

Vocalis Chamber Choir
Cambridge Summer Festival 2014

Journey in Song: American and European Choral Music, Past and Present

Lovers and participants of choral music are blessed with an extraordinarily diverse repertoire spanning centuries. *Journey In Song* celebrates this diversity, presenting unique and moving choral works from both sides of the Atlantic.

Tonight's program highlights the wide expanse of American choral music, from early hymns, folksongs, and spirituals, to 20th century masters Randall Thompson and Samuel Barber. In homage to America's beginning, (*Wondrous Love*) acknowledges the religious roots of our founding. The African-American spiritual (*Didn't My Lord*) is indelibly linked to America's music, influencing the blues, jazz, rock and roll, country and classical. Called the "Father of American Music," Stephen Foster composed some of the country's most beloved folksongs, (*Nelly Bly*) a tradition that continues today with artists like Dolly Parton. (*Light of a Clear Blue Morning*) Composers Eric Whitacre, (*hope, faith, life, love*) and René Clausen, (*Tonight, Eternity, Alone*) have firmly established themselves as two of America's choral greats.

We are pleased to include on the program two works with links to Buffalo and Western New York. Born in Buffalo, Michael Slon, (*I Am the Way*), is director of choral activities at the University of Virginia, and conducts the Oratorio Society of Virginia. Caroline Mallonée, (*Da Pacem Domine*), a member of Vocalis, is an accomplished composer, whose music has been performed throughout the world, including performances at Carnegie Hall, and Avery Fisher Hall in Lincoln Center, and several broadcasts on National Public Radio as part of Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion."

Tonight's program also celebrates the vast history of European choral music, particularly, the English choral tradition. The polyphonic works of the Renaissance have long been a staple for Vocalis. The music of Victoria, Palestrina and Byrd, represent the height of this art form. The connection between these works, and the tradition of sung prayer in England and throughout the world, imbues each performance with meaning. The music of Ralph Vaughan Williams, (*The Lover's Ghost, O Mistress Mine*) and Gerald Finzi, (*My Spirit Sang All Day*) is held dear to choral musicians the world over. Deeply felt in joy and sorrow, these works illustrate the extraordinary range of human emotion. Commissioned in 2012 for Vocalis' 10th Anniversary, English composer Andrew Smith, (*Veni, laudemus Domine*) finds inspiration from chant and the psalms, in a contemporary setting that is at once lyrical and powerful. "Come, let us sing for joy!"

Vocalis Chamber Choir
James Burritt, Director

Biography

Founded in 2002 by its director James Burritt, the Vocalis Chamber Choir is a select ensemble of dedicated professionals based in Buffalo, New York. Vocalis is committed to performing great a cappella music of all eras, and to cultivating an awareness of the art of choral singing. Comprising 20 voices, the choir strives to inspire, educate and enlighten our audiences through an intimate and moving concert experience. Now in its 12th season, Vocalis has established itself as one of the finest ensembles in New York.

Members of Vocalis are music educators, church musicians, and other talented professionals from Buffalo and beyond. The choir presents eight to ten concerts a year in the Buffalo area, and has traveled to Toronto, Pittsburgh, Rochester, Albany and New York City. In 2011 and again in 2012, Vocalis performed on the closing concert of the Music Niagara Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. Vocalis has collaborated with the choirs of St. Paul's Cathedral, Buffalo, the Amherst Symphony Orchestra, Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra, and Camerata di Sant' Antonio.

From the beginning, Vocalis' programming has been wide-ranging and diverse, featuring both great choral masterpieces and less well-known gems from throughout the ages, along with exciting contemporary works such as James MacMillan's *Cantos Sagrados*. In 2011-12, Vocalis' 10th Anniversary Season, a 'Spotlight WNY' concert presented compositions from Western New York's thriving artistic community. The choir ended its first decade with 'Triumph and Majesty', featuring Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, Handel's Coronation Anthem *Zadok the Priest*, and the world premiere of *Venite Laudemus Dominum* by English composer Andrew Smith, commissioned by Vocalis in celebration of its first ten years.

The 2012-2013 season included a collaboration on the music of Monteverdi and Vivaldi with the Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra, the festive annual Christmas concert in the glorious acoustic of the Karpeles Manuscript Museum in Buffalo, and a performance on the inaugural concert series for Buffalo State College's new recital hall. Our thrilling season finale featured music for string orchestra and choir with members of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, in works by Bach and Beethoven, and the WNY premiere of Tarik O'Regan's moving *Triptych*.

Highlights of the 2013-2014 season includes a concert tour to Cleveland, a collaboration with the Western New York Chamber Orchestra presenting the music of Mozart and Rutter, and a summer tour of England, with engagements at Southwark Cathedral, Grosvenor Chapel, the Old Royal Naval College Chapel, Ely Cathedral, and the Cambridge Summer Music Festival.

PROGRAM

Wondrous Love	Early American Hymn	3:30
O quam gloriosum Exultate Deo	T.L. de Victoria Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina	2:30 2:00
Da Pacem Domine I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life	Caroline Mallonée Michael Slon	3:30 4:00
Laudibus in Sanctis	William Byrd	5:30
O Mistress Mine And Will A' Not Come Again?	R.V. Williams Matthew Harris	1:30 3:00
Venite, laudemus Dominum	Andrew Smith	7:00
		<hr/> 31:30

INTERVAL

My Spirit Sang All Day Tonight, Eternity, Alone	Gerald Finzi Rene Clausen	2:00 4:00
Felices Ter The Lover's Ghost	Randall Thompson Ralph Vaughan Williams	2:00 4:30
hope, faith, life, love	Eric Whitacre	4:00
Let Down the Bars, O Death Anthony O'Daly	Samuel Barber Samuel Barber	2:00 3:30
Nelly Bly	Stephen Foster arr. Halloran	2:30
Light of a Clear Blue Morning	Dolly Parton arr. Johnson	4:00
Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel	American Spiritual arr. Hogan	2:30
		<hr/> 31:00



VOCÁLIS

CHAMBER CHOIR

James Burritt, Director

Soprano

Kathleen Bassett, Lydia Evans, Miriah Reyes, Erin Scudder

Alto

Teresa Darlak, Patricia Hills, Maria Parker, Amelia Scinta

Tenor

Andrew Cantrill, Todd Creech, Suzanne Fatta, Ward Hamlin

Bass

Damon Ayer, Kyle Botsford, David Frieder, Michael Manganiello

