San Francisco Choral Society

Robert Geary, Artistic Director

Dimensions of Sound

Meet the artistc below:

Jessica House Steward, soprano
Zach Ullery, organ
Keisuke Nakagoshi, piano

Arvo Pärt

Berliner Messe

Louis Vierne

Messe solennelle

with works by Lili and Nadia Boulanger

Saturday · November 21 · 7pm
Sunday · November 22 · 4pm

Calvary Presbyterian Church

Tickets on sale!

cityboxoffice.com

Meet our Guest Artists



Jessica House Steward
Soprano



Keisuke Nakagoshi
Piano



Zach Ullery
Organ



Soprano **Jessica House Steward** has performed throughout the United States and internationally in opera, concert, and recital. She has appeared as soprano soloist in numerous oratorio and concert works, including J. S. Bach's Mass in B Minor, Pergolesi's Stabat Mater, Handel's Messiah, Mozart's Great Mass in C Minor, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, and Samuel Barber's Knoxville: Summer of 1915, among others. Equally at home in contemporary repertoire, Ms. House Steward made her Carnegie Hall debut performing the world premiere of two song cycles by New York–based composer Gerald Busby. In recital, she most notably collaborated for three years with renowned pianist John Wustman as part of his Schubert Song Recital Series. She has also presented recitals at the Neues Residenz and St. Mark's Kapelle in Salzburg, Austria.

Among her many honors, Ms. House Steward has received performance awards from the National Society of Arts and Letters, the National Opera Association, the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the Leni Fe Bland Foundation, and the Theodore Presser Foundation. She is a member of the Volti ensemble and serves as Executive Director of the San Francisco Choral Society.

Pianist **Keisuke Nakagoshi** studied with Emanuel Ax, Gilbert Kalish, Menahem Pressler, and Paul Hersh and has performed on concert stages across the US, including the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and the Hollywood Bowl. In 2009, Mr. Nakagoshi and Swiss pianist Eva-Maria Zimmermann formed the piano duo ZOFO, and their first CD was nominated for a Grammy award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble. He made his solo debut with the San Francisco Symphony performing Ingvar Lidholm's Poesis with Herbert Blomstedt conducting. Mr. Nakagoshi is currently Pianist-in-Residence at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and serves as pianist on the production team for Opera Parallèle and West Edge Opera, and he is also a member of San Francisco Contemporary Music Players.





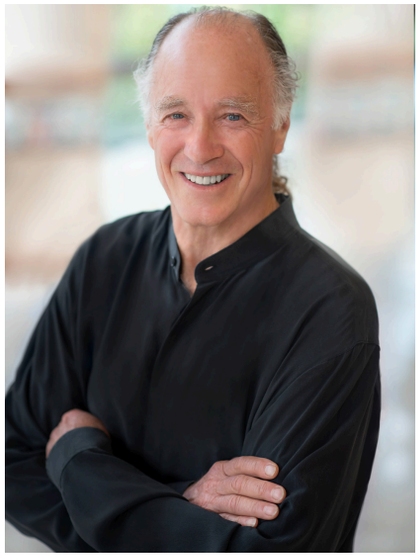
Zach Ullery is an accomplished choral conductor, pastoral musician, music educator, arts administrator, and organist. For 16 years, he served as canon precentor and director of music at The American Cathedral in Paris, where he oversaw an extensive and multifaceted music program. In this role, he directed the Cathedral Choir, Youth Choir, and Children's Choir, contributing significantly to the cathedral's cultural and liturgical life.

Mr. Ullery also held the position of conductor and artistic director of The Paris Choral Society, an auditioned ensemble of approximately 100 singers. Under his leadership, the choir presented most of the major choral-orchestral works in prominent Parisian churches and cathedrals, performing in collaboration with The Paris Symphonic Orchestra and Les Enfants d'Apollon. During his tenure, he prioritized expanding the ensemble's repertoire to include works by living and underrepresented composers, with a particular focus on lesser-known or rarely performed compositions.

He earned bachelor's and master's degrees in choral conducting and music education from the University of Kentucky, where he studied conducting with Dr. Jefferson Johnson and Dr. Lori Hetzel, and organ with Dr. Schuyler Robinson. He pursued further professional development at the Choral Institute at Oxford (United Kingdom), studying under James Jordan and James Whitbourn. In addition, he completed advanced coursework in Orff-Schulwerk, a developmental approach to music education rooted in the integration of music, movement, speech, and drama.

Outside of his professional engagements, Mr. Ullery enjoys hiking and exploring the natural landscapes of the Bay Area with his partner, Dr. Joy-Leilani Garbutt.

ROBERT GEARY, Artistic Director of the San Francisco Choral Society since 1995, is also the founding Artistic Director of Volti, and is now Artistic Director emeritus of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir and the Golden Gate International Choral Festival. His multi-dimensional commitment to the choral arts for five decades has led him and his choirs to national and international prominence. Geary has conducted first performances of nearly 200 compositions in dozens of countries and his choirs have been recognized in the United States by invitations to perform for the national conferences of Chorus America, the American Choral Directors Association, the Organization of American Kodaly Educators, and the College Music Society.



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He has led the San Francisco Choral Society to a robust position as a keeper of the traditional repertoire and an innovative force in the commissioning and performance of new works for chorus and orchestra. The Choral Society has commissioned numerous works, most recently: Three Portraits: Voices of Chinese-American Women of Early California by Eric Tuan(2026), Signs of Grace by Oleksandr Shchetynsky (2026), and Brontë, a cycle by Ola Gjeilo (2023).

Under his direction since its founding in 1979, the professional vocal ensemble Volti has become recognized as one of the most accomplished new music ensembles in the United States. In addition to multiple ASCAP awards, Chorus America awarded Volti the Margaret Hillis Award for sustained artistic accomplishment and organizational strength in 2023.

For 37 years he oversaw the development of both the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, an innovative education and performance program, and the Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choral Festival which has become part of the international choral environment.

Recipient of the 2023 Michael Korn Award from Chorus America for a lifetime of significant contributions to the professional choral art, he has also received awards from Music Mundi for Outstanding Conductorial Achievement in Giessen Germany, from the Miedzyzdroje Festival in Poland for Artistic Interpretation, from KDFC for Music Educator of the Year Award, and from the Lois Blair Rawlings for Educational Inspiration. His choirs have received ASCAP's award for Adventurous Programming nine times, more than any other conductor in the history of the award.

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