DiOrio. MCP welcomes all gender identities and includes over 120 singers of all ages and backgrounds, drawing from seven counties in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Many singers have degrees in music, work in musical professions, or study voice privately, and all have previous choral experience.

From its earliest days, MCP has been dedicated to artistic excellence by performing both the significant works of the past and the music of today at the highest levels. The Chorus has enjoyed a long performing relationship with the Philadelphia Orchestra, beginning with a 1903 performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and continuing with more than 100 concert appearances. MCP's discography includes more than 20 commercial recordings (including the Grammy-nominated 1985 recording of Persichetti's *Winter Cantata*). Its latest recording, *Fetter & Air*, was released in January 2022 on the Navona Records label.

MCP has had a long and significant commitment to commissioning new music, presenting 70 commissioned works over the past 30 years alone, including pieces by Pulitzer Prize winning composers David Lang, Jennifer Higdon and Caroline Shaw. Many of these works have entered the repertoire with multiple subsequent performances. Five have been commercially recorded, and our 2014 commission, Julia Wolfe's *Anthracite Fields*, was awarded the 2015 Pulitzer Prize in Music.

Recognizing that choral music is a living art, MCP has pushed the boundaries of traditional performances by integrating elements such as dance, choreography, videography, and audience movement into our programs to create an immersive experience. The Philadelphia Inquirer wrote about *Turbine*, a site-responsive work performed at the Philadelphia Water Works with a score by Byron Au Yong and choreography by Leah Stein, that "...it's hard to imagine that anyone walked away from Turbine unchanged." This imaginative programming has won MCP two ASCAP/Chorus America Awards for Adventurous Programming in 1992 and 2013. When MCP was honored to host the 2019 Chorus America Annual Conference, it welcomed the attendees with the Philadelphia premiere of Tan Dun's evocative soundscape *Water Passion According to St. Matthew*. MCP has regularly received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, including recent grants to support Andrea Clearfield's *Beyond the Binary* and the March 2022 program *Our Story Is Not Over*.

In addition to programming our own concert season, MCP serves as a musical incubator for early career professional singers and conductors through our section leader and apprenticeship programs. MCP develops programs and activities that leverage each individual's skill set as they continue to hone their craft. Many MCP singers and conductors have gone on to major professional careers, including singers Eric Owens, Tamara Matthews and Laura Heimes.

Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia

(singing in this concert)

Soprano

Maryl Apadula
Brooke Bartolome
Barbara Berry
Anna Bochenek
Rachel Castro-
Diephouse
Lauren Cohen*
Courtney Comar
Shiloh Cooper
Lauren Darkes
Amanda Davis
Bailey Dean
Kelsey DeJesus
Robertta Fischer
Caroline Fitch
Teri Gemberling-
Johnson
Lauren Gilmore
Miriam Goldberg
Lindsey Graham
Elizabeth Hohwieler
Anna Juliar
Lynn Kirby
Maya Kociba
Kelsey Lewis*
Carolyn Linarello
Rachael Lipson*
Emily Grace Kane
Fay Manicke
Juliana Melara
Ilene Miller
Leila Naitove
Andrea Nestman
Lynn Petroski
Gabrielle Rinkus
Robertta Rote
Sophia Santiago*
Marie Tavianini
Laura Temoyan
Jessica Vega
Kathryn Wadsworth
Deanda Wilson
Lisa Wooldridge

Alto

Ariel Alvarado
Rachele Armstrong
Elizabeth Beavers
Shahara Benson
Julia Bokunewicz*
Jenna Camacho
Christine Chaapel
Hannah Davis
Erin Donovan
Robin Eaton
Martha Fried-Cassorla
Shannon Foley
Rebecca Fülöp
Elisabeth Galassini-
Oothuizen
Tammara Gary
Anne Gold
Katherine Haas
Jennifer Hay
Mari Kawakatsu
Sharon Kempin
Deborah L. Laird
Allison Levine
Susan Lin
Priscilla Lo
Madeleine Mackin*
Heather Mitchell
Florence Moyer
Margaret Oravetz
Shannon Rafferty
Sharon Rhinesmith*
Rebecca Roberts
Julia Scott
Jennifer Sheffield
Maria Sisto
Heather Wismer

Tenor

Louis Bartholomew
Andrew Beck
Will Budreau
Michael Cabán
Christopher Carriero
Kyle Conner

Mark Davidson
Carl Ellinwood Jr.*
Rich Galassini
Campbell Holder
Frank Kanther
David Kaye
Jim Light
John Luttenberger
Ian Martin
Joshua Matthias-Long
Daniel Ojserkis
Nicholas Petroski
Mark Pinzur
Roy Schmidt
Michael Robert Smith*
Eric Rodriguez-Lopez
Jeffrey Schwartz
Kyle Sheehan
D'quan Tyson*
Steve Ullman
Zach Zaitlin

Bass

Evan Birnholz
Michael Carson
Mark Cordova
Tyler Cudia
Lucas DeJesus**
Brendan Fullam
Steven Glasser
Kreg Godfrey
Jon Kochavi
John Kohlhas
James Lamb
Martin Levitas
Jacob Lynn-Palevsky
Sean Martin
Michael Moore
Erik Potteiger*
Jeffrey Pufahl
Daniel Rosen
Cleveland Rea
Daniel Simpson
Thomas Sutton
William Thomas
Richard Tolsma
Alexander Varghese

* Section Leaders

** Senior Vocal Artist & Section Leader

Dominick DiOrio, Artistic Director & Conductor

Dominick DiOrio is an imaginative, enthusiastic, and energetic conductor and composer who has won widespread acclaim for his contributions to American music. Whether leading an ensemble or crafting a new score, he brings equal passion and skill to his work in vocal and instrumental music, and he has been recognized with The American Prizes in both Choral Composition (2014) and Choral Performance (2019, with NOTUS).

In July 2020, he became the 14th Artistic Director & Conductor of the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia, one of the most historic choral organizations in the US, now celebrating its 150th season. As part of those duties, he has had the honor of preparing the Mendelssohn Chorus to sing "The Glorious Sound of Christmas" concerts with The Philadelphia Orchestra and conductors Bramwell Tovey in 2021 and William Eddins in 2022 & 2023, and *Carmina Burana* with Fabio Luisi in 2024.



Synthia Steinman

DiOrio believes that singing together brings people joy. He has conducted ensembles around the world, from the Houston Chamber Choir and Choral Arts Initiative in the USA to Allmänna Sängen and Ars Veritas abroad. A strong advocate for new music, he has premiered over 50 original works, and he has collaborated with many of today's leading composers including Paquito D'Rivera, Melissa Dunphy, Marques L.A. Garrett, Texu Kim, Han Lash, Caroline Shaw, and Christopher Theofanidis. Committed to diversity and inclusion in artistic programming, DiOrio proudly programs works that reflect the gender, ethnic, and racial diversity of our world, and he works to amplify the voices of composers from underrepresented populations.

His love for contemporary repertoire spans the gamut of path-breaking works from the 20th and 21st centuries, including James MacMillan's *Seven Last Words*, Steve Reich's *The Desert Music*, Alfred Schnittke's *Requiem*, David Lang's *the little match girl passion*, Sarah Kirkland Snider's *Mass for the Endangered*, Sofia Gubaidulina's *Sonnengesang*, Joel Thompson's *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*, and Krzysztof Penderecki's *St. Luke Passion*, which he had the honor of preparing for the composer in November of 2017. Equally at home with music of earlier eras, he has also conducted choral-orchestral performances of Bach's *Magnificat*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Haydn's *Mass in Time of War*, W. A. Mozart's "Great" *C Minor Mass*, Mendelssohn's *Psalm 42*, Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs*, Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, and Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, among others.

As a composer, DiOrio has been hailed for a keenly intelligent, evocative style, which shows "a tour de force of inventive thinking and unique colour" (Gramophone). His music has been praised for its "depth of vision, mastery of compositional technique, and unique style" (The American Prize). His over 50 published works have appeared at major venues around the world including the Sydney Opera House, Lincoln Center, and Carnegie Hall — as well as in Austria, Canada, China, Finland, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, South Korea, Sweden, and the UK. He

composes for musicians of all ages and experiences, and his recent commissioning partners include the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, the Children's Chorus of Washington, the Worcester Youth Orchestras, the Cincinnati Vocal Arts Ensemble & Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, The Choral Arts Society of Washington, "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, and many institutions of higher education, including Macalester, Oberlin, Princeton, Smith, and the Universities of Michigan, Oregon, and Illinois.

DiOrio believes in the power of education to change lives and impact our communities. Since 2012, he has been a member of the choral conducting faculty at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he serves as Professor of Music and leads the new music vocal ensemble NOTUS. He has elevated NOTUS to acclaim through commissions, recording projects, and invited performances at regional and national conferences of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and the National Collegiate Choral Organization (NCCO). NOTUS was also one of only 24 choirs in the world selected by competitive audition to perform at the 12th World Symposium on Choral Music in Auckland, New Zealand, before it was cancelled due to the pandemic. NOTUS' critically acclaimed debut album, *Of Radiance & Refraction*, featured the world premiere recordings of five commissioned works. Released in December 2022 with Navona Records, NOTUS' second album, *What Is Ours: Music for an America in Progress* features English horn artist Roger Roe and eclectic new music composed by Reena Esmail, Moira Smiley, Carlos Cordero, Joel Thompson, Andrea Ramsey, John William Griffith II, Leigha Amick, and DiOrio.

DiOrio is deeply committed to strengthening the profession by empowering others, and he recently completed a four-year term as president & president-elect of the National Collegiate Choral Organization (2018-2022). For his leadership during the pandemic, he was honored with NCCO's inaugural Distinguished Service Award, presented at the NCCO10 National Conference at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia.

DiOrio has also previously served as treasurer of NCCO (2014-2017), as chair of ACDA's Composition Initiatives Standing Committee (2016-2020), and as a member of the board of directors for Chorus America (2015-2018). He holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the Yale School of Music, as well as the MMA and MM in conducting from Yale and the BM in composition summa cum laude from Ithaca College. He proudly credits his mentors Janet Galván, Simon Carrington, and Marguerite Brooks for serving as model leaders and for making him the person that he is today.

Andrew Kotylo, organ

Andrew Kotylo has been Director of Music and Organist at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Chestnut Hill since 2019. Previously he had served as Organist/Choirmaster at the Basilica of St. Peter in Columbia, South Carolina and Associate Director of Music at the historic Trinity Episcopal Church on the Green in New Haven, Connecticut.

A native of Binghamton, New York, Andy holds degrees from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music where he studied organ with Christopher Young

and Larry Smith and choral conducting with William Jon Gray. Other teachers have included Carolyn Albaugh, the late Searle Wright, Jonathan Biggers, and John Schwandt. His doctoral dissertation concerns the life and organ works of Searle Wright, for which he received a citation of excellence from Indiana University.

Kotylo has concertized throughout the United States and in England, with performances at conventions of the American Guild of Organists and Association of Anglican Musicians that have earned critical acclaim. A top prize-winner in numerous competitions, including the American Guild of Organists' National Young Artists Competition and Poister Competition, his performances have been featured several times on American Public Media's *Pipedreams*. He is also active as a private teacher, competition adjudicator, and workshop clinician.



Erik Potteiger, percussion

Erik Potteiger is a professional singer, percussionist, pianist, and composer currently based in Philadelphia, PA. He received his Bachelor of Music in Choral Music Education and Vocal Performance from the University of South Carolina. Erik has performed vocally as a bass in ensembles and solo settings across a plethora of cities and states in the U.S., as well as eight countries across three continents. A few of the professional vocal ensembles Erik has worked with include the Voces8 US Scholars Ensemble (London, England), The Cathedral Singers (Columbia, SC), The Cecilia Ensemble (Augusta, GA), Choral Arts Philadelphia, CORO Vocal Artists (Des Moines, IA), Coro Vocati (Atlanta, GA), Philadelphia Symphonic Choir, The Princeton Singers (Princeton, NJ), The Red Shift (Baton Rouge, LA), Tenão (Philadelphia, PA), Vox Fidelis (Bordentown, NJ), The Washington Chorus (Washington, D.C.) and Women's Sacred Music Project (Lafayette Hill, PA). He is also a founding member of Convoco, a professional choral ensemble based in the Philadelphia region.



An active church musician, Erik appears frequently as both a cantor and staff singer in the Tri-state area. His prior church residencies include St. Thomas 5th Ave (New York, NY), Christ Church Cathedral (Dublin, Ireland), Durham Cathedral (Durham, England), Exeter Cathedral (Exeter, England), Southwark Cathedral (London, England), St. Albans Cathedral (St. Albans, England) and St. Patrick's Cathedral (Dublin, Ireland).

Erik has musically collaborated with instrumental ensembles nationally, including The Philadelphia Orchestra, Brandywine Brass, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Germantown Oratorio Orchestra, North Carolina Baroque Orchestra, Philadelphia Bach Collegium, Philadelphia Brass, Philharmonia Orchestra of New York, Quartetto Ogrigado, Reading Symphony Orchestra and members of Tempesta di Mare. Away from his multi-genre performing engagements he enjoys teaching, video and audio editing, producing, recording, as well as creating virtual ensemble content and practice tracks.

Megan Hoeflicker, harp

Harpist Megan Hoeflicker has performed as a soloist and as a member of orchestras and chamber groups throughout the United States and Canada. Hoeflicker has been a frequent guest artist, teacher, and adjudicator at music festivals throughout the country including Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, the Richmond Summer Harp Institute, LMTA's Harp Rally, the Southwest Harp Festival, and the Princeton Harp Festival. In 2023 she was the artistic director of the Virginia Harp Center Festival.



In 2014 Hoeflicker completed her Doctorate in Harp Performance from Indiana University, earning a double minor in Music Education and Arts Administration. While at Indiana University, she studied with Distinguished Professor of Music Susann McDonald. She currently maintains a private studio at the Virginia Harp Center located in Haddonfield, New Jersey and is enjoying performing throughout the area.

Heather Mitchell, Associate Conductor & Director of Operations

Heather Mitchell serves as the Associate Conductor and Director of Operations for the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia, the Assistant Director of Choral Activities at The College of New Jersey, the Artistic Director of the Hopewell Valley Chorus, and previously served as Conductor-in-Residence at Manhattan Concert Productions. As a choral singer, she currently performs regularly with the Philadelphia Orchestra Symphonic Chorus and has sung with many professional groups all over the country including the Manhattan Chorale, Manhattan Choral Ensemble, Coro, Tucson Chamber Artists, and the Tucson Symphony Orchestra.



Specializing in unknown repertoire, Heather founded the professional vocal ensemble FIVE LINES to perform such works and bring attention to pieces by major composers that have been overlooked. In the spirit of FIVE LINES, she made her Carnegie Hall debut, conducting the vastly unfamiliar Schumann *Requiem, Op. 148*.

As a Bach scholar, Heather was the author of "A Reconsideration of the Performance of the Chorales in J.S. Bach's *Passio secundum Johannem*, BWV 245," a featured article in the *Choral Journal*, published by the American Choral Directors Association.

She has been sought out as a clinician and adjudicator for many major choral festivals including the Arizona Music Educators Association, All American Music Festival, OrlandoFest, and more across the states of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Arizona. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral and orchestral conducting from the University of Arizona and a Master of Music a degree in choral conducting from Saint Cloud State University, in Minnesota.

Elizabeth Beavers, Senior Conducting Apprentice

Elizabeth Beavers is pleased to be a part of the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia after over eight years of choral directing in schools, the last six of which she spent in South Korea as a Fulbright Grantee and teacher at Asia Pacific International and the International School of Busan. There she made music with Korean people and students from around the world. Over her summers, she has been chosen to conduct with Choral Chameleon in NYC, the University of Michigan Choral Conducting Symposium, and the Eastman Complete Conductor Summer Intensive. Elizabeth is a current Master's in Choral Conducting



student of Dr. Paul Rardin's at Temple University. She is also a proud graduate of the University of Maryland, where she received degrees in Vocal Performance and Music Education with a piano concentration. She is thrilled to be a John P. Leonard Conducting Apprentice for the Mendelssohn Chorus's 150th season.

Ariel Alvarado, Conducting Apprentice

Ariel Antoinette Alvarado is a conductor, vocalist, and scholar-artist dedicated to restorative justice and empowerment through culturally responsive pedagogy. Having grown up with little representation of her identities, Ariel's work focuses on centering the voices of the marginalized and making connections across cultures. Ms. Alvarado is the Inaugural Daniel L. Ridout Teaching Fellow of the Wilmington Children's Chorus in Wilmington, Delaware and a member of the Delaware Academy of Vocal Arts flagship ensemble 'Elevation'. She earned a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from The Ohio State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Spelman College in Atlanta, GA. Ms. Alvarado makes meaning with the world around her through music and is journeying to leave the world a better place than she found it.



Bailey Dean, Conducting Apprentice

Bailey Dean recently completed a Master of Music in choral conducting at Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia, and she holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. During her time in Portland, Bailey worked as a conductor, singer, arranger, and music teacher. She enjoys working with a wide range of ensembles, and strives to form lasting relationships with her colleagues, mentors, and students. At Georgia State, Bailey served as a graduate assistant to the choral area. She worked in the office, helping to manage ensembles and plan events, and as a choral scholar at Holy Trinity Parish in Decatur, Georgia. Bailey is very excited about living in Philadelphia, where she is the music teacher at Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School. She is overjoyed to join the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia as a Conducting Apprentice for the 2023-2024 season.



Ilene Miller, soprano

Ilene Miller is a former Director of Public Relations/Advertising for Roborn, Inc., the mirrored cabinet brand at Kohler Company. She is also a former Public Relations Director at Play on, Philly!. She has volunteered and directed PR programs for many non-profit organizations as well as directed music education programs in public schools. She has been singing since childhood and has performed opera and cabaret. Ilene has been a proud member of Mendelssohn Chorus since 2006. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and is on the Board of Directors of Settlement Music School-Wynnefield Branch.



Jenna Camacho, alto

Alto Jenna Camacho is so excited to sing with the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia for her first season! Jenna is a passionate music educator and performer in the Philadelphia region. She received her bachelors degree in music education from Temple University with a concentration in voice. Jenna sings with surrounding community choirs in the Philadelphia/South Jersey regions and loves giving her musical inspiration back to her students. Jenna is also heavily involved in the A Cappella community and takes pride in workshopping groups all over the east coast!



Eric Rodríguez-López, tenor

Eric M. Rodríguez-López, tenor, is an avid performer in the greater Philadelphia area. His repertoire has ranged from beloved early choral music to compelling contemporary works by present day composers. He has actively performed in a variety of choral ensembles both as an amateur and professionally, including Penn Collegium Musicum, the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Orchestra's Symphonic Choir. In addition, he serves as a staff singer at Saint Peter's Episcopal Church in Old City, Philadelphia. As a soloist, he has had the pleasure of doing recital work and staged productions of opera scenes with the group IndependentSounds, directed by South African soprano Angela Gilbert. Some of his notable roles include Don Curzio in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Danilo Danilovitsch in *The Merry Widow*, and Alfredo Germont in *La traviata*.



Eric is originally from Ponce, Puerto Rico. He has a bachelor's degree in biomedical sciences from the University of Puerto Rico at Ponce, and is pursuing a doctoral degree in Immunology from the University of Pennsylvania.

Alex Varghese, bass

Alex Varghese holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Westminster Choir College. His opera repertoire includes various lead Basso roles and he has performed as a recitalist in the United States and Europe. An avid chorister, Alex has also performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Houston Symphony, among others. He has been a member of the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia since 2019. Professionally, Alex is a trial attorney with the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender where he represents indigent defendants accused of felonies ranging from property crimes to homicide.



Maya Kociba, soprano

Maya Kociba (she/they) is originally from Cincinnati, OH where she attended CCM. During her time there, she was privileged enough to work with musicians in the Cincinnati May Festival Chorus, perform at Cincinnati Music Hall, and travel to Kecskemét, Hungary for a two-week intensive in music pedagogy at the Kodály Institute. She has been a private piano teacher for over 10 years, and has since added voice and ukulele students to her studio. She now lives in Southern New Jersey, where she is an elementary general music teacher in the Cherry Hill Public Schools. This is her first year singing with the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia, and will not be her last. She would like to thank her endlessly supportive husband, protective pup, and insatiable cat.



Origen Hungerford, treble

Origen is a sixth grader at Julia R. Masterman School in Philadelphia. He is proud to be a chorister at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and enjoys cooking, playing classical guitar, performing improv comedy, board games, camping, and swimming.



Barbara Berry, soprano

Soprano Barbara Berry's career in opera and oratorio has spanned two continents. After studying vocal performance at the University of Colorado, Barbara performed as soloist in concert at the Aspen music festival in Colorado and at the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria. Barbara accepted a position as the lead lyric soprano with the Trier opera (Germany). She has appeared in a number of leading roles to critical acclaim, including Konstanze in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Musetta in Puccini's *La Boheme*, Susanna in Hindemith's *Sancta Susanna*, Gretel in Humperdinck's *Hansel und Gretel*, Baby Doe in Moore's *Ballad of Baby Doe*, and Elsalil in Meyerwitz's *Die Winterballade*.



After returning to the United States Barbara has performed as soloist in concert in Mozart's *Requiem* with the Polish National Orchestra, Canteloube's *Chants d'Auvergne* with the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra, and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* and Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Mendelssohn Chorus. She has cherished the responsibility of raising her three children and for the past two decades Barbara has also pursued a self-guided art education, taking courses and workshops with esteemed artists throughout the country. Her contemporary impressionist paintings have received awards at national and international juried competitions and art shows.

Starting May 5th Barbara will be painting for five days in one of the longest running and most popular outdoor painting events in the country, the Wayne Art Center Plein Air Festival.

Shannon Rafferty, alto

Mezzo-soprano Shannon Rafferty is thrilled to sing with the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia for her second season! A native of the Philadelphia region, Shannon holds degrees from local West Chester University (BM Flute Performance and Music History) and the University of Pennsylvania (MLA). Shannon is no stranger to the stage, being an active flute player, singer, and collaborative artist in the Philadelphia region and previously in the Washington DC and Savannah, GA metropolitan areas. Some of her most recent appearances have been with the Philly Fringe Festival, Delaware Valley Opera Company, First State Flute Choir, Pennsylvania Flute Choir, the Marian Anderson Historical Society, Gemini Voices, the Brandywine Chamber Orchestra, and innumerable solo engagements. She has also performed abroad as a soloist and ensemble member across Latin America, Europe, and Asia.



Shannon is a 6-year veteran of the United States Army, having served as a flute player and training officer throughout the United States and abroad, including a combat tour of Afghanistan. When she's not performing, Shannon is working for

the newly merged Philadelphia Orchestra Association/Kimmel Cultural Campus “Ensemble Arts”, traveling all over the world, and fussing over her rescue shiba inu, Luna.

Ian Martin, tenor

Ian Martin is a classically trained tenor vocalist and music teacher. An alumnus of Philadelphia’s High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA), he graduated *magna cum laude* from West Chester University, receiving his Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education with a concentration in voice. During Ian’s time at West Chester, he earned the Hilary H. Parry Memorial Junior Voice Scholarship, and was an honors soloist for the WCU Symphony Orchestra. He was also a member of the Concert Choir, and the WCU Opera Theater Company, having performed in Poulenc’s *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, as well as Penhorwood’s *Too Many Sopranos*, and Caccini’s *La liberazione di Ruggiero*.



Ian has continued to perform as a freelance singer (having sung background for artists like Sarah Brightman and Bobby McFerrin), and as a member of the Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia (since 2022). When he’s not performing, he’s in the classroom, teaching general music to children from kindergarten to eighth grade, and directing his own elementary school chorus.

Jacob Lynn-Palevsky, baritone

Baritone Jacob Lynn-Palevsky graduated from Colorado College in 2023, where he majored in biology and minored in music, winning the Marie Clough Gillis Award for Excellence in Vocal Music. He plans to pursue graduate studies in biology after some time off. A resident of Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, Jacob began serious vocal studies while in high school, working with Marvin Keenze. He continued vocal work during college, studying with Jennifer DeDominici and as part of the Summer Vocal Arts Institute in Colorado Springs. He is thrilled to be part of the Mendelssohn Chorus.





Come visit Mendelssohn Chorus in our new administrative space at the Bok Building. We will have our archival exhibit on display, light refreshments, and musical performances!

Friday, May 4th, 2024
5pm-9pm
Bok Building
1901 S. 9th Street, Space 609
Philadelphia, PA 19148

Free and family-friendly!

