

EVERYTHING THE
Light
TOUCHES



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Light
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PRESENTED BY



Christopher Gilliam, *Conductor*
Robert Matthews, *Piano*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 7:30 PM

HIGHLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2380 CLOVERDALE AVE NW, WINSTON-SALEM, NC 27103

WSCA

PROGRAM

LUX AETERNA

Ēriks Ešenvalds
(b. 1977)

HYMNE AU SOLEIL

Kristin Schwecke, *soprano*

Lili Boulanger
(1893 - 1918)

NOCTURNE

Charli Mills, *soprano*

Adolphus Hailstork
(b. 1941)

CICADA SONGS

Dog Day Harvest Fly
Like Cicadas
In That Harsh Tune
Four Epigrams
Happy Are the Cicadas
An die Zikade
Koyo Summer / Kansas Summer
Seara, Seara

Charles Hoag
(b. 1931)

YONDER COME DAY

Cláudia Vianna Audet, *soprano*
Bob Garver, *tenor*

TRADITIONAL GEORGIA SEA ISLANDS MELODY

Paul John Rudoï
(b. 1985)

— INTERMISSION —

HAIL, GLADDENING LIGHT

Charles Wood
(1866-1926)

FERN HILL

Kristin Schwecke, *soprano*

John Corigliano
(b. 1938)

Quartet: Clara Reitz, *soprano* | Christin Baker, *alto*
Mason Boone, *tenor* | Kelly Turner, *bass*

LIGHT OF A CLEAR BLUE MORNING

Katie Muhlenkamp, *soprano*
Sara Lynch, *oboe*

Dolly Parton
arr. Craig Hella Johnson
(b. 1962)

CAN WE SING THE DARKNESS TO LIGHT?

Kyle Pederson
(b. 1971)

THROUGH LOVE TO LIGHT

Elaine Hagenberg
(b. 1979)

PROGRAM NOTES

LUX AETERNA — Eriks Ešenvalds

Lux aeterna luceat eis,
Domine,
Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
Quia pius es;

Requiem aeternam dona eis,
Domine,
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*May perpetual light shine upon them,
O Lord,
With your saints forever,
Because you are kind;*

*Grant them eternal rest,
O Lord,
And let perpetual light shine upon them.*

HYMNE AU SOLEIL (*Hymn to the Sun*) — Lili Boulanger

Du soleil qui renait
bénissons la puissance;
Avec tout l'univers
célébrons son retour.

Couronné de splendeur,
il se lève il s'é lance.
Le réveil de la terre,
est un hymne d'amour.

Sept coursiers,
Qu'en partant le
Dieu contient à peine,
Enflamment l'horison
De leur brûlante haleine.

O Soleil fécond,
Tu parais!

Avec ses champs en fleurs,
Ses monts, ses bois épais
La vaste mer de tes feux embrasée,
L'univers, plus jeune et plus frais,
Des vapeurs du matin
sont brillants de rosée.

Du soleil qui renait
Célébrons la puissance

Du soleil qui renait
bénissons la puissance;
Avec tout l'univers
célébrons son retour.

Couronné de splendeur,
il se lève il s'é lance.
Le réveil de la terre,
est un hymne d'amour.

*Of the sun-god reborn
Let us glory the power,
As we hail his return
To the heavens above.*

*Splendour crown'd he leaps forth
From his night-glamour'd bower.
The awak'ning of earth
Is one great hymn of love.*

*Courers sev'n,
O'er their strength the
God but scarce prevailing,
The skyline set aflame,
Their fiery breath exhaling*

*Shine O sun benign
Fill thy heav'n!*

*With all its flow'ring fields,
Its mounts and forests old,
The spreading ocean that reflects you glowing,
Lo the world, younger, fresher grown,
Through the cloud veils of morn,
pearl'd with dewdrops behold!*

*Of the sun god reborn
Let us glory the power.*

*Of the sun-god reborn
Let us glory the power,
As we hail his return
To the heavens above.*

*Splendour crown'd he leaps forth
From his night-glamour'd bower.
The awak'ning of earth
Is one great hymn of love.*

NOCTURNE — Adolphus Hailstork

Have you known the beauty of a summer night
With a white streak of stars in a charcoal sky?
Have you heard the insects, with their countless array of sounds,
Endlessly busy through the otherwise silent night?
Have you walked in the field with the cool wind
And the black grass rustling around you?
Have you at last turned your face to the brilliant sky above,
And seen the suns floating there,
Each a fiery universe?
Have you lost yourself in that broad expanse
So that the black grass
And the humming insects
And the chill breeze
Have all vanished?
Have you felt the wonder that flows in those mighty spaces,
Where countless fires burn in the surrounding darkness?
Have you kissed the night, and it's promise,
When it turned its expectant face to your lips?
If you have done these things, lover,
Then come and watch these skies,
Then come and watch these fields, with me
Have you known the beauty of a summer night?

CICADA SONGS — Charles Hoag

I. DOG DAY HARVEST FLY

Shrill in your hearing
When heat is searing:
"Seara-seara"
Harvest is by.

Cloying, annoying,
Bright August enjoying,
"Jeera-jeera"
Midsummer's cry.

Now cool interrupting
His legato corrupting:
"Neara, neara"
Life soon shall be by.

How blind is his flying
Staccato and crying,
"Sic transit Cicada"
Dog Day Harvest Fly.

II. IN THAT HARSH TUNE

Like Cicadas sitting
Upon a tree in the forest,
And pouring out their piping voices
So the leaders of the Trojans
Were sitting in their towers.

III. IN THAT HARSH TUNE

How one in flight,
Now one in light,
Now one at night.
How much love is there contained
In that harsh tune sung again,
In summer bright
In song and sight repeated?

IV. FOUR EPIGRAMS

Lo, the heart-rending cry
Of a cicada caught by a hawk!

His voice
Consumed by crying
Only the shell remains.

Forests cicadas
Some have cool voices
Others warm.

Cicadas of my hut
I'll be going away,
So make love and enjoy yourselves.

V. HAPPY ARE THE CICADAS

Happy are the Cicadas
For their wives
Are mute.

VI. AN DIE ZIKADE

Selig bist du, liebe Kleine,
Due du auf der Bäume-Zweigen
Von geringem Trank begeistert
Singend wie ein König lebest!
Dir gehöret eigen alles
Was du aus den Feldern siehst,
Alles was die Stunden bringen;
Lebest unter Achersleuten Ihre
Freundin ohnbeschädigt,
Du den Sterblichen verehrte,
Süssen Frühlings
Süsser Bote!

Ja dich lieben alle Musen
Phöbus selber muss dich lieben;
Gaben dir die Silberstimme,
Dich ergreiftet nie das Alter,
Weise, zarte, Dischterfeundin
Ohne Fleisch und Blutgetorne
Leidenlose Erdentochter,
Fast den Göttem zu vergleichen.

*Blissful thou art, dear little one,
Who lives among the trees' boughs
Inspired by but a few drops of drink,
Singing like a king
All you see in the field
Is thine,
All what the hours might bring
So you live among the tillers of the soil
As their friend, unharmed,
Venerated by the mortals
As sweet messenger of
Sweet Spring!*

*Yes, all the muses love you
Phoebus himself must love you
For they gave you the silver voice,
Never will old age affect you
You, the friend of poets, wise and tender,
Born without flesh and blood,
Daughter of the earth
Comparable almost to the immortal gods.*

VII. KYOTO SUMMER/ KANSAS SUMMER

Kyoto summer
Three children walking
Though early morning mist
Toward a shrine
A pet cicada on a string leash
Leading us.

My mother offers me
A cicada husk
As light as a tear
All sound escaped

VIII. SEARA, SEARS

Seara, sears,
I wonder how they know
To crescendo together.
Who is their conductor?

YONDER COME DAY — Paul John Rudoi

Oh day, yonder come day.
Day done broke inna my soul, yonder come day.
Good mornin' day, yonder come day.
A brand new day, yonder come day.
Oh come on child,

Hush, hush, somebody's callin' my name.
Hush, somebody's callin' my name.
Hush, hush, somebody's callin' my name.
Oh my Lord, oh my Lord what shall I do?

Oh day, yonder come day.
I was on my knees, yonder come day.
When I heard him say, yonder come day.
Oh come on child,

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus.
Steal away, steal away, I ain't got long to stay here.
Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home.
Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home.

Oh day, yonder come day.
Good mornin' day, yonder come day.
A brand new day, yonder come day.
Oh come on child, yonder come day.
Day done broke inna my soul, yonder come day.

HAIL, GLADDENING LIGHT — Charles Wood

Hail, gladdening light,
Of His pure glory poured,
Who is the Immortal Father,
Heavenly, Blest,
Holiest of Holies
Jesu Christ, our Lord.

Now we are come to the sun's hour of rest,
The light's of evening round us shine,
We hymn the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit Divine.

Worthiest art Thou at all times to be sung
With undefiled tongue
Son of our God,
Giver of life alone;

Therefore in all the world
Thy glories Lord, they own.
Amen.

FERN HILL — John Corigliano

How as I was young and easy under the apple boughs
About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green,
The night above the dingle starry,
Time let me hail and climb
Golden in the heydays of his eyes,
And honoured among wagons I was prince of the apple towns
And once below a time I lordly had the trees and leaves
Trail with daisies and barley
Down the rivers of the windfall light.

And as I was green and carefree, famous among the barns
About the happy hard and singing as the farm was home,
In the sun that is young once only,
Time let me play and be
Golden in the mercy of his means,
And green and golden I was huntsman and herdsman, the calves
Sang to my horn, the foxes on the hills barked clear and cold,
And the sabbath rang slowly
In the pebbles of the holy streams.

All the sun long it was running, it was lovely, the hay
Fields high as the house, the tunes from the chimneys, it was air
And playing, lovely and watery
And fire green as grass.
And nightly under the simple stars
As I rode to sleep the owls were bearing the farm away,
All the moon long I heard, blessed among stables, the night hars
Flying with the ricks, and the horses
Flashing into the dark.

And then to awake, and the farm, like a wanderer white
With the dew, come back, the cock on his shoulder: it was all
Shining, it was Adam and maiden,
The sky gathered again
And the sun grew round that very day.
So it must have been after the birth of the simple light
In the first, spinning place, the spellbound horses walking warm
Out of the whinnying green stable
On to the fields of praise.

And honoured among foxes and pheasants by the gay house
Under the new made clouds and happy as the heart was long,
In the sun born over and over
I ran my heedless ways,
My wishes raced through the house high hay
And nothing I cared, at my sky blue trades, that time allows
Before the children green and golden
Follow him out of grace.

Nothing I cared, in the lamb white days, that time would take me
Up to the swallow thronged loft by the shadow of my hand,
In the moon that is always rising,
Nor that riding to sleep
I should hear him fly with the high fields
And wake to the farm forever fled from the childless land.
Oh as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means,
Time held me green and dying
Though I sand in my chains like the sea.

LIGHT OF A CLEAR BLUE MORNING — Dolly Parton

It's been a long dark night
And I've been waiting for the morning.
It's been a long hard fight,
But I see a brand- new day a-dawning.

I've been looking for the sunshine
'Cause I ain't seen it in so long.
Everything's gonna work out fine.
Everything's gonna be alright,
It's gonna be okay.

I can see the light of a clear blue morning.
I can see the light of a brand- new day.
I can see the light of a clear blue morning.
Everything's gonna be alright,
It's gonna be okay.

I can see the light,
I can see the light,
Blue, blue, morning blue.

CAN WE SING THE DARKNESS TO LIGHT? — Kyle Pederson

What if instead of more violence,
We let our weapons fall silent?
No more revenge or retribution;
No more war or persecution.
It could be beautiful.

What if instead of our judgment,
We soften our hearts that have hardened?
Instead of certainty and pride
We love and sacrifice.
It could be beautiful.

Can we see the other as our brother?
Can we sing the darkness to light
Sounding chords of compassion and grace?
Set the swords of judgment aside,
Let mercy's eyes see the other human face.

THROUGH LOVE TO LIGHT — Elaine Hagenberg

Through love to light! Oh, wonderful the way
That leads from darkness to the perfect day!
From darkness and from arrow of the night
To morning that comes singing o'er the sea.
Through love to light! Through light, O God, to thee,
Who art the love of love, the eternal light of light!

HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW — Zanaida Stewart Robles

"Let not your heart be troubled."
His tender words I hear.
And, resting on his goodness,
I lose my doubts and fears.

Though, by the path he leads me,
Though one thing I may see,
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know he watches me.

Why should I feel discouraged?
Why should the shadows come?
Why should my heart feel lonely
And long for heav'n and home,

When Jesus is my portion?
A constant friend is he.
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know he watches me.

I sing because I'm happy,
I sing because I'm free,
Oh, his eye is on the sparrow,
And I know he watches me

PROGRAM NOTES

LUX AETERNA — Eriks Ešenvalds

Latvian composer Eriks Ešenvalds has garnered international praise for his writing, winning countless awards. His myriad choral works have been performed on every continent. His music for the Latvian feature film *Mellow Mud* won honors at the 2016 *Berlin International Film Festival* and the 2017 *International Palm Springs Film Festival*. His compositions have been recorded on labels such as Decca Classics, Deutsche Gramophone, and Naxos. At least ten critically acclaimed recordings devoted exclusively to his works have been released to date.

Lux Aeterna, an ancient text from the *Requiem Mass*, has been a source of inspiration for composers for centuries. It is a prayer for peace, and an acknowledgment of the essential nature of light upon which eternal rest is secured. Ešenvalds' arrangement, which opens our concert, envelops the listener in the warm, unencumbered texture typical of Ešenvalds writing, encapsulating the sensation one might experience witnessing the first rays of sunshine over the horizon on a cool autumn morning.

HYMNE AU SOLEIL (*Hymn to the Sun*) — Lili Boulanger

The first woman ever awarded the *Prix de Rome*, Lili Boulanger secured the coveted prize for composition in 1913. Lili's sister, Nadia, was a well-known composer and teacher of composers at the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau, France. Although both women made an indelible mark on classical music Lily died tragically early at the age of 24 from Crohn's Disease. Nadia wrote of her younger sister, "She represents the best, the most intimate, and the most profound in my life." Lili Boulanger's choral works like *Hymne au Soleil*, and others such as *Psaume 24 & 130*, demonstrate her keen understanding of texture, timbre, orchestration, and poetry, underscoring her flair for the dramatic.

The text of *Hymne au Soleil* was written by Casimir Delavigne, 19th Century French poet and dramatist who was regarded by his contemporaries as an unsurpassed writer. His poem celebrates the power of the sun that causes the colors of the earth to be renewed and refreshed daily. As through a kaleidoscope or stained glass window, the sun's rays inspire fresh and vibrant colors, transforming the common into the sublime.

NOCTURNE — Adolphus Hailstork

African-American / Native-American composer Adolphus Hailstork was awarded two degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, and he completed a PhD in composition at Michigan State University in 1971. He has served on the faculty at Michigan State, Youngstown State University in Ohio, Norfolk State University in Virginia, and is currently Professor Emeritus at Old-Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. A prolific composer, he has written multiple award-winning works for chorus, solo voice, chamber ensembles, band, and orchestra.

Hailstork was a student of Nadia Boulanger, and one can hear Boulanger's impressionistic influence in *Nocturne*. The poem, written for a Unitarian assembly by Rev. Jim Curtis, celebrates the beauty of light as seen in the night sky on a warm summer night. It references the stars as "suns floating there, each a fiery universe" asking if one has ever considered the "wonder that flows...in mighty spaces where...fires burn." The poem reflects upon the beauty of starlight that touches the earth, igniting the sounds and fragrances that enliven the summer evening. It invites us to watch the sky together, and as lovers marvel at its reflective and radiant beauty.

CICADA SONGS — Charles Hoag

Charlie Hoag was a beloved theory professor at the University of Kansas when I was a doctoral student there. He and my mentor, Simon Carrington, had a very fond relationship, and Charlie wrote this set of songs for Carrington and faculty colleagues Larry Maxey, clarinet, and Linda Maxey, marimba. The University of Kansas Chamber Choir premiered the piece at an American Choral Director's Association Convention performance in the early 2000s.

About *Cicada Songs*, Hoag writes:

"It all started several summers ago when we were enduring a deluge of periodic cicadas. I sat on my front porch and knocked out a verse about them. The verse led to my starting a collection of the various kinds of cicadas, which may to this day be viewed through the rear window of my car. The collection of cicadas led to the songs. The songs are dedicated to my wife."

YONDER COME DAY — Paul John Rudoi

The words *day* and *sunshine* are metaphorically synonymous, and "everything the light touches," in this context, speaks to the nature of daylight that represents our journey through life. Rudoi's arrangement of *Yonder Come Day* deepens the traditional Georgia Sea Islands tune with a narrative that encapsulates other well-known spirituals, including *Hush, Hush, Somebody's Calling My Name, Steal Away*, and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*. In them, we move forward and upward, hoping for a better day, while also reminding us that though the journey leads us to the light, there are shadows that indelibly mark the passing of time.

HAIL, GLADDENING LIGHT — Charles Wood

Many will be familiar with this stalwart anthem by the Irish-born composer Charles Wood. A student of both Charles Stanford and Hubert Parry, Wood's writing represents a superior craftsmanship and brilliant understanding of rich vocal sonorities and complex homophony and counterpoint. The text, by John Kemble, was inspired by the early Greek hymn *Phos Hilaron (O Gladsome Light)*, and speaks about the setting sun, and perhaps poetically, even the Godhead, as the "light of the evening." Because he was writing for the professional choirs of Cambridge, Wood frequently composed works that required double choir. "*Hail, Gladdening Light*," is a stellar example of a cappella choral writing, and stands as one of the composer's most revered compositions.

FERN HILL — John Corigliano

The first composer to serve as Composer-in-Residence for the Chicago Symphony, John Corigliano has received an Academy Award for Original Music Score (*The Red Violin*, 1999), the Pulitzer Prize for Music (Symphony No. 2, 2001) and a Grammy Award for Best Classical Contemporary Composition (*Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven Poems of Bob Dylan*, 2009). Among Corigliano's famous students are Eric Whitacre, Mason Bates, and David Ludwig.

Though Corigliano's opera, *The Ghosts of Versailles*, is the work for which he is best known, *Fern Hill* (1960) is the most performed of his choral repertoire. Written as a gift for his high school music teacher, Bella Tillis, *Fern Hill* is a remarkable collaboration of poetry and music. Of Welsh-born Dylan Thomas's poem Corigliano writes, "I was irresistibly drawn to translate his music into mine," because, as Thomas wrote in his *Poetic Manifesto of 1951*, "What the words meant was of secondary importance; what matters was the sound of them...these words were as the notes of bells, the sounds of musical instruments."

Fern Hill is a joyful celebration of youth and the fancy it holds. Time—the passing of the daylight—is an integral character in the poem; while it observes the momentum of life with frivolity and mirth, the journey leads elsewhere. Thomas writes, "time held me green and dying," suggesting that through days of childish play, Time accompanies him on a winding road to his appointed end.

Corigliano's mastery of lyrical melody is evident from the first notes of the piano—originally scored for violins. The direction "with simplicity" is frequent throughout the work, reminding the singer that gentle spirit and tender intimacy should be captured in the sweet essence of Thomas's pastoral recollections. Sonorous dissonance is carefully interspersed throughout to mark Time's enduring presence—and the composition ends with juxtaposed half-steps in a slightly bitter, although satisfying, final cadence.

LIGHT OF A CLEAR BLUE MORNING — Craig Hella Johnson

Dolly Parton's "*Light of a Clear Blue Morning*," was featured in her 1977 album *New Harvest...First Gathering*. She said it was her "song of deliverance" as she was making a break from longtime business partner Porter Wagoner. Rolling Stone ranked the song at number four on a list of top 50 Dolly Parton songs, declaring that the song was "new-era Dolly, luminous, independent, and on the verge of superstardom."

Craig Hella Johnson wrote this arrangement of Dolly Parton's hit single in 2009, and it has been performed thousands of times by choirs all over the world. The song evokes sentiment that most of us feel as we try to navigate the current rancorous political climate, consider injustice, poverty, and war, and struggle to find our own way through what too often feels like a "long dark night." As we look for the sunshine, we are assured that "everything is gonna work out fine, everything's gonna be OK," because we can see—feel, sense—the light.

CAN WE SING THE DARKNESS TO LIGHT? — Kyle Pederson

Minneapolis composer/pianist Kyle Pederson is becoming an increasingly familiar name in the US and abroad. He has won multiple awards for his compositions, and he is frequently called on to write choral commissions for professional and amateur choruses. As the author of this poem, Pederson asks questions which may appear to be unfortunately idealistic to our modern—and perhaps somewhat jaded—sensibilities: “What if...”? The text invites the listener to imagine a world without judgment, certainty, or pride and what would it look and feel like to love and sacrifice, to turn the darkness into light? “It could be beautiful.”

THROUGH LOVE TO LIGHT — Elaine Hagenberg

One of the freshest voices in choral music today, Elaine Hagenberg has written for over 50 choral commissions as part of her prolific canon. Her music has been featured in Carnegie Hall and other international concert halls from Australia to South America and Europe. She was the winner of the 2020 ACDA Raymond Brock Competition for Professional Composers for her work “*I Am the Wind*.”

Through Love to Light has a simple message, but the simplest messages always seem to confound. Darkness to light, sadness to joy, hatred to love—all of these represent a journey of choice, of struggle, of profound intention. As we seek the light, acknowledging that *whatever the light touches*, we can find our way, *through love, to light*.

HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW — Zanaida Stewart Robles

Zanaida Stewart Robles is an award-winning Black American female composer, vocalist, and teacher. She is a fierce advocate for diversity and inclusion in music education and performance. Authentic interpersonal connection and relationship-building are core principles of her teaching and performance methods. Born, raised, and educated in Southern California on the occupied lands of the Gabrielino-Tongva people, she is in demand as a composer, vocalist, clinician and adjudicator for competitions, festivals, and conferences related to choral and solo vocal music. Robles holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music.

ARTISTIC PERSONAL

WINSTON SALEM CHORAL ARTISTS

Dr. Christopher Gilliam, Artistic Director and Conductor

Winston-Salem Choral Artists is the premiere fully-professional choral organization in the City of Arts and Innovation. Dedicated to highest-level artistry, and in support of vocal artists from the Piedmont Triad and surrounding areas, its mission is to perform compelling and relevant repertoire before diverse audiences locally, regionally, and nationally, and to engage with and support artistic organizations and educational institutions in our city and beyond.

Having spent the better part of their lives and careers in music, the Choral Artists are exceptional soloists, musicians, and performers in their own right. They are also entrepreneurs, health care professionals, educators, therapists, and everything in between. It is the focus of the ensemble—the teamwork, camaraderie, discipline, and intentionality—that brings them together, but it is the power of the choral art and the impact that music continues to have in their lives, and can have in the lives of others, that compels them.

PERSONNEL

SOPRANO I

Claudia Audet
Alexandria McNeely
Charli Mills
Barbara Wilder

SOPRANO II

Taylor Hill
Sara Lynch
Katie Muhlenkamp
Clara Reitz

ALTO I

Christin Baker
Alyssa Cataldi
Kristin Schwecke
Elaine Phelps

ALTO II

Christin Barnhardt
Daniele Olsen
Madeline Hamrick Phillips
Krista Steinour

TENOR I

Mason Boone
David Brooks
Joshua Moyer

TENOR II

Isaac Fulk
Bob Garver
Robert Matthews
Robert Steinour

BASS I

Chris Ervin
Stephens Stringer
Kelly Turner
Rich Lowder

BASS II

Michael Martinez
Will Munster
David Arnold Paris
Jackson Wood

DR. CHRISTOPHER GILLIAM

Artistic Director and Conductor



A conductor praised for his “precision and clarity,” and performances hailed as “enlightened,” **Christopher Gilliam** is the Director of Choral Activities at Wake Forest University, director of the Winston-Salem Symphony Chorus, artistic director and conductor for Winston-Salem Choral Artists, and Director of Music at Highland Presbyterian Church in Winston-Salem.

North Carolina native Christopher Gilliam received the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Voice Performance and Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting from the University of Kansas in 2003. At KU, he studied with conducting professors Simon Carrington, Brian Priestman, James Daugherty, and John Paul Johnson, voice professor John Stephens, and

guest conductors Hilary Apfelstadt, Robert Sund, Maurice Casey, Jameson Marvin, Carl Hogset, André Thomas, and Rodney Eichenberger.

Gilliam accepted the post of Assistant Professor and Director of Choral Activities at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina in the fall of 2020. There he conducts the Chamber Choir, the premier touring choir, and Concert Choir. From 2012 to 2020 he was Director of Choral Activities at Davidson College in Davidson, NC, where he directed a graded choral program, served as Artistic Director for both the Choral Arts Society of Davidson and the annual Holiday Gala, and taught private voice. Gilliam also taught at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana, where he served as Associate Professor of Choral Activities and Associate Professor of Voice. Additionally, Gilliam is the artistic director and conductor for Winston-Salem Choral Artists, a professional choral ensemble based in Winston-Salem, the Director of Music at Highland Presbyterian Church, and as director of the Winston-Salem Symphony Chorus, he has regularly taken the podium to conduct choral masterworks for the Symphony.

Gilliam has traveled extensively nationally and internationally, serving as guest conductor, clinician, and/or singer in several states and abroad—Australia, Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, and Switzerland. A member of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), he has directed choirs and taught award-winning voice students who participated in state and regional conferences for both associations. Gilliam was a founding member of and soloist for the Simon Carrington Chamber Singers, a professional choral ensemble formerly based in Kansas City, Missouri, and he appears as a soloist on the ensemble's CD, *Juxtapositions*. Of his solo performances, critics have written, “magnificent,” “a well-modulated voice with a pleasant timbre,” “...commanding baritone,” and “...marvelous, with strikingly rich tone and impeccable diction.” Gilliam has been a soloist for the Winston-Salem and Memphis Symphonies, and he is currently on the rosters of the Oregon Bach Festival and Charlotte Bach Akademie.

As a choral composer, Gilliam has published music with Alliance Music, Beckenhorst Press, E.C. Schirmer, and Lorenz, and is a current ASCAP member.

ROBERT MATTHEWS

Pianist

Robert Matthews is a native of Carthage, NC and is currently Organist and Choirmaster at St. Timothy's Episcopal in Winston-Salem. He holds degrees from UNC-Greensboro (DMA in Choral Conducting), Salem College (MM in Piano), and Appalachian State (MM in Music Education and BM in Piano), with additional piano study at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France. Before moving to Winston-Salem, Robert was the Director of Choral and Vocal Studies at Emory & Henry College. Other teaching appointments have included North Wilkes High School and Greensboro Day School.

Robert has been a collaborative pianist for the choirs of ASU, UNCG, and several NC All-State choirs. He also traveled to China with the winners of the Charles A. Lynam Vocal Competition to serve as pianist for performances in Beijing, Shanghai, Dalian, and Tongliao. Other formative experiences include his participation in the Vancouver International Song Institute's French Mélodie Immersion Program at the University of British Columbia and the Tallis Scholars Summer School at Seattle University. He was also a Conducting Apprentice at the Berkshire Choral Festival in Sheffield, MA where he was given the Charles Dodsley Walker Award. He is thrilled to have the opportunity to collaborate with the fine musicians of the WSCA.



KRISTIN SCHWECKE

Soprano

Kristin Schwcke has been heralded as

"A name to keep in mind...Her voice filled the house and dominated the stage. Simply spectacular! What a promising dramatic soprano!"
- *Opera Lively*

On the operatic stage, Kristin's highlights include La Contessa in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Hubbard Hall Opera Theater, First Lady in *The Magic Flute* with Piedmont Opera, Magda in *La Rondine* with the AJ Fletcher Opera Institute, Abigail in *Robert Ward's The Crucible* with Piedmont Opera, and 2nd Sprite in *Rusalka* with North Carolina Opera, and as the title role in the World Premiere of Michael Ching's opera *Anna Hunter* with The Savannah Voice Festival.

In concert, Kristin has appeared as a soloist with orchestras nationwide including Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra, Cobb Symphony Orchestra, The University of North Carolina School of the Arts Symphony Orchestra,



Valdosta Symphony Orchestra and the University of Wisconsin Madison Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Schwেকে has received honors in the Heafner Williams Vocal Competition, the Fritz and Lavinia Jensen Foundation Competition, Charlotte Opera Guild Competition, Rosen-Schaffel Young Artist Competition, Schubert Club Bruce P Carlson Scholarship Competition and internationally from the Czech and Slovak International Singing Competition. She was also the winner at the District level and received an Encouragement Award at Regional level in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

A native to Wisconsin, Kristin graduated from the University of Wisconsin Madison with a Masters degree in Voice. She also holds a Performing Artist Certificate from the AJ Fletcher Opera Institute at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Ms. Schwেকে is currently part of the music faculty at Salem College and Wake Forest University in North Carolina.

KSENIIJA KOMLIJENOVIC

Marimba



Ksenija Komljenović, hailing from Belgrade, Serbia, stands as a testament to the transformative power of music. Acclaimed as a prizewinner of the International Percussion Competition Luxembourg, she has carved a niche for herself as a distinguished percussionist, dedicated educator, and innovative composer. Her expansive musical journey, marked by performances, teachings, and studies, has spanned the culturally rich terrains of Europe, the diverse landscapes of the United States, and the ancient traditions of Asia. Trailblazing her way into the annals of music history, Komljenović holds the distinctive honor of being the first Serbian woman to secure a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Percussion.

"I dedicate significant time to understand each student and their aspirations. My approach focuses on nurturing their artistic vision, instilling in them the belief in their ability to bring beauty into the world, and empowering them to pursue their dreams." - Ksenija Komljenović

Having served as a faculty member at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, her commitment to education and mentoring is evident. Throughout her career, she has graced countless stages, presenting hundreds of concerts and imparting her knowledge through over 50 masterclasses, underlining her unwavering commitment to nurturing the next generation of musicians. In 2022, she embraced the directorial role for the *TIERRAS South Texas Percussion Competition*. Her multifaceted talents also saw her co-producing the "At Percussion" podcast from 2019 to 2022, and organizing the *SoundWaves Music Festival* in 2021 and 2022. Komljenović's association as a *Marimba One* Artist further highlights her stature in the percussion community.

Komljenović's illustrious career is peppered with significant milestones. She has been instrumental in establishing renowned chamber ensembles, notably the *Vesna Duo* and *PNEUMA*, which unite premier performers from five different countries. Globally, her

performances have garnered accolades, with notable recitals in Hong Kong, England, Spain, Portugal, Russia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Poland. Her ingenious arrangement of Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* for marimba and piano, spotlighted on *Vesna Duo's* debut album, has been lauded by critics and peers alike.

Deepening her roots in her homeland, she pioneered the first drumline camp and modern percussion workshop in Serbia. Her recent composition, *Slavdom for Wind Band*, a tribute to her Slavic/Balkan lineage and backed by ten U.S. universities, celebrated its premiere in Arkansas in November 2022. Additionally, her collaborative piece, *Epilog [Epilogue]*, melding music with dance, graced the ceremonial reopening of the annex of the Memorial Museum of Ivo Andric, a treasured Yugoslav Nobel Prize laureate, in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

OSKAR ESPINA RUIZ

Clarinet

Oskar Espina Ruiz, esteemed member of the clarinet faculty, is a force to be reckoned with in the world of classical music. Lauded by the media as a "masterful soloist," Espina Ruiz's clarinet artistry is "highly expressive," exuding an energy that deeply resonates with listeners. Over the past decade, his virtuosity has been showcased in prestigious concert halls and festivals worldwide. His remarkable performances span from the iconic Philharmonic Hall in St. Petersburg, Russia, to Carnegie's Weill Hall in New York. Additional performance highlights include the Corcoran Museum in Washington D.C., the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, Oji Hall in Tokyo, and the Madrid Royal Superior Conservatory. Espina Ruiz's talents have further echoed in the halls of the Beijing and Shanghai Conservatories and through broadcasts on Radio Television Hong Kong.



Recognized as a prodigiously gifted musician, Espina Ruiz has cemented his reputation as one of the premier clarinetists in the U.S. His tenure includes serving on the UNCSCA Clarinet Faculty since 2011 and previously imparting his knowledge at the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music between 2009 and 2011. Additionally, he has helmed the Treetops Chamber Music Society in Stamford, CT, as its artistic director since 2006. Espina Ruiz's musical foundation has been shaped by luminaries such as Charles Neidich, Ayako Oshima, and flutist Aurèle Nicolet.

Espina Ruiz's career is punctuated by numerous accolades and collaborations. He has recorded under esteemed labels like Bridge, Kobaltone, and Prion, with his solo recording "Julián Menéndez Rediscovered" garnering praise from clarinet maestros Richard Stoltzman and Charles Neidich. As a soloist, his collaborations span globally, including performances with orchestras such as the St. Petersburg State Academic Symphony, Orquesta Sinfónica de la Ciudad de Asunción, and Bilbao Symphony. Chamber music endeavors have seen him partnering with renowned groups and artists like the Shanghai, Escher, and Calla quartets, and Metropolitan Opera Orchestra artists.

His commitment to revitalizing the clarinet repertoire is evident. In 2003, he brought the original Copland Clarinet Concerto to South American audiences and has introduced adaptations of works by revered composers like Ravel, Arriaga, and

Menéndez. Espina Ruiz's contributions also extend to premiering compositions by contemporary international composers, reflecting his dedication to the music of our era. Remarkably, at just 16, he became the youngest member to perform with the Bilbao Symphony.

Espina Ruiz's excellence hasn't gone unnoticed. He clinched top honors at esteemed events like the Olga Koussevitzky and Artists International competitions. His profound research on Spanish Post-Romantic composer Julián Menéndez earned him the first prize at the International Clarinet Association Research Competition in 2006, leading to his feature in The Clarinet magazine and facilitating the acquisition of a Menéndez clarinet by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

An Encore of Appreciation!

As the final notes of our performance linger in the air, we pause to recognize those who have played an instrumental role behind the scenes. Just as a concert is incomplete without an encore, our first concert would not have been possible without the unwavering support and belief of the individuals listed below. Their contributions, both seen and unseen, have harmonized perfectly with our efforts, creating a symphony of success. Let's celebrate our backstage stars!

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Become a part of our musical journey
and scan here to contribute!**





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AND ON EARTH PEACE GOODWILL

DECEMBER 21 & 22, 7:30 PM

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A perfect prelude to your Christmas Eve, join the Choral Artists for an evening of resplendent a cappella choral repertoire of classic seasonal gems, traditional holiday favorites, and newly composed Christmas arrangements. Featuring works by Poulenc, Stopford, Warlock, and more, bring along your family and friends to revel in the wonder and beauty of the season with us!

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