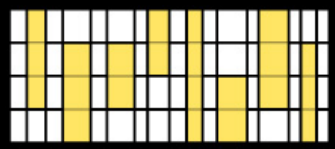


CLERESTORY



A
*Many Splendored
Thing*

November 11, David Brower Center, Berkeley
November 12, St. Gregory's, San Francisco



CLERESTORY

A Many Splendored Thing

NOVEMBER 2023

CLERESTORY

Yuhi Aizawa Combatti, Simon Barrad, Matt Boehler, Von Bringhurst, Sidney Chen,
Dan Cromeenes, David Kurtenbach Rivera, Tim Silva, Nathan Stroud

Xenia - hospitality, or love for the stranger

Hail, Guest!

Dan Cromeenes

The Rune of Hospitality

Alf Houkom

Philia - friendship

'Tis the Last Rose of Summer

Richard Alfred Milliken, arr. Philip Lawson

When She Loved Me (from *Toy Story 2*)

Randy Newman, arr. Jim Kahlke

Vive L'Amour

Traditional, arr. Alice Parker & Robert Shaw

Storge - of a parent to a child

So weich und warm

Peter Cornelius

Lullaby (from *Songs of Lowly Life*)

Stacy Garrop

dear heart,

Dylan Tran

Eros - erotic, romantic, physical love

My Funny Valentine

Richard Rodgers, arr. Cromeenes

Haste on, my joys!

Gerald Finzi

Mystery of Love

Sufjan Stevens, arr. Von Bringhurst

Philautia - self-love, self-care or obsession

SATOR

Melissa Dunphy

I Flow ... I Am

Mari Esabel Valverde

And So It Goes

Billy Joel, arr. Bob Chilcott

Agape - selfless, godlike love

Love bade me welcome

Roderick Williams

A Quiet Place

Ralph Carmichael, arr. Mervyn Warren

Rytmus

Ivan Hrušovský

Program Leader: Von Bringhurst

Season Producer: Sidney Chen

NOTES, TEXTS, AND TRANSLATIONS

Of all the human emotions, the most powerful is love. As Euripedes wrote, it is "the greatest pleasure in life;" according to Socrates, it "frees us from life's weight and pain." The single English word 'love' carries many meanings, while Greek offers a kaleidoscopic love language from the friendship of *philia*, the *storge* of parents, the *philautia* of compassion, and the *eros* of desire. This program *A Many Splendored Thing* explores love in all its forms and facets.

Xenia - hospitality, or love for the stranger

Hail, Guest

Music: Dan Cromeenes

Text: Welsh door verse

We begin our musical journey with "Hail, Guest," a welcoming and spirited opening that sets the tone for the evening, composed by longtime Clerestory singer Dan Cromeenes. Now commonly posted over doors and on gateposts in England and Wales, the text is a Welsh "door verse," likely stemming from the old Welsh tradition of Mari Lwyd. Similar to Christmas caroling, Mari Lwyd is a custom performed during winter celebrations in which a horse figure is mounted on a pole and carried from house to house by a person leading a group of singers. The Mari Lwyd knocks on the door, and the first verse of a traditional song is sung. The person inside responds by singing a second verse (this text is likely one such response), and after a number of verses had been exchanged, the Mari Lwyd singers are invited into the house for refreshments (and departing, of course, with a farewell song).

*Hail, Guest! We ask not what thou art;
If Friend, we greet thee, hand and heart;
If Stranger, such no longer be;
If Foe, our love shall conquer thee!*

The Rune of Hospitality

Music: Alf Houkom (b. 1935)

Text: Gaelic rune inscription

Around Christmas in 1984, while living in Iowa as a professor at Cornell College, Alf Houkom was sitting in his easy chair around Christmas reading a book on old Scandinavian runes. Suddenly, this text of Gaelic origin "simply grabbed me," he says. "In my experience, Christianity has the capacity to be a closed-door faith. This text struck me with its openness, with the possibility for the Christ to come in any place." Not writing for any performance or commission in particular, he quickly wrote this piece in response, and "...the music just unfolded, purposefully simple."

*I saw a stranger yestereen;
I put food in the eating place,
Drink in the drinking place,
Music in the listening place;
And in the sacred names of the Triune
He blessed me and my house,
My cattle and my dear ones.
And the lark said in her song:
Often, often, often,
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise:
Often, often, often,
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.*

Philia - friendship

'Tis the Last Rose of Summer

Music: Richard Alfred Milliken (1767-1815), arr. Philip Lawson

Text: Thomas Moore (1779-1852)

Thomas Moore penned his well-known poem in 1805 while staying at Jenkinstown Castle in County Kilkenny, Ireland, where he was said to have been inspired by a specimen of Rosa 'Old Blush' (pictured). In 1813, it was set and published to the tune "Aisling an Óigfhear", or "The Young Man's Dream," and has been re-set to many variations of that tune ever since. This poignant reflection on the passage of time is here beautifully arranged by Philip Lawson for the King's Singers.

*'Tis the last rose of Summer,
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred,
No rose-bud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes
Or give sigh for sigh!*

*I'll not leave thee, thou lone one,
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter
Thy leaves o'er the bed
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.*



*So soon may I follow,
When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle
The gems drop away!
When true hearts lie withered,
And fond ones are flown,
Oh! who would inhabit
This bleak world alone?*

When She Loved Me

Music & Text: Randy Newman (b.1943), arr. Jim Kahlke

Randy Newman is a singer, pianist, arranger, and Songwriter Hall of Fame composer who has won two Oscars, two Emmys, and four Grammys. This song, from Pixar's 1999 film Toy Story 2, was performed by Sarah McLachlan, won a Grammy, and was nominated for an Oscar. The performance notes point out that "...in the movie the song was sung by a girl doll about her (girl) owner, who had forgotten and abandoned her. But the message...fits anyone who carries a torch for a long-lost love." This moving Barbershop arrangement by Jim Kahlke evokes that nostalgic tone.

*When somebody loved me, everything was beautiful
Every hour we spent together lives within my heart
And when she was sad, I was there to dry her tears
And when she was happy, so was I, when she loved me*

*Through the summer and the fall, we had each other,
that was all
Just she and I together, like it was meant to be
And when she was lonely, I was there to comfort her
And I knew that she loved me*

*So the years went by, I stayed the same
But she began to drift away, I was left alone
Still I waited for the day
When she'd say "I will always love you"*

*Lonely and forgotten, never thought she'd look my way
And she smiled at me and held me, just like she used to
do*

Like she loved me, when she loved me

*When somebody loved me, everything was beautiful
Every hour we spent together, lives within my heart
When she loved me*

Vive L'Amour

Music & Text: Trad. arr. Alice Parker (b. 1925) and Robert Shaw (1916-1999)

Alice Parker and Robert Shaw were important contributors to what is referred to as the “Golden Age” of choral music (roughly 1950-1970) 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 together, with Parker composing and arranging many more herself. 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,” of which you’ll hear plenty in this piece. The central element of the text is enduring camaraderie: “Should time or occasion compel us to part, these days shall forever enlighten the heart.”

*Let every good fellow now join in our song,
Vive la compagnie!
Success to each other, and pass it along...
Vive l'amour, vive l'amour...
A friend on your left, and a friend on your right...
In love and good fellowship, let us unite...*

*Now wider and wider, our circle expands...
We'll sing to our comrades, in far away lands...
With friends all around us, we'll sing out our song...
We'll banish our troubles, it won't take us long...
Should time or occasion compel us to part...
These days shall forever enliven our heart...*

Storge - of a parent to a child

So weich und warm

Music: Peter Cornelius (1824-1874)

Text: Paul Heyse (1830-1914)

“So weich und warm” was German composer Peter Cornelius’s last work, written in the month of his death (October 1874). The text, from Cornelius’s friend Paul Heyse, is a tender reflection of motherly love. Says scholar James Deaville, “...this alternately imitative and homophonic, strophic setting of Heyse’s poem is a fitting last work for the composer, who often achieved his greatest effects with the simplest of means.”

So weich und warm hegt dich kein Arm
Als wenn die Mutter dich umfängt,
Kein Trost so traut dich übertaut,
Als wenn ihr Aug' an deinem hängt.
Drum sei gesinnt als gutes Kind,
Daß sterbend sie dich segnet ein:
Sonst ob auch Lieb
Und Freundschaft blieb,
Bist dennoch mutterseelenallein.
Und wenn ergreist in treuem Geist
Du manch' ein Jugendbild bewahrst,
Vor Allem hoch beglückt dich doch,
Daß deiner Mutter Kind du warst.
Drum sei gesinnt...

*No arm cherishes you as softly and warmly
As when your mother embraces you,
No comfort melts you as cozily
As when her eyes gaze into yours.
So of that be mindful as a good child,
That, dying, she blesses you:
Otherwise, even though love
And friendship remain,
Nevertheless you'd be all alone.
And when deeply stirred in devoted spirit
You preserve many an image from youth,
Above all be very happy
That you were your mother's child.
So of that be mindful...*

Lullaby

Music: Stacy Garrop (b. 1969)

Text: Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

Clerestory favorite Stacy Garrop is a prolific and varied composer based in the Chicago area. Here's what she has to say about this piece, commissioned by Volti: "...I seized the opportunity to feature the poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar, [the] first African-American poet and novelist to gain national and international recognition. Born in Dayton, Ohio, his mother was a former slave and his father had escaped from slavery prior to serving in [the] Civil War. Dunbar began writing poetry as a child and published his first book of poems, called *Oak and Ivy*, when he was twenty. This was followed by eleven additional books of poetry, four books of short stories, five novels, and a play. The subject matter of Dunbar's poems encompasses a wide array of topics, from his observations of nature, love, and life to his renditions of African American life."

*Sing me, sweet, a soothing psalm,
Holy, tender, low, and calm,
Full of drowsy words and dreamy,
Sleep half seen where the sides are seamy;
Lay my head upon your breast;
Sing me to rest.*

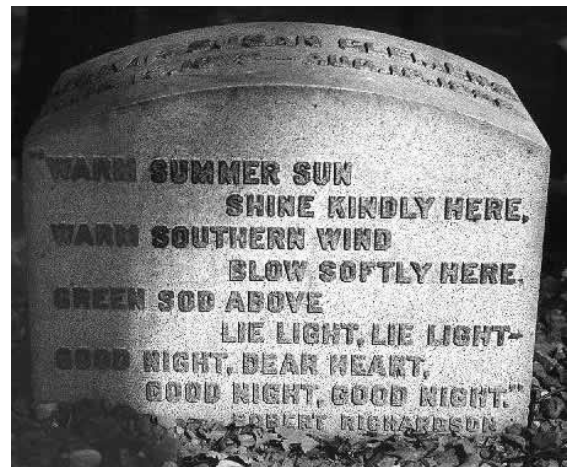
dear heart,

Music: Dylan Tran (b. 1994)

Text: Robert Richardson (1850-1901), adapted by Mark Twain (1835-1910)

The text comes from a longer poem, "Annette," by Robert Richardson; Mark Twain adapted these lines, now known as "Warm Summer Sun," as an epitaph for his 24-year-old daughter's gravestone. When he learned that people had begun to attribute the poem to him, he ordered Richardson's name to be cut into the stone (pictured). Dylan Tran wrote this choral setting in reflection of his own process of grieving after his father's death in 2011, as "a post-minimalist expression of the duality of grief. The music is intentionally simple, while still remaining poignant, making clusters and extensions more easily accessible through voice leading and repetition."

*Warm summer sun,
Shine kindly here,
Warm southern wind,
Blow softly here.
Green sod above,
Lie light, lie light.
Good night, dear heart,
Good night, good night.*



Eros - erotic, romantic, physical love

My Funny Valentine

Music: Richard Rodgers (1902-1979), arr. Dan Cromeenes

Text: Lorenz Hart (1895-1943)

"My Funny Valentine," a showtune from the 1937 musical *Babes in Arms* is now best known as a popular jazz standard. It has appeared on over 1300 albums performed by over 600 artists, and became Chet Baker's signature song. It was composed and lyricized, respectively, by the prolific duo of Rodgers and Hart, whose other popular showtunes include "Blue Moon" and "The Lady Is a Tramp." (Rodgers went on to famously collaborate with another lyricist, Oscar Hammerstein II, whom he initially brought in to assist Hart as the latter's health began to decline.) The text finds humor in imperfections and celebrates love's uniqueness, and Clerestory singer Dan Cromeenes' arrangement adds depth and charm to this timeless piece.

My funny valentine

Sweet comic valentine

You make me smile with my heart

Your looks are laughable

Unphotographable

Yet, you're my favorite work of art

Is your figure less than Greek?

Is your mouth a little weak?

When you open it to speak

Are you smart?

But don't change your hair for me

Not if you care for me

Stay, little valentine, stay

Each day is Valentine's Day

Haste on, my joys!

Music: Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)

Text: Robert Bridges (1844-1930)

In addition to being a composer, Gerald Finzi was a collector and a lover of the written word, amassing some 3000 volumes of English poetry, philosophy and literature during his lifetime. Finzi's great love of poetry is evident in the way he carefully sets each and every line of text, always attuned to the meaning of the written word, and always finding a way to add to and accentuate each line of poetry. His work often evokes the charm and tranquility of the English countryside, and "Haste on, my joys! Your treasure lies," the penultimate movement of *Seven Poems* of Robert Bridges, op. 17, captures Finzi's signature style, blending lush harmonies with a profound emotional depth.

Haste on, my joys! your treasure lies

In swift, unceasing flight.

O haste: for while your beauty flies

I seize your full delight.

Lo! I have seen the scented flower,

Whose tender stems I cull,

For her brief date and meted hour

Appear more beautiful.

O youth, O strength, O most divine

For that so short ye prove;

Were but your rare gifts longer mine,

Ye scarce would win my love.

Nay, life itself the heart would spurn,

Did once the days restore

The days, that once enjoyed return,

Return, ah! nevermore.

Mystery of Love

Music & Text: Sufjan Stevens (b. 1975), arr. Von Bringham

American singer-songwriter Sufjan Stevens wrote "Mystery of Love" for the 2017 film *Call Me By Your Name*. The lyrics were inspired by the film script and André Aciman's novel of the same name, a coming-of-age story about the romantic relationship between two young men in 1983. The song was nominated for both an Oscar and a Grammy. Beautifully arranged by Clerestory soprano Von Bringham, the piece is reminiscent upon and contemplates the mysteries that make love such a profound and enduring force.

Oh, to see without my eyes

The first time that you kissed me

Boundless by the time I cried

I built your walls around me

*White noise, what an awful sound
Fumbling by Rogue River
Feel my feet above the ground
Hand of God, deliver me*

*Oh, oh woe-oh-woah is me
The first time that you touched me
Oh, will wonders ever cease?
Blessed be the mystery of love*

*Lord, I no longer believe
Drowned in living waters
Cursed by the love that I received
From my brother's daughter*

*Like Hephaestion, who died
Alexander's lover
Now my riverbed has dried
Shall I find no other?
Oh, oh woe-oh-woah is me
I'm running like a plover*

*Now I'm prone to misery
The birthmark on your shoulder reminds me*

*How much sorrow can I take?
Blackbird on my shoulder
And what difference does it make
When this love is over?*

*Shall I sleep within your bed?
River of unhappiness
Hold your hands upon my head
'Til I breathe my last breath*

*Oh, oh woe-oh-woah is me
The last time that you touched me
Oh, will wonders ever cease?
Blessed be the mystery of love*

Philautia - self-love, self-care or obsession

SATOR

Music & Text: Melissa Dunphy (b. 1980)

“As a composer, I believe that music is not only a form of expression but a means of communication...I want my music to be relevant to the world around it and exist in that world. It is inspired by and explores real-world issues of social justice and personal relationships,” says Australian-American composer Melissa Dunphy. Her piece "SATOR" was commissioned by Skylark Vocal Ensemble for their concert "Hidden Symbols, Secret Codes." It shifts obsessively and meticulously through a mysterious codex of text, with a central exclamation of “Alpha, omega!”

*SATOR
AREPO
TENET
OPERA
ROTAS*

I Flow ... I Am

Music: Mari Esabel Valverde (b. 1987)

Text: Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926), transl. Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy

Mari Esabel Valverde is an award-winning composer in steady demand in the United States and internationally, and trained at St. Olaf College, the European American Musical Alliance in Paris, and San Francisco Conservatory of Music. She says that this piece “...is a setting of Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy’s translation of Rilke’s 29th and ultimate sonnet to Orpheus. It is a spiritual commentary on the courage it takes to be present in darkness, breathing, speaking, living, and loving through pain and uncertainty. As Macy suggests, we may only survive on this planet by flowing with the turbulence of the earth, taking refuge in its beautiful chaos.”

*Quiet friend who has come so far,
feel how your breathing makes more space around you.
Let this darkness be a bell tower*

*and you the bell. As you ring,
what batters you becomes your strength.
Move back and forth into the change.
What is it like, such intensity of pain?
If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.
In this uncontainable night,
be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,
the meaning discovered there.
And if the world has ceased to hear you,
say to the silent earth: I flow.
To the rushing water, speak: I am.*

And So It Goes

Music & Text: Billy Joel (b. 1949), arr. Bob Chilcott

Bob Chilcott is a British composer and conductor known for his arrangements of popular music for choral ensembles. One of the most notable is this Billy Joel song "And So It Goes," originally commissioned and performed by the vocal quintet The King's Singers (and thus is set in five parts). His adaptation preserves the introspectiveness and vulnerability of the original song while adding a rich choral texture.

*In every heart there is a room
A sanctuary safe and strong
To heal the wounds from lovers past
Until a new one comes along*

*I spoke to you in cautious tones
You answered me with no pretense
And still I feel I said too much
My silence is my self defense*

*And every time I've held a rose
It seems I only felt the thorns
And so it goes, and so it goes
And so will you, soon, I suppose*

*But if my silence made you leave
Then that would be my worst mistake*

*So I will share this room with you
And you can have this heart to break*

*And this is why my eyes are closed
It's just as well for all I've seen
And so it goes, and so it goes
And you're the only one who knows*

*So I would choose to be with you
That's if the choice were mine to make
But you can make decisions too
And you can have this heart to break*

*And so it goes, and so it goes
And you're the only one who knows*

Agape - selfless, godlike love

Love bade me welcome

Music: Roderick Williams (b. 1965)

Text: George Herbert (1593-1633)

Williams, a contemporary English composer and baritone, wrote this setting of Herbert's poem as the anthem for a Matins service broadcast on BBC Radio 4 by the Schola Cantorum of Oxford. According to the composer, "...this anthem was specifically written for unaccompanied voices in the hope that it could stand alone as a piece in the jazz idiom while remaining within the bounds of mainstream choral music."

*Love bade me welcome. Yet my soul drew back
Guilty of dust and sin.*

*But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,*

*Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lacked any thing.*

*A guest, I answered, worthy to be here:
Love said, You shall be he.
I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,
I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?*

*Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?
My dear, then I will serve.
You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:
So I did sit and eat.*

A Quiet Place

Music & Text: Ralph Carmichael (1927-2021)

Ralph Carmichael was a composer and record producer who shaped the sound of contemporary Christian music from the 1970s onward. A violin prodigy with perfect pitch and a love for jazz chords, Carmichael built his reputation in Los Angeles TV and film studios before turning to worship music. "A Quiet Place" provides a moment of reflection and stillness, inviting you to contemplate the silent, intimate moments of love that speak volumes without words.

*There is a quiet place, far from the rapid pace,
where God can soothe my troubled mind.
Sheltered by tree and flower,
There in my quiet hour with Him,
My cares are left behind.
Whether a garden small or on a mountain tall
New strength and courage there I find;
Then from this quiet place I go prepared to face
A new day with love for all mankind.*

Rytmus (from Three Etudes)

Music and Text: Ivan Hrušovský (1927-2001)

Ivan Hrušovský was a Slovak composer and conductor celebrated for his innovative choral compositions and arrangements, which blend elements of modernism with folk traditions. The title of this piece, "Rytmus," immediately draws our attention to the central element of the composition: rhythm. The lines move quickly, the text dancing and keeping the ear guessing at what will come next. The harmony is largely tonal but hints at polymodal harmonies, which along with the jolting rhythms create an energizing experience for listener and performer alike, vibrant and ecstatic.

*Ave Eva
fons amoris,
tu regina venustatis.*

*Be greeted Eve,
you source of love,
you are the queen of nobleness.*

ABOUT CLERESTORY

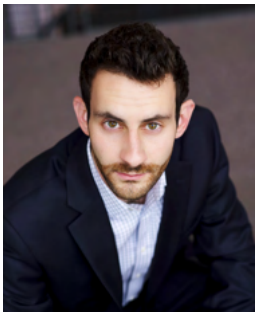
Clerestory is named for cathedral windows that let in daylight; since its founding in 2006, the group has told the "clear story" of music through sophisticated performances, grounded in decades of experience singing together. Clerestory's singers are veterans of San Francisco's finest professional vocal groups, and the group has performed across the Bay Area, including regular concerts in San Francisco, Berkeley, and Sonoma, along with appearances in Palo Alto, Santa Cruz, Grass Valley, Pleasanton, and Lodi. The ensemble has been featured on National Public Radio and on San Francisco's KDFC, and they were the featured ensemble at the 2012 North Central ACDA Conference in Madison, Wisconsin. Listen to free recordings at clerestory.org/music.

SINGERS



Yuhi Aizawa Combatti, a Japan-native soprano, is recognized for her clear timbre and keen musicianship in repertoire ranging from Renaissance to Contemporary. Yuhi has performed with orchestras and chamber ensembles in the United States and Japan including the Kronos Quartet, the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Berkeley Symphony. A passionate advocate of new music, Yuhi was a featured soloist for the West Coast premiere of Luciano Berio's *Sinfonia* with UC Davis Orchestra and has enjoyed premiering works by a multitude of composers including Melissa Dunphy, Ted Hearne, and LJ White as a member of Volti. She made her operatic debut at Spoleto Festival U.S.A in the North American premiere of Braunfels's *Die Vogel*. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal

Performance from Westminster Choir College. When not singing, Yuhi enjoys cooking and eating cuisines from all around the world, and spending time with her partner Tegan and their two irresistible dogs: Tanuki and Ten.



The versatility of Grammy-nominated baritone **Simon Barrad**, has been heard in genre-bending concerts across the United States and Europe. His talent for unique and innovative programming and arranging – melding new and old, jazz and drama, classical technique and heartfelt folk idioms – has led to recent features at the Art of the Piano Festival, the Ravinia Festival, Stanford Live, the Marlboro Music Festival, and Cincinnati Opera. Upcoming and recent performance highlights include debuts at the Metropolitan Opera, Wigmore Hall in London, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and the Columbus Symphony. He has headlined several concerts across the Atlantic including performances at Helsinki's Musiikkitalo, Finland's National Opera House, and the Berlin Philharmonie. Through his performing and as a former

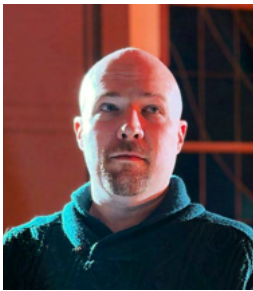
mentor for ArtSmart, which provides free music and singing lessons to teenagers in underserved communities, Simon strives to build a more equitable world of empathy and understanding through music.

In 2015/16 as a Fulbright scholar in Helsinki, Mr. Barrad toured southern Finland with his *Musical Madeleine* recital, and gave lectures and private lessons promoting contemporary American art song abroad. His recent performances of Finnish and American music have brought him wide acclaim as a recitalist, headlining in venues including the Berlin Philharmonie, Helsinki's Musiikkitalo, and Finland's National Opera House, and his gift for creative recital programming led to a residency as Songfest's very first Recital Fellow. Simon is also an avid lover and performer of jazz, new music, and ensemble singing. He is a four-time Downbeat magazine national award winner for vocal jazz, and he has performed at the Monterey Jazz Festival, ADCA conventions across the country, and the Grammys as a member of the Grammy vocal jazz ensemble. Simon regularly performs with Austin-based ensemble Conspirare, and was the baritone soloist for their national tour of *Considering Matthew Shepard*. In the realm of new music, he has consistently championed new works, giving first performances of works by John Harbison, David Lang, and many others. Mr. Barrad holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music where he studied with Kenneth Shaw. Mr. Barrad also holds a BM in Voice and a French Language minor from the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach, where he was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa honor society.



Matt Boehler, bass, is known in the world of opera and classical music as an inventive collaborative artist. Hailed by *The New York Times* as "a bass with an attitude and the goods to back it up," he has sung principal roles with The Metropolitan Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Dallas Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Theater St. Gallen, and Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, as well as the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and National Symphony Orchestra, among many others. In addition to bringing "power and brilliant tone" (*Opera News*) to staples of the standard operatic repertoire, Matt is frequently in demand as a new music collaborator. His discography features many world premieres, including new operas by Mark Adamo, John Corigliano, and Kevin Puts.

Also an accomplished composer, Matt's recent chamber opera, *Fat Pig*, was lauded by *Opera* magazine as "impressive and captivating." His song commission from mezzo Sasha Cooke was praised by *Opera News* as "fresh and vital," and, after its premiere at Davies Hall, Cooke recorded it for her 2022 GRAMMY-nominated album, *how do I find you*. Matt's recent commissioners include Washington National Opera, Victory Hall Opera, Vocal Arts DC, Turas Ensemble, and Left Coast Chamber Ensemble. He trained as an actor at Viterbo University, an opera singer at Juilliard, and as a composer at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Excerpts of his new opera, *The Road to Wellville*, will be featured this season on West Edge Opera's *Snapshot* series. www.mattboehler.com, IG: in.sta.matt



Von Bringhurst (he/they) is a countertenor & sopranoist who moved to the Bay Area in 2018. He holds a Master of Music in Vocal Performance degree from the Longy School of Music of Bard College in Cambridge, MA, and a Bachelor of Science in Voice from Idaho State University in Pocatello, ID.

He enjoys a varied career as a soloist and ensemble member, including Clerestory, Força Chorus, Harvard Early Music Society, the Video Game Orchestra, Xerces Blue Ensemble, and can be heard on a number of video game titles, including *Ace Combat*, *Final Fantasy XV*, and *Code Vein*. Von has been Music Director for the Opera House Theater Company in Philipsburg, MT; The Virginia City Players of Virginia City, MT; and WholeTone Opera of Somerville, MA.

Von is currently choir director at Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Fremont, CA, as well as soprano section leader at Christ Church Portola Valley and Woodside in Portola Valley, CA. He also maintains an active teaching studio based in the Bay Area, as well as working with students virtually across time zones. vonbringhurst.com



Sidney Chen is a multi-faceted musician who seeks to dissolve boundaries of all kinds through his work. He is passionate about using his "expressive and richly mellifluous" bass-baritone voice (*San Francisco Chronicle*) to support the creation of new work, in collaboration with artists of all disciplines. Recent projects include touring with ODC/Dance as a guest performer in KT Nelson's *Path of Miracles*, and creating roles in Anne Hege's "laptopera" *The Furies* with SLOrk (Stanford Laptop Orchestra) and Lisa Mezzacappa's serial podcast opera *The Electronic Lover*. As a member of composer/choreographer Meredith Monk's Vocal Ensemble, he has performed internationally and recorded for ECM Records. At home in the Bay Area, he has appeared recently as a soloist with the Oakland and Golden Gate Symphony Orchestras, been a featured performer on SF Symphony's American Mavericks Festival and the Other Minds Festival, and sings regularly with the new-music vocal ensemble Volti. His solo creative projects tend towards quietness, detail, and sharpened focus, and often include his DIY music boxes and intricately hand-punched scrolls, which have been featured in a *SF Chronicle* Sunday Datebook cover story. sidneychenarts.com



Dan Cromeenes, countertenor, is a versatile musician who has performed professionally as a countertenor soloist, choral singer, and collaborative pianist. A native of southern California, he first moved to San Francisco to perform with the ensemble Chanticleer, and has since flourished in the Bay Area's music scene. He has sung with American Bach, Philharmonia Baroque, Cantata Collective, Bach Collegium San Diego, and Oregon Bach Festival. He serves as staff accompanist at Santa Clara University and Sonoma State University. In addition to his playing and singing, Dan has written multiple choral arrangements that have been performed by Clerestory. When not onstage or behind a piano, Dan can usually be found either on a hike in the mountains or at home baking gourmet goodies.



David Kurtenbach Rivera, tenor (he/him), described in “warm and intimate” performances as having a voice “lined with silver” (*Classical Voice*), enjoys an active ensemble and solo career, specializing in early music.

He has appeared as featured soloist with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Chorale, Bach Collegium San Diego, Cantata Collective, American Bach Soloists, Conspirare, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Bach-Akademie Charlotte, Oregon Bach Festival, Apollo’s Fire, and many others. He is privileged to share GRAMMY nominations for Best Choral Performance with the musicians of Conspirare.

During the pandemic, David continued freelance work from his home in San Francisco, recording premieres and performances, and teaching master classes with ensembles around the country. He also served as Guest Lecturer in Composition at University of California, Berkeley. Last season David premiered a new Spanish language translation of Handel’s Messiah, and a full-length concert of the music of Margaret Bonds, which will be recorded this spring. This season’s highlights include 15 world premieres over two evenings with Conspirare, solo engagements with Vocal Arts Ensemble Cincinnati, and a three week engagement with Santa Fe Desert Chorale.

A trained conductor, David previously spent 10 years as an opera conductor, including 5 seasons appointed as Chorus Master of Opera San Jose, and a summer at the Tanglewood Music Center. He works as clinician, guest conductor, and coach for ensembles around the country, and is in demand as a church musician and organist.

David is also pursuing a degree in Ornamental Horticulture with a focus on Greenhouse Operations, Nursery Management, and Taxonomy. When not traveling for music, he works as Identification and Inventory Specialist at a wholesale nursery.

As a reconnecting Indigenous Puerto Rican (Taíno), David is committed to decolonization in his life and work. He is deeply grateful to the Ramaytush, Muwekma Ohlone, and Me-Wuk Peoples for allowing his continued presence on their land.



Tim Silva (he/him) was born and raised in the East Bay. When he’s not making art, he’s playing with plants. He sings regularly with Volti, Gaude, and San Francisco Symphony Chorus. He has appeared as a soloist at the Berkeley Early Music Festival with California Bach Society. As an educator, Tim has worked with Bay Area choirs for over ten years, serving in vocal coaching, theory instruction, and conducting roles for the San Francisco Boys Chorus, Throckmorton Theatre Chorus, Piedmont East Bay Children’s Choirs, and Pacific Boychoir Academy. An active collaborator and versatile performer, he has performed and/or recorded with Artists’ Vocal Ensemble, Briget Boyle, Chalice Consort, Foreignfire, Iron Henry, Katy Stephan, Kronos Quartet, Marin Symphony, Michael Bang, Nick Hours, ODC/Dance, Russian National Orchestra, San Francisco Choral Artists, and many others.



Nathan Stroud, countertenor, is a multi-faceted musician with a passion for early music consort singing. He currently sings with the Grace Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys and the Philharmonia Baroque Chorale, and has been performing around the Bay Area as a singer and French horn player since moving to San Francisco in 2014.

With a background in architectural acoustics, Nathan loves to bring his expertise in architecture, acoustical fundamentals, and psychoacoustics to tailor his performance technique to the built environment and human auditory response. His Master’s thesis research was on “optimization of orchestral layouts based on instrument directivity patterns” in which he studied the acoustically ideal arrangements of romantic period orchestras on stage.

Outside of performing Nathan stays busy working full time as an Acoustics & Audiovisual Consultant at Arup, a global engineering and design firm, where he leads a broad portfolio of regional and international projects.

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