

Choral Union

Saturday, February 29, 2020 at 8pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
School of Arts and Communication / Department of Music presents

Choral Union
Richard Nance, *conductor*

Saturday, February 29, 2020 at 8pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.
Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.
Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

I

Pied Beauty J.A.C. Redford (b. 1953)
The Gift J.A.C. Redford

II

American Folk Hymns

- 1. Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal** arr. Alice Parker (b. 1925)
Biffy Brinkley, soloist
- 2. My Song in the Night** arr. Paul J. Christiansen (1914-1997)
- 3. Simple Gifts**arr. René Clausen (b. 1953)
Hannah Rausch, soloist

III

Under Heaven (world premiere).....Austin Schend (b. 1991)
1. Birth and Death
2. The Setting Sun (Christina Nelson, *soloist*)
3. Return to Heaven

INTERMISSION

IV

Two MotetsJosu Elberdin (b. 1976)

1. Ubi caritas et amor

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsultemus et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.

*Where charity and love are, God is there.
Christ's love has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice, and be pleased in him.
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.
And may we love each other with a sincere heart.*

2. Cantate Domino (Kanta Jaunari Kantu Berria)

Sing to the Lord a new song.
Sing to the Lord, sing all the earth praise his name.

(Basque)

Kanta Jaunari kantu berria,
Kanta Jaunari lur guztia,
Egin alaitsu haren nahia.

*Sing to the Lord a new song,
sing to the Lord all the earth,
Joyfully fulfill his will.*

(Latin)

Benedicite nomini eius.
Annuntiate diem de die salutare eius.
Cantate, exsultate et psalite in cithara.
Psalite voce psalmi.
Quia mirabilia fecit.

*Let us come before him with thanks.
Let us shout songs of joy to him.
Sing and praise with the harp,
Sing praises with a psalm.
For he has done wonders.*

V

Hail, Queen of Heaven.....**Rihards Dubra (b. 1964)**

Lydia Bill and Nicole Fife, *soloists*

VI

African-American Sprituals

1. I Got Shoes.....**arr. Alice Parker/Robert Shaw (1916-1999)**

2. I've Been in the Storm So Long..... **arr. Jeffrey Ames (b. 1969)**

Faith Ockwell, *soloist*

3. Witness.....**arr. Jack Halloran (1916-1997)**

Program Notes

This summer the Choral Union Tour Ensemble will tour to Croatia (June 25-July 9). The ensemble will be made up of 38 of the singers that will perform this evening's program. Since Choral Union meets only once a week for regular rehearsal, and we have a program called "Peace at Play" with the Northwest Sinfonietta on May 16 and 17 (northwestsinfonietta.org) it seemed helpful and prudent to teach the tour literature to the entire choir for this concert.

Since we will be singing in Catholic churches in Croatia, our repertoire is all sacred, and much of it is American. We begin with two beautiful works by J.A.C. Redford, a composer, arranger, orchestrator and conductor of concert, chamber and choral music, film, television and theater scores, and music for recordings. *Pied Beauty* is his joyful setting of a poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), expressing praise and glory to God for all sorts of "dappled" things – skies as colorful as a "brinded cow," stippled trout, finch's wings, and more. Redford's refrain features a stuttering effect as the word "glory" is repeated "g-g-g-glory." I interpret this as expressing so much joy and excitement for God's glory that the word can hardly be held back. *The Gift* is a setting of the Latin text "Musica Dei donum optimi." Redford interjects the first line of the Latin, alternating it with the English translation. He uses duets between voices to bring textural variety to the dense polyphony that accompanies the theme. A middle section, "Music stirs even the very trees" is chordal, and throughout a brief, chordal refrain separates the sections of the work.

The second section of our program consists of three American folk hymns. Alice Parker's beloved arrangement of the shape-note hymn *Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal* was written for the Robert Shaw Chorale and published in 1967. Parker infuses the sturdy hymn with gutsy rhythmic figures under the tune. Paul J. Christiansen was conductor of the Concordia (Moorhead) College Choir from 1937-1986. He was the youngest son of F. Melius Christiansen, founder of the Lutheran College choral tradition in America. His simple, yet lush arrangement of the Southern hymn *My Song in the Night* perfectly captures the personal, prayerful, pleading nature of the text. We end the set with René Clausen's arrangement of

the familiar Shaker tune *Simple Gifts*. Clausen followed Paul Christiansen as conductor of the Concordia Choir, and has just recently announced his retirement. His imaginative arrangement features numerous shifts in meter, paired voices (particularly in the female voices while the male voices sing chordal underlay), and a joyful cacophony of soprano voices in aleatoric fashion over a long, sustained chord before the bottom three voices present the theme in unison at the end of the piece.

Austin Schend is a 2019 graduate of PLU where he studied composition under Dr. Gregory Youtz. After performing his enormously successful work *To Achieve Thine Ends* last summer with Choir of the West, I asked Austin if he might compose a work for the Choral Union tour. The result is a beautiful set of three miniatures called *Under Heaven*. The work features texts from Ecclesiastes, the poem *As A Man Thinketh* by James Allen (1864-1912), and *Meditations* by Marcus Aurelius (121-180 AD). The note from the score says the piece "...deals with themes of life and death, and particularly the acceptance of death as a natural process of life." Throughout the work Austin uses aleatoric techniques, paired voices, lyric solo lines, and chant. He has created a beautiful, meditative, and consoling work.

Josu Elberdin is from Pasaia, Spain, where since 2000 he has worked as a music teacher at the Musical School of Pasaia. He also works as a church organist, choral singer, and vocal soloist. He has won several awards in composition, and has set compulsory scores for international choral contests through Europe and in Argentina. *Ubi caritas et amor* was composed for a 2014 concert tribute to renowned Spanish composer Javier Busto, in celebration of his sixty-fifth birthday. Elberdin says "it is a collection of the liturgical texts of Holy Thursday, and this setting seeks to reflect ideas of humility and affection." *Cantate Domino* was commissioned in 2011 by the Salt Lake Choral Artists for their performance at the World Choral Symposium in Puerto Madryn, Argentina. Elberdin says, "After a stately opening reflecting the deep sense of joy that comes from singing to God, the composition breaks into a joyful and exuberant Basque text interspersed with Latin. After the last reprise, the coda is repeated, finishing strongly and energetically."

Our trip to Croatia will take us primarily along the Dalmatian coastline, and I thought a piece on the text *Ave Maris Stella* (Hail, Star of the Sea) would be perfect to perform in Catholic churches. I chose an extended setting by Rihards Dubra, one of Latvia's finest composers. His music can be described as being meditative, influenced by music from the Middle Ages with a twenty-first century harmonic language. *Hail, Queen of Heaven* was commissioned by the State Choir Latvija in 2008. It was Dubra's first piece written in English. The piece opens with two solo voices in chant, surrounded by the chorus in free-flowing 9/4 rhythm, creating a mystical, halo-like effect. The opening chant is then presented in aleatoric fashion by the inner voices, while the basses and sopranos present a new melody in parallel tenths. The full chorus enters, pleading in strong declamation "Save us!" from the woes of life. After a moment of silence, Dubra sets a serene, reserved prayer in rich and resonant harmony, "Mother of Christ, Star of the sea, pray for the wanderer. Pray for me." This refrain will be heard again after the next verse of text, set in a dancelike 3/8 meter, perhaps meant to portray the frivolous and naïve way we go through life. This leads to the most passionate part of the text, again set in heavy declamation, "Remind thy Son that He has paid the price for our iniquity." The refrain is heard again, and Dubra then leads to the end of the piece with a section of rising vocal lines as the singers plead for Mary to soothe and bring hope as they go through life's journey. The refrain returns once more, then Dubra closes the piece with a reprise of the opening section.

European audiences always love hearing American spirituals, so I have chosen a set of three to end our program. Alice Parker and Robert Shaw collaborated on many settings of folk songs, spirituals and carols in the 1950s and '60s when the Robert Shaw Chorale was the leading choral ensemble in America. *I Got Shoes* is typical of their style – imaginative, straight forward and skillfully set. Jeffrey Ames is the Director of Choral Activities at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. He wrote his setting of *I've Been in the Storm So Long* "in response to Hurricane Katrina, the merciless storm that devastated New Orleans and the Gulf Coast in August of 2005." Ames says, "In the aftermath of the storm, homes, personal possessions, as well as hundreds of precious lives were forever lost. However, amid the despair, a glimmer of hope shines through. The recurring phrase in this piece, 'Give me little time to pray,' reminds us of the strength former slaves longed for to give themselves hope and peace in the midst of life's storms." The final piece of the set is Jack Halloran's *Witness*. This showy, evangelical spiritual uses two biblical stories – the conversion of Nicodemus, and Samson and Delilah, to encourage the faithful to act as witnesses for the Lord.

Pacific Lutheran University Choral Union

Richard Nance, *conductor*

Soprano

Biffy Binkley
Lauren Boyles
Natalie Breshears
Katie Brizuela
Sue Byrd
Melissa Dier
Caryl D. Dowd
Kathryn Eagle
Christina Nelson
Nancy Nole
Amy Onstot
Allison Saager
Richelle Scanlan
Heather Simmons

Alto

Lydia Bill
Debbie Dion
Nicole Fife
Karen Fulmer
Debbie Hushagen
Holly Jensen
Kamila Komshlies
Jamie Lindberg
Cindy Luebke
Gloria Moore
Patti Nance
Faith Ockwell
Becky Purser
Janelle Purser
Hannah Rausch
Allison Shane
Jane Sparks
Anne Urlie
Marie Valenzuela
Sadi Wentz

Tenor

Neil Asay
Tom Cameron
Sam Eagle
Eric Faris
Nicholas Gorne
John McGilliard
John Ockwell
Rich Ockwell
Nick Pharris
Roland Robinson
Randy Saager
Austin Schend
Nate Sears

Bass

Alan Aplin
James D. Bales, Jr.
Chris Berntsen
Jason Brinker
Mike Byrd
Greg Golliet
Brandon Hell
Jim Hushagen
J. Christian Jaeger
Todd E. Kelley
Frank Lewis
Joshua Luebke
Philip Nesvig
Daniel Schreiner
Peter Seto
Manuel Tirado
Larry Wiseman

Want to skip the line at the door?

Tickets are available for purchase online up to two hours prior to each ticketed performance.

Visit www.plu.edu/music/calendar prior to any event to purchase your tickets ahead of time.

Simply select the event you'd like to attend and click "Buy Tickets" to visit the event ticketing page on www.eventbrite.com.

Spring Events

at Pacific Lutheran University

ALL MUSIC EVENTS ARE IN MARY BAKER RUSSELL MUSIC CENTER, LAGERQUIST CONCERT HALL AT 8PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

FEBRUARY

- 1 Saturday, February, 3pm**
WSMTA 4-Piano Benefit Concert, free admission
- 7 Friday, 8pm**
Choir of the West Tour Homecoming Concert
- 8 Saturday, 5:30pm**
Northwest High School Honor Jazz Band. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center, free admission
- 21 Friday, 8pm**
Showcase Concert, free admission
- 26 Wednesday, 8pm**
Artist Series: Duo Powers-de la Torre, free admission
- 29 Saturday, 8pm**
Choral Union. Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 Senior Citizen (60+), Military, Alumni, PLU Community; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under

MARCH

- 1 Sunday, 3pm**
Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Erica Johnson, Organist
Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 Senior Citizen (60+), Military, Alumni, PLU Community; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under
- 2 Monday, 7:15pm**
Kelly Kuo Voice Masterclass. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission
- 7 Saturday, 5:30pm**
Washington Day of Percussion & Pan Celebration. Visit for ticketing details: <https://wapas.ticketleap.com/washington-day-of-percussion-2019/details>
- 10 Tuesday, 8pm**
University Symphony Orchestra: Student Showcase
- 15 Sunday, 3pm**
University Wind Ensemble, free admission
- 16 Monday, 8pm**
University Jazz Ensemble. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 18 Wednesday, 8pm**
Regency Series: Regency Jazz Ensemble. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall.
- 19 Thursday, 3:40pm**
Nicole Molumby Flute Masterclass. MBR 334, free admission
- 19 Thursday, 8pm**
Keyboard Students Recital, free admission
- 27 Friday, 7:30pm**
PLU Guitar Festival & NW Guitar Festival: Guest Artist Concert
- 28 Saturday, 8pm**
PLU Guitar Festival & NW Guitar Festival: Guest Artist Concert
- 29 Sunday, 1pm**
PLU Guitar Festival & NW Guitar Festival: Ensembles & Orchestras
- 31 Tuesday, 8pm**
Artist Series: Rhyne, Flute; Case, Harp; & Takekawa, Percussion

APRIL

- 5 Sunday, 3pm**
Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Zhen Piao, Organist
Tickets: \$17 general admission; \$10 Senior Citizen (60+), Military, Alumni, PLU Community; \$5 PLU students & 18 and under
- 6 Monday, 8pm**
University Symphony Orchestra: KammerMusikeren
- 13 Monday**
Knights Chorus & Normanna Male Chorus. Scandinavian Cultural Center, Anderson University Center, free admission
- 17 Friday, 4pm**
Tim McAllister Saxophone Masterclass. MBR 322, free admission
- 19 Sunday, 3pm**
Choir of the West
- 22 Wednesday, 8pm**
Keyboard Students Recital, free admission
- 26 Sunday, 3pm**
Regency Series: Lyric Brass Quintet

APRIL, Cont.

- 26 Sunday, 8pm**
Regency Series: Regency String Trio with William Chapman Nyaho, Piano
- 27 Monday, 6:30pm**
PLUtonic/HERmonic, MBR Amphitheater, free admission
- 28 Tuesday, 5:30pm**
Saxophone Quartets & Jazz Combos. The Cave, Anderson University Center, free admission
- 28 Tuesday, 8pm**
University Chorale Tour Homecoming Concert
- 30 Thursday, 8pm**
University Singers & Knights Chorus, free admission

MAY

- 1 Friday, 6pm**
Artist Series: Amity Trio. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall.
- 1 Friday, 8pm**
Steel Band & Percussion Ensembles, free admission
- 2 Saturday, 3pm**
Sølvvinden Flute Ensemble, free admission
- 2 Saturday, 8pm**
PLU Ringers, free admission
- 3 Sunday, 3pm**
Woodwind Students Recital, free admission
- 3 Sunday, 4:30pm**
Brass Students Recital, free admission
- 5 Tuesday, 8pm**
University Symphony Orchestra
- 7 Thursday, 8pm**
Keyboard Students Recital, free admission
- 9 Saturday, 8pm**
Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission
- 10 Sunday, 3pm**
University Wind Ensemble
- 11 Monday, 8pm**
Piano Ensemble, free admission
- 12 Tuesday, 6pm**
Chamber Music Kaleidoscope, free admission
- 12 Tuesday, 8pm**
String Kaleidoscope, free admission
- 13 Wednesday, 8pm**
University Concert Band with Camas Wind Quintet, free admission
- 14 Thursday, 8pm**
University Jazz Ensemble with Guest Artist Greg Gisbert, Trumpet. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 16 Saturday, 2pm**
South Sound Saxophone Ensemble, free admission
- 16 Saturday, 3pm**
Consonare Amici. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission
- 16 Saturday and 17 Sunday, 7:30pm**
Opera Scenes. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 17 Sunday, 3pm**
Composers Forum, free admission
- 17 Sunday, 5:30pm**
Songwriters Workshop. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission

To Order Tickets:

On Line: <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/pacific-lutheran-university-8233304504>
At the Concert: Lobby Desk in Mary Baker Russell Music Center

CONCERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

All ticket sales are final - no refunds

MUSIC EVENT TICKET PRICES: \$10 GENERAL; \$5 SENIOR CITIZENS (60+); MILITARY, PLU ALUMNI & PLU COMMUNITY; FREE TO PLU STUDENTS & 18 AND UNDER UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. CONCERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND SOME CONCERTS MAY BE ADDED AFTER PUBLICATION.
<http://www.plu.edu/music/calendar> (updated February 27, 2020)