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Schola Cantorum, Jeffrey Riehl, Conductor, and Women's Chorale, David Pedersen, Conductor

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SCHOLA CANTORUM

JEFFREY RIEHL, CONDUCTOR

WOMEN'S CHORALE

DAVID PEDERSEN, CONDUCTOR

MARY BETH BENNETT, ACCOMPANIST

CAMP CONCERT HALL

SUNDAY • 3 NOVEMBER 2019 • 3:00 PM



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

I WOMEN'S CHORALE

Though Philomela Lost Her Love

Thomas Morley
(1557-1602)

Thomas Morley was a gentleman of the Chapel Royal to Queen Elizabeth I and organist at St. Paul's Cathedral. He was a gifted student of William Byrd and set several of Shakespeare's songs to music. Morley composed motets, Anglican service music and many charming madrigals as well as a treatise on composition called *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597). *Though Philomela Lost Her Love* is a madrigal for treble voices that refers to a tragic figure in Greek mythology. The music is playful and light-hearted, as Philomela ended her earthly struggles by being turned into a nightingale by the gods.

Dixit Dominus

Johann Michael Haydn
(1737-1806)

Johann Michael Haydn, the younger brother of the celebrated composer Joseph Haydn, grew up singing as a chorister at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. When his voice changed he had to leave the choir and he became a freelance musician. After working for a short period of time in Hungary, he was hired by the Archbishop of Salzburg, where he would remain for the rest of his life. Haydn particularly enjoyed composing music for the talented boys' choir at the Salzburg Cathedral, and *Dixit Dominus* is one of the many pieces he wrote for treble voices. The text is from Psalm 110, which is prayed at Vespers on Sunday evenings and major liturgical feast days. Vespers services were public events, and these liturgies frequently featured elaborate musical settings for chorus, soloists and various accompanying instruments.

Laudate Pueri

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Felix Mendelssohn composed this setting of Psalm 113 for women's voices in 1837, following a trip to Italy which he took several years earlier. While visiting Rome, Mendelssohn enjoyed hearing choirs of nuns chanting the Divine Office and other choral works in the beautiful churches he visited. This experience motivated him to write several motets for treble voices, of which *Laudate Pueri* is the most well-known. Only the first two verses of the psalm are used, and the counterpoint displays the composer's great gift for melody and variation, as well as a loving sensitivity to the text.

Waldesnacht

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Waldesnacht is the third song of Brahms' *Sieben Lieder*, Op. 62, which he published in 1874. Each of the seven pieces were originally composed for mixed voices. Their texts are derived from folk origins, and each piece is strophic, using the same music for each stanza. Geoffrey Edwards has arranged *Waldesnacht* for treble voices, and added an original piano accompaniment. The lush chord progressions and voice leading evoke the scene of the woods at night, where a person may escape the tumult of life and find serenity.

Flight Song

Kim André Arnesen
(b. 1980)

Flight Song was written as a gift to Dr. Anton Armstrong and the St. Olaf Choir. Full of the imagery of the nurturing of a young life on the edge of flight into adulthood, *Flight Song* sings of each singer's hidden song, and the conductor drawing that song from the singers: their hidden, unfolding life stories, their deep longings. The arms of the conductor, like great wings, shape the singing; music is compassion and the singers' longing is to fly towards others' suffering. Even if originally written for young adults, we are always throughout our life as our journey develops, on the edge of new growth and therefore new flight, new soul growth. The final message is that music making is the song of new life, fragile as the fall of a feather.

Program note by the composer

Mouth Music

arr. Dolores Keane and John Faulkner

Celtic mouth music, also known as liling, is vocal music meant for dancing in which the singers imitate various musical instruments while singing nonsense syllables or short lines of lyrics, which are often humorous or even bawdy. Mouth music would be sung at weddings and other celebrations, with or without any combination of available instruments. This particular tune, from the Hebrides Islands off the coast of Scotland, was transcribed from the version performed by the famous Irish musicians Dolores Keane and John Faulkner. Dr. Bennett has added an original piano part to our performance.

Notes by David Pedersen unless otherwise indicated.

PAUSE
(five minutes)

II SCHOLA CANTORUM

Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened, HWV 259

G. F. Handel
(1685-1759)

Handel composed four anthems for the October 1727 coronation of King George II and Queen Caroline, all with texts drawn from the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. “Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened,” the second of these Anthems, is divided into three sections. The first part combines both block chords and some imitative writing. The second section makes effective use of the *suspirato* or ‘sigh’ gesture on the word “mercy.” And the anthem ends with a festive “Alleluia” that supersedes the more contemplative mood of the preceding section. Handel crafts a powerful and lasting effect with the clarity of his choral and instrumental writing in all of the Coronation Anthems, the first of which, “Zadok the Priest,” has been sung at every English coronation since 1727.

O lux beatissima

Howard Helvey
(b. 1968)

Even When He Is Silent

Kim André Arnesen
(b. 1980)

“Even When He Is Silent” was commissioned in 2011 by the St. Olav Festival in Trondheim, Norway. The composer writes: “The assignment was to write a work in two separate versions – one for SATB choir and one for SSAA choir, unaccompanied. The text was found written on a wall at a concentration camp after World War II. Imagining what that person went through makes the words so powerful. As I read them, it was a Credo – when everything is dark and difficult in life you might wonder where God is, or if God is there at all. This is about keeping faith in God, love, and hope. I think of the sun as a metaphor for hope. Even without thinking of metaphors, the text has a deep meaning. Even if people take away your freedom, your friends, the people you love – they cannot take God away from you.”

Arnesen grew up in Trondheim, Norway, and began studying piano at the age of six. At age ten, he started singing in the Nidaros Cathedral Boys Choirs and was later educated at the Music Conservatory in Trondheim. He is one of the most frequently performed classical composers from Norway today and his music has been performed by choirs all over the world.

Stars

Ēriks Ešņvalds
(b. 1977)

Sarah Teasdale loved to look up at the night sky to see the stars, whether she was in New York, California, Arizona, or abroad. The light and radiance of the stars inspired her and they inspire Ēriks Ešņvalds, who long has been fascinated by the Nordic lights. Ešņvalds responds to the imagery in Teasdale’s poem by writing carefully controlled tone clusters for the choir and the accompanying water-tuned glasses, which combine to reflect the magic and mystery of Teasdale’s words.

Ešenvalds was a member of the Latvian State Choir from 2002-2011 and from 2011-2013, he served as Fellow Commoner in Creative Arts in Trinity College, Cambridge University. He is currently a professor of composition at the Latvian Academy of Music and is in demand worldwide as a composer, creating works for orchestra, chamber groups, and choruses. He has composed two operas, *Joseph Is a Fruitful Bough* and *The Immured*, as well as the film score for the 2016 Latvian film *Mellow Mud*, a story about a Latvian girl's coming of age. In 2016, Schola Cantorum and University Women's Chorale, premiered *The Woman and Her Bear*, a work commissioned by the UR Department of Music.

Bright Morning Stars

Appalachian Song; arr. Shawn Kirchner

Jack Anderson and Kobie Turner, baritones

Program notes by J. Riehl, unless otherwise noted.

WOMEN'S CHORALE

Mr. David Pedersen, conductor

Dr. Mary Beth Bennett, accompanist

The University Women's Chorale is an auditioned ensemble comprised of students from many different majors across the University of Richmond campus and a few community and UR alumna singers. The Chorale has made two international concert tours under Mr. Pedersen's leadership.

Sopranos

Lizzie Barnett**
Rachel Bollinger
Lexi Cobbs
Ellie Doran*
Maria Douglas*
Marissa Goodall
Penny Hu
Shuying Huang
Jessica Johnston*
Emma Meade
Natalie Melton
Maxine Xin

Altos

Tyler Chong
Bernadette Doran*
Mary Doran*
Yanran Li
Michelle Mai
Lillie Mucha**
Jessica Pedersen*
Ruiyi Tang
Mengqi Zhang

*community singer

**UR alumna

SCHOLA CANTORUM

Dr. Jeffrey Riehl, conductor

Dr. Mary Beth Bennett, accompanist

Setting the standard for choral excellence on campus since 1971, Schola Cantorum is comprised of University of Richmond undergraduates who represent many different academic majors across the University's School of Arts & Sciences, School of Leadership Studies, and Robins School of Business. Schola Cantorum has made two recordings with Jeffrey Riehl and was the centerpiece of the 2007 PRI broadcast *Christmas from Jamestowne*. Praised for its expressive and incisive singing, Schola has performed with Maestro Joseph Flummerfelt, Peter Phillips and the Tallis Scholars, Joseph Jennings and Chanticleer, New York Polyphony, Eighth Blackbird, composer Nico Muhly, and jazz bassist Matt Ulery. Schola has made six international concert tours under Dr. Riehl's leadership and will travel to Croatia, Slovenia, and Italy in March.

Sopranos

Lilly Alemayehu
Emily Marie Breaux
Olivia du Bois
Layla Cobrinik
Alexa Fasulo
Jasmine Feng
Nora Geer
Lucy McSweeney
Angelique Steenhagen

Altos

Rebekah Greene
Shira Greer
Lauren Guzman
Ifetayo Maloney
Abby Miller
Samantha Morgan
Faith Pinckney
Anna Tartline

Tenors

Jack Boo
Joshua Higdon
Brandon Johnson
Kinme Reeves
Joseph Rhodenhiser
Wesley Tsai

Bass

Jack Anderson
Ray Barr
Will Delaney
Ryan Kern
Sam McPeak
Aalok Sathe
Graham Shannon
Charles Simmonds
Wesley Su
Kobie Turner

MARY BETH BENNETT is an internationally recognized performer, composer and improviser. She serves on the adjunct music faculty of the University of Richmond and is Organist of Second Baptist Church. Before coming to the University of Richmond, she taught piano at Virginia Commonwealth University and Hampton University. She also held various positions in Washington, DC, including at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and as Ceremonial Organist for the United States Government. She holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Stetson University, the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik (Cologne, Germany), and the University of Southern California. The winner of nine national and regional awards in performance and composition, this year, she won the AGO/ECS National Publishing Award in Choral Composition. She also maintains a studio of improvisation students and has served as a judge for the AGO National Competition in Organ Improvisation, and presented improvisation seminars for major conventions of the AGO and NPM as well as the Smithsonian Institution. As a conductor, she has directed the Basilica of the National Shrine's professional choir in Washington, D. C., as well as the 120-voice West Los Angeles Chorale, among others. She has served as a judge for the national women's composition competition of AAM and the AGO International Year of the Organ composition competition. As a performing member of the Liturgical Organists Consortium, she recorded three compact discs which have garnered critical acclaim, including a "Golden Ear Award" for best organ CD of the year from *Absolute Sound Magazine*. Her most recent CD, *Bennett plays Bennett*, was recorded in 2015. Her performances and compositions have been featured multiple times on APM's *Pipedreams* with host, Michael Barone, and her compositions are published by EC Schirmer, Augsburg-Fortress, Concordia, Selah, G.I.A., World Library, National, Hope, and Oxford University Press.

DAVID PEDERSEN has conducted the University of Richmond Women's Chorale since 2008. Additionally, he serves as director of music at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Richmond, where he conducts adult and youth choirs. Mr. Pedersen is the artistic director and conductor of the James River Singers, a semi-professional chamber choir in Richmond, founded by Thomas Colohan and Jeffrey Riehl. He frequently serves as clinician and adjudicator at choral festivals. Previously, he directed the music programs at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church in Newport News, Virginia, and Risen Christ Catholic Community in Boise, Idaho. He founded and directed the Honor Choir, Women's Chorale, and Classical Guitar Ensemble at Bishop Kelly High School in Boise, Idaho from 2003 to 2006. Ensembles under his direction have earned top ratings at festivals and competitions, and have performed on concert tours of the United States as well as Austria, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, and Hungary. In 2006 his high school choirs were invited to perform in Austria and Czech Republic for the celebration of the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth. Recently Mr. Pedersen conducted premiere performances of commissioned works by Chen Yi and Benjamin Broening. He holds Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, and he is a member of the American Choral Directors' Association and the Church Music Association of America. He lives with his wife and two sons in Chesterfield, Virginia.

JEFFREY RIEHL is Associate Professor and Chair of the Music Department at the University of Richmond, where he has taught since 1995. He conducts Schola Cantorum and teaches voice, conducting, and other courses for both music majors and general students. His choirs have performed in distinguished venues throughout the United States and Europe, and are widely admired for their musicality, vitality, and expressive sound. An accomplished solo and professional ensemble singer, Riehl performed with Robert Shaw, Helmuth Rilling, Peter Schreier, Joseph Flummerfelt, the early music consort Affetti Musicali, the Eastman Collegium Musicum and lutenist Paul O'Dette, the Williamsburg Choral Guild, and at the Spoleto Festival USA, among others. He is an active guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator and has recorded for Chesky Records as a member of the Westminster Choir and for the Milken Foundation Archive of American Jewish Music. Riehl is Director of Music at historic Second Presbyterian Church in downtown Richmond and former Artistic Director and Conductor of the James River Singers, one of Richmond's leading chamber choirs. Dr. Riehl earned degrees in conducting at the Eastman School of Music and at Westminster Choir College.



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