2020 Winter Tour
Albuquerque  I  Santa Fe  I  Colorado Springs  I  Boulder  I  Denver
January 21-31, 2020

The Choir of the West

Richard Nance, Conductor
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God ........................................ Martin Luther (1483 - 1546)/arr. W.B. Olds (1874 - 1948)

Three Motets ........................................................................................................................................ Gottfried Homilius (1714 - 1785)

1. Machet die Tore Weit

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.

2. Siehe, das ist Gottes Lamm

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.
Christ, you Lamb of God,
you who take away the sins of the world.
have mercy on us!

3. Seid fröhlich in Hoffnung

Be joyful in hope, patient in trouble, faithful in prayer.
Hopeful, cheerful and undaunted
Everywhere they appear who in Christ are planted.
Death itself cannot appall them,
They rejoice when the voice of the Lord doth call them.

Matters of the Heart

1. The Heart’s Reflection ....................................................................................................................... Daniel Elder (b. 1986)

2. Batter My Heart, Three-Personed God .............................................................................................. Richard Nance (b. 1955)
Shakespeare Songs ................................................................. Matthew Harris (b. 1956)

1. It Was A Lover And His Lass
2. O, Mistress Mine
3. When Daffodils Begin To Peer

INTERMISSION

Psalm 117 (US premiere) ......................................................... Daniel Knaggs (b. 1983)

There Will Come Soft Rains .................................................. Ėriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

The Sleeping Earth Begins To Dream (world premiere) .............. Thomas (TJ) Wheeler (b. 1994)
Thomas Wheeler is a member of the Choir of the West and a music composition major. He composed both the text and music for this work.

Leonardo Dreams of His Flying Machine ................................ Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)


1. I'm Gonna Sing ‘Til The Spirit
2. I Want Jesus To Walk With Me
3. Great Day!

Beautiful Savior ................................................................. arr. F. Melius Christiansen (1871 - 1955)

We welcome all our audiences and hope to be able to spend some time visiting with you following today’s program!
Soprano
Maya Adams
Caroline Goodwin
Lindsey Hansen
Anna Hatfield
Rachel King
Kayla Linquist
Morgan Roberts
Jessica Swanson
Mackenzie Taylor

Alto
Rachel Bridges
Emma Christensen
Isabella Daltoso
Ella Ekstedt
Anika Hille
Rae Hyra
Cecilia Lewis
Cat Tyler

Tenor
Chase Alm
Will Bentley
David Gilman
Trevor Kytola
Ian Rice
Zach Thomas
TJ Wheeler
Jackson Wray

Bass
Benaiah Axlund
Hugh Davis
Trevor Hansen
Luke Hartley
Brent Johnson
Duncan Kass
Arthur Keast
Ben Merrill
Ethan Moon
Ryan Shane
CHOIR OF THE WEST

The Choir of the West is the premier choral ensemble of the Department of Music at Pacific Lutheran University, located in Tacoma, Washington. The choir was founded in 1926, and was the third Lutheran college choir to tour extensively throughout the United States. The Choir of the West has toured Europe, Scandinavia, Japan and China, and has been selected to appear at several state, division and national conferences of the National Association for Music Education and the American Choral Directors Association. Most recently, the choir performed at the Northwestern Division ACDA conference in 2018 and previously 2012, and gave a highly acclaimed performance at the 2013 ACDA National Conference held in Dallas. Choir of the West performed a featured concert at the 2015 National Collegiate Choral Organization Conference under the direction of headliner Simon Carrington. The choir won two gold awards at the 2011 Harmonie Festival in Lindenholzhausen, Germany, and won two categories at the 2015 Anton Bruckner Competition in Linz, Austria. The choir was awarded the Anton Bruckner Prize as the most outstanding ensemble in the competition.

Choir of the West has regularly participated in the premieres of important new works. Most recently, the choir combined with the PLU Choral Union and University Symphony Orchestra to give the North American premiere of Ėriks Ešenvalds’ “Nordic Light Symphony” (2017) and Sven-David Sandström’s “Matthauspassion” (2016). In spring of 2018 the choir joined with the PLU Chorale and University Wind Ensemble to premiere the chamber version of JAC Redford’s “Homing,” which was the 2017 Raymond W. Brock Composition. The choir has released several recordings (available at https://lutelocker.com/collections/plu-music-recordings), and in April 2018 recorded several works by Ėriks Ešenvalds under his supervision. The album, titled There Will Come Soft Rains is available on the Signum Classics label at www.plu.edu/softrains.

The Choir of the West is comprised of undergraduate students from a variety of academic disciplines. The choir performs several concerts each year, including shared programs with other PLU ensembles, the annual series of five Christmas Concerts (the 2015 concert was filmed for broadcast on PBS), and campus celebratory events. The choir tours domestically in three out of four years, and once every four years tours internationally. For more information about the Choir of the West, please visit: www.plu.edu/sing.

RICHARD NANCE, CONDUCTOR

Richard Nance is Director of Choral Activities and conductor of the Choir of the West and Choral Union at PLU. Nance’s choirs have been regularly selected to perform at conferences of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and the National Association for Music Education. Most recently, Choir of the West appeared at the 2018 ACDA Northwestern Division Conference, and the choir gave highly acclaimed performances at the 2013 ACDA National Conference, held in Dallas. Choir of the West was one of two headliner choirs at the 2015 National Collegiate Choral Organization Conference, where the choir was guest conducted by Simon Carrington. Nance’s choirs have toured Europe on several occasions and have won top awards at the Harmonie Festival, Florence International Choral Festival and the Anton Bruckner Choir Competition. His choirs have regularly given premiere performances of important new works, including the North American premieres of Sven David Sandström’s “Matthauspassion” and the “Nordic Light Symphony” by Ėriks Ešenvalds. Dr. Nance has published choral works with Walton Music, Hinshaw Music and Colla Voce Music. In 2002, Nance was selected to write the prestigious Raymond Brock Memorial Composition for the American Choral Directors Association. In 2011 and 2013, he was awarded the American Prize for choral conducting, and he has received leadership awards from the Washington State and Northwestern Division chapters of ACDA.
Catchy melodies and technical sophistication contribute to the popularity of the motets by Gottfried Homilius. The composer often incorporated familiar Lutheran chorale tunes in these works, usually sung in traditional harmony by choir two against a more florid setting of a biblical text sung by choir one. This stylistic element can be heard in *Siehe, das its Gottes Lamm* and *Seid fröhlich in Hoffnung*.  

Daniel Elder describes *The Heart's Reflection* as a “musical fantasia in its free-flowing form. As each word is presented, musical ideas transport the listener to a unique emotion associated with each part of this profound proverb (Proverbs 27:19). Through the coloring of each thought, we are taken on a journey of love, wonder, and spirituality associated with the bonds we share with one another.” *Batter My Heart, Three-Personed God* is set to a text from the *Holy Sonnets* by 16th-century poet John Donne. It describes a person’s inner struggle with faith, painted musically with heavily accented chords, expressive dissonance, and unsettling modulations.

Matthew Harris composed six enormously successful books of songs (21 works) on texts from Shakespeare’s plays. This music is fresh and melodic, containing elements of popular style. Harris describes *It Was a Lover and His Lass* as a “slow, gentle idyll of young love in the spring.” *O Mistress Mine* is a “heavenly coda that expands on the lessons of youth and love.” And *When Daffodils Begin to Peer* finishes the set in “good old country style.”

Daniel Knaggs’ works are being commissioned and performed by some of the world’s finest choral ensembles, including the choir of Trinity College of Cambridge University, for whom *Psalm 117* was composed just last year. In this piece Knaggs combines rhythmic drive, harmonic vigor, and dynamic contrasts to convey a sense of excitement and joy.

Choir of the West is pleased to announce the release of our new album of works by Latvian composer Ēriks Ešenvalds. The title work of the album, *There Will Come Soft Rains*, dates from 2016, and is one of many works Ešenvalds has composed on poems by Sara Teasdale (1884 - 1938). Written in a poignant, melodic style, Ešenvalds paints his impression of a world “peaceful and full of life - frogs, birds, trees and rain,” even as conflict is happening somewhere in the world, and continuing on after the human race is gone.

Choir of the West regularly performs new works by student composers. Thomas (TJ) Wheeler is a member of this year’s choir. TJ says, “*The Sleeping Earth Begins to Dream* is a piece that, on the surface, depicts a poetic journey from dusk to dawn. However, one could also interpret this journey as a reminder of time itself always pushing forward, that change will always come and all storms will inevitably pass. From an ethereal outset to a bold conclusion, this piece colorfully explores what all could unfold as the sun sets and rises again.”

Eric Whitacre is one of America’s most performed composers of choral music. His beloved work, *Leonardo Dreams of His Flying Machine* (2002) can best be described as a “opera bréve.” In this vivid, dramatic imagining, Leonardo is tormented by the calling of the air, tortured to such degree that his only recourse is to solve the riddle and figure out how to fly.

Moses Hogan’s many arrangements of classic spirituals have influenced generations of choral musicians and audiences for years, and will into the future. His settings are filled with rhythmic drive, creative harmonization, and powerful emotion, as you will hear in the three pieces we present as the climax of tonight’s program.
Please keep this program if you wish, or you may return it for use at another concert in the boxes provided in the lobby.
Gottfried and Mary Fuchs Organ, Lagerquist Concert Hall, Pacific Lutheran University