



Robert Geary, Artistic Director

PRESENTS

**Volti
Peninsula Women's Chorus
Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir**

**new
music
FOR
TREBLE
VOICES**

Sunday, April 18, 2010, 4:00 PM

ALL SAINTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH, PALO ALTO

Artistic Director
MARTIN BENVENUTO

Welcome to the Third Annual Festival of New Music for Treble Voices

The idea for the festival sprang from the realization that several of the most nationally- and internationally-acclaimed treble choirs, all leaders in commissioning and performing new music, reside in the Bay Area.

As a professional choir dedicated to new music,

Volti

initiated the Festival of New Music for Treble Voices to support performances of this innovative repertoire.

Volti is pleased to welcome

Martín Benvenuto

as the Festival's artistic director.

MARTÍN BENVENUTO, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Martín Benvenuto has established himself as one of the leading treble choir conductors in the San Francisco Bay Area. A native of Buenos Aires, he has been Artistic Director of the Peninsula Women's Chorus since 2003. Active as a clinician, panelist, and guest conductor, Benvenuto is also Artistic Director of WomenSing, and has served on the faculty of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir.

Recognized for his exacting technique, compelling presence, and a passion for drawing the finest choral tone, Benvenuto's repertoire is extensive, including great landmarks of the treble repertoire as well as works by living composers. His choirs are dedicated to commissioning new works from leading composers such as Libby Larsen, Chen Yi, Stacy Garrop, Charles Griffin, Cristián Grases, Brian Holmes, and David Conte.

His choirs have earned high marks in international competitions in Argentina, South Africa, Canada, Hungary, and Spain. Of particular note is third prize awarded to the PWC at the Béla Bartók International Choir Competition, one of the most competitive and prestigious in the European circuit. Benvenuto highly values artistic collaborations: his choirs have collaborated with Veljo Tormis, Joseph Jennings, Karmina Šilec, Charles Bruffy, California Shakespeare Theater, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, and the Golden Gate Men's Chorus.

Benvenuto has prepared choirs for organizations such as the San Francisco Opera, the Oakland East Bay Symphony, the Redwood Symphony, and the Kronos Quartet, and for works such as Bach's St. Matthew Passion, Monteverdi's Vespers, Britten's St. Nicholas, Mahler's Third Symphony, Holst's The Planets, Stravinsky's Mass, and Orff's Carmina Burana.

An accomplished singer as well, Benvenuto has appeared as a tenor soloist in Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass, Vivaldi's Magnificat, Mozart's Requiem, Bach's Cantata BWV 61, Beethoven's Mass in C, Ramirez's Misa Criolla, and others. As a member of the Westminster Symphonic Choir, he sang with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic under the batons of Kurt Masur, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Helmuth Rilling, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Joseph Flummerfelt.

Benvenuto holds a DMA in choral conducting from Boston University, where he studied with Ann Howard Jones and the late Robert Shaw. He earned his master's degree from Westminster Choir College, majoring both in Choral Conducting and Voice Performance and Pedagogy, studying under Joseph Flummerfelt, Elem Eley, and Julia Kemp. His undergraduate degrees in choral conducting and composition are from the Universidad Católica Argentina.

ROBERT GEARY

Robert Geary, founder of Volti and the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir as well as of the Festival of New Music for Treble Voices, also holds directorial positions with the San Francisco Choral Society and the Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choral Festival. For fourteen years, Geary was the director of the Baroque Choral Guild, and served for thirteen years as the Music Director of the First Unitarian Universalist Church in San Francisco.

A champion of contemporary music, Geary and his choirs have won numerous international and national awards. In 1993 Geary was awarded the International Peace Child Medal for his role as co-founder of the Golden Gate International Children's Choral Festival; in 1997, he received the award for "outstanding conductorial achievement" in Giessen, Germany; in 1998 he received a special award for interpretation at the Miedzzydroje Choral Festival in Poland; in 2002 he was named Music Educator of the Year by KDFC radio; and in 2003 he received the Lois Blair Rawlings Educational Inspiration Award.

Geary's choirs have performed throughout North America, Europe, the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, Russia, and the Far East. His choirs have been selected to perform for the national conferences of Chorus America, the American Choral Directors Association, the Organization of American Kodaly Educators and the College Music Society. They have performed for radio, television, opera, symphony and music festivals nationally and internationally. Geary also has prepared his choirs for some of the world's leading conductors, including Helmuth Rilling, Robert Shaw, Kurt Herbert Adler, Edo de Waart, Krzysztof Penderecki, Herbert Blomstedt, Dale Warland, Kent Nagano and Mikhail Pletnev.

Geary's choirs have been recorded by Harmonia Mundi, Koch International, Swiss International Radio and innova. He has served as a jurist for choral competitions in the United States and internationally. He has served as a clinician and guest conductor in the US, Denmark and Singapore. Geary has undergraduate degrees in Music Theory and Composition and a graduate degree in Choral Conducting as a student of Howard Swan.

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* PREVIEW OF COMING ATTRACTIONS *

PENINSULA WOMEN'S CHORUS

Words from Paradise

Collaboration with Golden Gate Men's Chorus
Premieres by Eric Whitacre and Frank Ferko

Program highlights: Alberto Grau: "Como tu"; Ferko: new commission;
Whitacre: new commission (with GGMC); Dan Forrest: "Words from
Paradise" (with GGMC)

Sunday, May 16, 2010, 2:30 p.m.
Mission Santa Clara, Santa Clara University

Sunday, May 9, 2010, 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, May 18, 2010, 8:00 p.m.
Mission Dolores Basilica, San Francisco

See PWChorus.org for tickets, directions and more information.

**Festival of New Music for Treble Voices
PROGRAM**

PENINSULA WOMEN'S CHORUS

Day Break.....Stephen Paulus
Oblivion.....Cristián Grases
Como Tú.....Alberto Grau
Song of Perfect Propriety.....Carol Barnett

ANCORA

(Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir; Young Women in Grades 9 - 12)

Alleluia.....Austrina
Veni, amica mea.....Pekka Kostianen
Nocturne.....Eric Tuan

*** INTERMISSION ***

ENSEMBLE

(Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir; Girls and Treble-Voiced Boys under 16)

Two canons.....György Ligeti
Ikikaiku.....Olli Kortekangas

VOLTI

Zêteô.....Jean Ahn

VOLTI and ENSEMBLE

Luna, Nova Luna.....Mark Wings

ALL CHOIRS

Dona Nobis Pacem.....Ko Matsushita

**The Festival of New Music for Treble Voices
extends special thanks to
All Saints' Episcopal Church
Rodney Gehrke
and Susan Reaves**

PROGRAM NOTES

PENINSULA WOMEN'S CHORUS

Day Break.....Stephen Paulus (b. 1949)
text anon., from the Mudbara – a tribe of Wave Hill, northern Australia

Day breaks —
the day breaks —
the first rays of the rising Sun,
stretching her arms.
Daylight breaking as the Sun rises to her feet.
Sun rising, scattering the darkness, lighting up the land...
With disk shining, bringing daylight, lighting up the land...
People are talking, moving about, feeling the warmth.
Burning through the gorge she rises walking westwards,
Wearing her waistband of human hair.
She shines on the blossoming coolibah tree,
with its sprawling roots: She shines!

Composer STEPHEN PAULUS (b. 1949) has been hailed as "...a bright, fluent inventor with a ready lyric gift." (The New Yorker) His prolific output of more than two hundred works is represented in many genres, including music for orchestra, chorus, chamber ensembles, solo voice, keyboard, and opera. From the Mudbara, a tribe of in northern Australia, an anonymous poet depicts the rising of the sun in "Day Break". A part of his larger work, *The Earth Sings*, Paulus sets "Day Break" with rugged yet lyrical melodic lines underlined with energetic rhythms provided by piano and percussion. The vitality of this piece will set you on fire!

Oblivion.....Cristián Grases (b. 1973)
The text is a juxtaposition of the first verse of the "Dies irae" from the Latin Requiem Mass and "Proverbios y Cantares XLVI" by Spanish poet Antonio Machado (1875-1939).

Dies irae, dies illa
Solvat seclum in favilla
Teste David cum sybilla.
Anoche soñé
que oía a Dios
gritando ¡alerta!
Luego era Dios
quien dormía.
Y yo gritaba:
¡Despierta!

Day of wrath, that day
the world dissolves in ashes,
as foretold by David and the sybil.
Last night I dreamed
that I heard God
screaming, "Be alert!"
Then it was God
who slept
And I screamed,
"Wake up!"

In “Oblivion,” Venezuelan composer CRISTIÁN GRASES (b. 1973), using traditional and aleatory techniques, interweaves two texts: the first verse of Dies Irae (dies irae – day of wrath; dies illa – that day) from the Latin Requiem Mass and Proverb 46 by Spanish poet Antonio Machado. In his poem, Machado describes a dream sequence which juxtaposes a sleeping world – an allegorical drifting away from connection to the Divinity (a threat of the inevitable return to ashes) – and a sleeping God who might sometimes seem to forget our plight. “Alerta!” (Be alert!), we warn each other. “Despierta!” (Wake up!), we implore. In the closing chant, we are left in an impassioned dream or limbo where we fight against darkness and the threat of oblivion.

Born in Caracas in 1973, Cristián Grases started his musical studies at age 11 in music theory, harmony, counterpoint, history, and piano. His education also included choral and instrumental performance and studies in composition and choral and orchestral conducting. In 2001, Grases finished his master’s degree with honors in choral conducting with María Guinand and Alberto Grau at Simón Bolívar University in Venezuela, and is a DMA student at the University of Miami.

Como Tú.....Alberto Grau (b. 1937)
 text is from the poem, “A Margarita Debayle,” by Rubén Darío

Te voy a contar un cuento	I am going to tell you a story
Este era un Rey que tenía un palacio de diamantes, una tienda hecha de día y un rebaño de elefantes.	There was once a King who had a palace of diamonds, a tent of gossamer, and a herd of elephants.
Un kiosco de malaquita, un gran manto de tisú, y una gentil Princesita tan bonita como tú.	A pavilion of malachite, a great cape of silk and gold, and a nice little Princess, as pretty as you

Contemporary Venezuelan composer ALBERTO GRAU (b. 1937) was inspired by the poem *Margarita* by the Nicaraguan poet Félix Rubén García Sarmiento, known as Rubén Darío. Darío was the father of the Spanish-American literary movement known as modernismo, which flourished at the end of the nineteenth century. Using only the first stanza of the poem, Grau explores various settings of the text and uses certain words like malaquita, tan bonita, and como tú, “just like you,” to produce rich polyrhythmic textures. Latin-American rhythms, dissonant harmonies, and multicolor vocal effects are combined in three- to sixteen-part vocal textures, starting with a simple introduction and gradually growing to a large divisi climax at the end. The piece is a real tour de force for a women’s choir. – María Guinand

Song of Perfect Propriety, Carol Barnett (b. 1949)
poem by Dorothy Parker (1893-1967)

Oh, I should like to ride the seas,
A roaring buccaneer;
A cutlass banging at my knees,
A dirk behind my ear.
And when my captives' chains would clank
I'd howl with glee and drink
And then fling out the quivering plank
And watch the beggars sink.
I'd like to straddle gory decks,
And dig in laden sands,
And know the feel of throbbing necks
Between my knotted hands.
Oh, I should like to strut and curse
Among my blackguard crew
But I am writing little verse,
As little ladies do.

Oh, I should like to dance and laugh
And pose and preen and sway,
And rip the hearts of men in half,
And toss the bits away.
I'd like to view the reeling years
Through unastonished eyes,
And dip my finger-tips in tears,
And give my smiles for sighs.
I'd stroll beyond the ancient bounds,
And tap at fastened gates,
And hear the prettiest of sounds, —
The clink of shattered fates.
My slaves I'd like to bind with thongs
That cut and burn and chill
But I am writing little songs,
As little ladies will.

CAROL BARNETT's (b. 1949) music has been called audacious and engaging. Inspired by Dorothy Parker's feisty poem, Barnett selected "Song of Perfect Propriety" for the Cornell University Women's Chorus as part of a project titled "No Whining, No Flowers," for which several women composers were commissioned to set texts by women poets. In her vocal direction, Ms. Barnett instructs us to be lusty, unpredictable, and... a bit dangerous. Ms. Barnett studied composition, piano, and flute at the University of Minnesota and she currently teaches at Augsburg College in Minneapolis.

DOROTHY PARKER (1893 – 1967) was one of the most accomplished and successful feminist literary writers in women’s history. Working as a columnist for *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker* magazines and as a successful Hollywood screenplay writer, Parker received literary acclaim for her satirical wit and her works which often encouraged women to move away from repressive Victorian ideals. In keeping with this philosophy, her poem, “Song of Perfect Propriety,” alternates between a more modern take on the gentler sex as swashbuckling, strutting, cursing pirates plundering the hearts of men and the more traditional fate of “writing little verse as little ladies do.” Known for her caustic, dry wit, this well-known verse is attributed to her: “Men seldom make passes/At girls that wear glasses” and she had suggested as her epitaph: “Excuse my dust.”

THE PENINSULA WOMEN’S CHORUS

The Peninsula Women’s Chorus, established in 1966, is a leader in the resurgence in women’s choirs specializing in choral masterpieces. The PWC is known for its adventurous programming, seeking out music written specifically for women, and frequently commissioning new works. The singers are selected by audition and share an enthusiasm for challenging repertoire sung in original languages. Among PWC’s honors are third prize in the 2006 Béla Bartók 22nd International Choir Competition, women’s division, in Debrecen, Hungary; two Chorus America/AS-CAP Awards for Adventurous Programming (2003 and 1999); second place, 2000 Margaret Hillis award for Choral Excellence, and second prize at the 1994 Tallinn International Choral Competition in Estonia. The chorus has made three appearances at ACDA National Conventions – first in 1987, singing a feature concert of the vocal orchestra music from the film, *Song of Survival*, and presenting music for women’s voices in a special interest session of music by Kirke Mechem; in 1993, presenting a traditional choral program; and most recently in March of 2001, presenting a contemporary tour de force before more than 6,000 choral directors to great acclaim. In addition, the chorus performed as a continental founding choir at the AmericaFest World Festival of Women’s Singing in Seattle in July of 2001. In the summer of 2003, the PWC participated, as one of four choirs representing the United States, in Festival 500: Sharing the Voices, an international festival of choral music in St. John’s, Newfoundland. In addition to extensive performing throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, the chorus has competed in international competitions, has performed on National Public Radio, and has appeared on television both nationally and internationally.

PWC MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

PWC has had the pleasure of welcoming and working with six talented high school students in our inaugural 2009/2010 Mentorship Program. This program offers young women currently enrolled in high school and with choral experience a unique opportunity to work with us on selected repertoire for performance at the New Music for Treble Voices festival. For more information about the PWC Mentorship Program please visit our website at www.pwchorus.org/mentor.html. Applications for 2010/2011 will be available online this coming September.

PWC MEMBER ROSTER SPRING 2010
(* 2009/2010 PWC Mentorship Program Students)

Soprano 1	Alto 1
Stephanie Batties	Priscilla Bates
Mardie Daul	Ashby Cogan*
Evyne Fagan*	Christi Coutolenc
Kathryn Feetham	Jan Cummins
Emilee Getter	Sarah Etheredge
Shaula Kumaishi	Ann Hillesland
MaryLouise Meckler	Emily Jiang
Marina Orzano	Cathleen Kalcic
Rachel Sanville*	Betsy Landergren
Kyle Sofman	Kathy MacLaury
Judy Sweet	Jan Schonhaut
Tricia Tani	Gail Schwettman
Mary Tusa	Vivian Taina*
Jane Walker	Deanne Tucker
	Jeanne Von Gunten
	Marsha Wells
Soprano 2	
Sara Asher	
Vicki Brown	Alto 2
Melody Cardona	Anne Anderson
Amy Cohen	Tricia Baldwin
Virginia Crowley*	Lisa Collart
Beatrice Fanning	Hannah Druckman
Jennifer Katz	May Goodreau
Elise Kent	Lynne Haynes-Tucker
Shreya Kumar*	Valerie Hornstein
Holly Liberatore	Martha Morgan
Andra Marynowski	Gerri Roe
Yoko Meier	Hoai-Thu Truong
Robin Mulgannon	Barbara Zoeller
Eithne Pardini	
Barbara Pforzheimer	
Bonnie Senko	

IRINA BEHRENDT, ACCOMPANIST, PENINSULA WOMEN'S CHORUS

Irina Behrendt is a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music where she earned a Graduate Diploma in piano performance. She also holds a MM in piano performance from the Petrozavodsk State Conservatory (Petrozavodsk, Russia) and a BM in piano performance and pedagogy from the Rachmaninoff College of Music (Kaliningrad, Russia). Having grown up in a musical family, Irina has always had a passion for collaborative playing and started her professional career as a performer and accompanist with the Kaliningrad Philharmonic Society and as a staff accompanist for the Kaliningrad Rachmaninoff College of Music.

Irina immigrated to the US in 1998, and is currently on the faculty of the New Mozart School of Music in Palo Alto, an accompanist for the PWC, and choir accompanist for the CUMC in Half Moon Bay.

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PWC acknowledges and gives special thanks to its generous donors and to the members of its Chorus Auxiliary whose help is greatly appreciated. Special thanks to Beverly Colquhoun, Corky Fulton, Jan Houlihan, and Dick Roe for their help with NMTV.

PWC Percussionists in **Daybreak**:

Stephanie Batties, Cathleen Kalcic, Sarah Etheredge, Deanne Tucker

PWC Program Content Staff:

Elise Kent, content, Kathy MacLaury and Mary Tusa, editors

PROGRAM NOTES

ANCORA

Alleluia.....Austrina

Text: Alleluia!

There is a certain amount of mystery surrounding this piece. The unpublished manuscript score was given to the Piedmont Choirs while on tour several years ago in the Latvian town of Kuldiga. We don't know much more about it than that.

Veni, amica mea.....Pekka Kostiainen (b. 1944)

Text from *Song of Solomon*:

Surge, propera, amica mea, et veni iam enim hiems transiit.

Arise, hasten, my love, and come away, for lo, the winter is passed.

Finnish composer PEKKA KOSTIAINEN received a church musician's degree from the Sibelius Academy in 1968 and served as organist in the parish of Pohja from 1969-71. He was a lecturer in music at the University of Jyväskylä from 1971 to 2000. Following further studies with Jouko Toulonen, he received a composition diploma in 1973. His other composition teachers have included Einer Englund and Einojuhani Rautavaara. He received an honorary Doctorate from Jyväskylä University in 2004.

In 1977 he became founding director of the Musica Choir at the University of Jyväskylä, a post he still holds. Since 1994, he has also directed the Vox Aurea Childrens Choir. Under his leadership, both choirs have won many prizes in international competition. Kostiainen's work will be familiar to audiences of Volti and the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir as both groups have performed several of his published and commissioned works over the past decade.

The composer does not confine himself exclusively to choral music, but choral works do, in fact, constitute the biggest category in his oeuvre, amounting to around one hundred compositions for choirs of different types. These fall into three main categories: sacred music, works for children's choir, and works on nationalistic themes, many drawing on the national "epic", Kalevala. While widely exploiting the choir's potential, he has always done so on the music's and the singers' terms. Thus, in writing for children's choir, he makes careful allowance for his young singers' abilities while at the same time providing them with inspiring and interesting music to sing.

Nocturne.....Eric Tuan (b. 1990)

Text: Puedo escribir, by Pablo Neruda
(Text and translation on following pages)

Soloist: Allison Rosengard

Nocturne (Night-Song) is a choral setting of seventeen lines from the love poem, "Puedo escribir" ("Tonight I can write"), by Chilean author and political activist Pablo Neruda (1904-1973). The text, taken from Neruda's collection *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada* (*Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair*), starkly depicts the conflicting, often devastating emotions of lost love. My setting of the poem, rather than being formally structured, is rhapsodic, allowing the music to respond freely to the often disparate textual images. A simple, repeated chant-like melody on the initial text, "Tonight I can write the saddest lines," depicts a hushed, broken resignation; in contrast, poignant seventh and ninth chords in the middle of the piece represent the speaker's bittersweet memories of past embraces. The violently conflicting emotions in the poem suggest the juxtaposition of equally disparate musical elements – near the end, a low unison melody explodes into an eight-part tone cluster, as the speaker's repressed anguish finally bursts into the open. *Nocturne's* constantly shifting musical language creates an emotional landscape in which the past and present are bound together only by a memory of romance.

ERIC TUAN is a second-year student at Stanford University. During his ten years in the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, he performed as a vocal soloist with various local arts organizations, including the Oakland East Bay Symphony, and accompanied Ensemble's 2005 tour to mainland China. Tuan is an active collaborative pianist and sings with the Stanford Chamber Chorale and Early Music Singers. He also enjoys composing; his arrangements of American folksongs and settings of Shakespeare and Neruda were recently premiered by the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir.

Puedo escribir, by Pablo Neruda

Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche.
Escribir, por ejemplo: "La noche está estrellada,
y tiritan, azules, los astros, a los lejos."
El viento de la noche gira en el cielo y canta.
Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche.
Yo la quise, y a veces ella también me quiso.
En las noches como ésta la tuve entre mis brazos.
La besé tantas veces bajo el cielo infinito.
Ella me quiso, a veces yo también la quería.
Cómo no haber amado sus grandes ojos fijos.

Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche.
Pensar que no la tengo. Sentir que la he perdido.
Oír la noche inmensa, más inmensa sin ella.
Y el verso cae al alma como al pasto el rocío.
Qué importa que mi amor no pudiera guardarla.
La noche está estrellada y ella no está conmigo.
Eso es todo. A lo lejos alguien canta. A lo lejos.

Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir

Robert Geary, Artistic Director
Conductor of Ensemble and Ancora

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PEBCC acknowledges and thanks its generous donors
and all of its many volunteers. whose help is greatly appreciated.
Special thanks to TJ Togasaki for her extra help with this festival.

Tonight I can write the most sorrowful lines.
I can write, for example: "The night is star-filled
and the blue stars are shivering in the distance."
The night wind turns in the sky and sings.
Tonight I can write the most sorrowful lines.
I loved her then, and sometimes she loved me back.
Through nights like tonight I held her in my arms.
I kissed her and kissed her under endless skies.
She loved me then, and sometimes I loved her back.
How could I not love her great, still eyes?

Tonight I can write the most sorrowful lines.
I can think I'm not holding her. I can regret that I lost her.
I can hear the vast night, still vaster without her.
And the words settle on my soul like dew on the pasture.
It doesn't matter that my love couldn't keep her.
The night is star-filled and she is not with me.
That's all that matters. Someone is singing far away. Far away.

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PIEDMONT EAST BAY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

For 27 years, the internationally-acclaimed Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir (formerly Piedmont Choirs) has been offering children from throughout San Francisco's East Bay an outstanding program of choral training and performance. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Robert Geary, the Choir has established itself as a leading force in international choral activities and new music. With concert tours to more than twenty-five nations, and sponsorship of the Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choral Festival (the oldest and only international children's choral competition in the United States), the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir is vigorously engaged in the global community of choral ensembles. Recognizing that the creation of art is a forward-looking and forward-thinking endeavor, the Choir has commissioned and premiered 26 new works by 16 living composers, including Kui Dong, Mark Winges, Pekka Kostianen, Kirke Mechem, and many others.

The Choir's flagship group, Ensemble, has an extraordinary record of success in international competitions. In 2008 Ensemble was the only choir to win three gold medals at Grand Prix St. Petersburg (Russia) Choral Festival. In 2006 Ensemble earned two gold medals and one silver medal at the Hong Kong International Children's Choral Festival. In 2003 Geary led the Piedmont Children's Choirs to a special award for the highest score among equal voice choirs at the prestigious Guido D'Arezzo competition in Gorizia, Italy. Previous awards include three gold medals and a coveted first prize (the only American children's choir to ever win a first prize at the Choral Olympics) for Contemporary Music at the Choral Olympics in Linz, Austria (July, 2000); the grand prize at the Miedzzydroje Choral Festival in Poland (July, 1998); three gold medals at the Giessen (Germany) International Children's and Youth Choir Festival (1997); two gold medals, a silver medal and the "Best of the Choirs" award at the Des Moines International Children's Choral Festival (1997); and first prize for Contemporary Music at the Kathaumixw Festival in British Columbia in 1996 and 1992. Ensemble has been invited to perform for national and regional conventions of the American Choral Directors Association and for the national conference of the Organization of American Kodály Educators. Ensemble and other Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir groups regularly collaborate with major Bay Area performing arts organizations such as the San Francisco and Oakland East Bay symphonies, have been featured on many of the Bay Area's most prestigious concert series, and have performed with artists as diverse as the Kronos Quartet, the Mark Morris Dance Company, and the folk rock group, Bare Naked Ladies.

The Choir's comprehensive music curriculum offers students age 4-18 the chance to progress through a series of training choirs to professional-level performing groups. Besides offering an outstanding education in vocal technique and music theory, the organization strives to offer lessons in creativity, expression, poise and engagement with many cultures, a character-building, transformative process they describe as "Growing With Music."

Ancora Singers

Jasa Alexander-Mends
Tziporah Amgott-Kwan
Chloe Bash
Alice Del Simone
Sophia El-Wakil
Maya Florsheim
Akela Franklin-Baker
Honor Grace Goodby
Katharine Harley
Laura Henry
Anna Kubitschek
Casey Lewis
Megan Newcomb
Andrea Perman
Hannah Pinkham
Maymunah Rasheed
Allison Rosengard
Kyra Simpson
Aliza Theis

Ensemble Singers

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Madeleine Ahlers
Lauren Boranian
Alexander Browne
Antonia Calabrese-Thomas
Kennedy Christensen
Renzo Downey
Emi Fogg
Emma Grove
Rebecca Havian
Madeline Heaps
Kristi Hong
Apryl Hsu
Erin Hutchinson
Amalia Isen
Samantha Lai
Andrea Lee
Sarah Lo

Alison Mathews
Tlalli Aztlan Moya-Smith
Bahar Ostadan
Francine Penikis
Catherine Phillips
Annalisa Piccinini
Claire Pinkham
Ailey Simpson
Josef Starc
Rachel Stewart
Sabrina Tobe
Kai Vogel
Michelle Wan
Alina Whatley
Daphne Williams
Maya Wong
Paige Woolman
Steve You

PROGRAM NOTES

ENSEMBLE

Két kánon (Two Canons) (1947 and 1952)

György Ligeti (1923-2006)

Hungarian composer György Ligeti began his musical studies at the conservatory in Cluj, Transylvania. After World War II, Ligeti moved to Budapest to continue his musical education, graduating from the Franz Liszt Academy in 1949. For the next seven years he taught music while working on his own compositions. When the Soviets quashed the 1956 democratic uprising, Ligeti had to flee the Communist regime to make his home in Germany and Austria for the remainder of his life.

In Cologne, Germany, Ligeti began writing his first electronic compositions, influenced by Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez. Ligeti gained worldwide recognition when his *Requiem* for chorus and orchestra was used in Stanley Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, together with his *Atmospheres* and *Lux Aeterna* for unaccompanied chorus.

Hailed as a pioneer of psychedelic music, Ligeti spent time in the United States, where he taught a composition course at the Berkshire Music Center in Tanglewood and served as composer-in-residence at Stanford University in the 1970s. After 1973, Ligeti taught at the Music Academy in Hamburg, Germany.

Két kánon for four-voice choir shows the influence of Bartók and Kodály on his early folkloric compositions. The first piece, *Ha folyóvíz volnék* (Like a Stream Gently Flowing), uses a Slovakian folk text while the text of the second canon, *Pletykázó asszonyok* (Gossiping Women), is by the 20th century Hungarian poet Weöres Sándor, a personal friend of the composer. The choir will sing both pieces in the English translation by Desmond Clayton.

Like a Stream Gently Flowing

Like a stream gently flowing,
dreaming dreams as I'm going,
that is how I'd love to live.

Through the hills, through the valleys,
beauty all around, peacefully I'd flow,
free from all care, free from woe.

Gossiping Women

Auntie Julie, Auntie Cathy,
natter chatter natter chat
sit together for prattle, and my goodness, how they tattle!
natter chatter natter chat!

"Have I told you natter chatter?"

"No, not yet" "Oh dear: natter chatter natter!"

"Is that so? Did you see it with your own eyes, natter chatter natter chat?"

"It was torn right in the middle, how it happened is a riddle!"

"Oh! Oh! Oh, natter chatter natter chat, natter chatter chat!"

Olli Kortekangas, one of Finland's leading composers of his generation, studied music theory and composition with Einojuhani Rautavaara and Eero Hämeenniemi at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki and with Dieter Schnebel in Germany. He has written music in all genres, but is especially known for his delicate, often meditative vocal works. His first contact with singing and choirs came at the age of 16 when he joined the Candomino youth choir and he has since worked with many choirs in Finland and abroad. One of his main partners has been the Tapiola Children's Choir for whom he composed *Ikikaiku*.

What interests Kortekangas is not only the human voice itself but, above all, the marriage of voice and text. For him, the text is not just phonetic fodder for singers, but a medium for addressing various philosophical issues.

The Finnish national epic, *Kalevala*, begins with the creation of the world and the birth of Väinämöinen, the eternal sage and chief among the epic's three main characters. Väinämöinen lands on the shore of a treeless land and entreats the agricultural god, Sampo, to plant trees. This undertaking is too successful and a great oak tree grows so large that it blocks the light of the sun and moon. Väinämöinen then implores his mother to send someone to cut down the tree. A small man rises from the sea, transforms into a giant, and, with three strokes of his ax, fells the giant oak and scatters its pieces in all directions.

It is at this point, in the second runo (poem) of *Kalevala*, that we find ourselves. The poet relates how those who came and took pieces of the tree prospered.

Kenpä siitä oksan otti,
se otti ikuisen onnen;
kenpä siitä latvan taittoi,
se taittoi ikuisen taian;
kenpä lehvän leikkaeli,
se leikkoi ikuisen lemmen

Whoever took a branch from there
took eternal luck;
whoever crafted a treetop from there
crafted eternal magic;
whoever cut off a leafy branchlet
cut off eternal love . . .

In *Ikikaiku*, Kortekangas uses several lines from the *Kalevala* text in support of the idea of seeking and finding strength in nature and in what we do. There are lighthouses that cast their search light about illuminating the cliffs and whatever else comes into their view, there are young people wandering about calling out verses as they seek their own truth in thought. The choir then intones the *Kalevala* text to a folk-like melody and rhythm reminiscent of the music to which *Kalevala* is traditionally recited. Ultimately, the audience fulfills the search by singing back (as an echo) to the singers on stage at the end of the piece.

VOLTI

Robert Geary established the San Francisco Chamber Singers in 1979. By the 1990s the ensemble was basing its programming almost exclusively on premieres and commissions from living composers. For its 25th anniversary season in 2003/04, the choir adopted a new name—**Volti**. Evoking the hallmark energy, vigor and forward-looking spirit of the group, the new name was taken from the musical expression *volti subito*, which directs musicians to “turn [the page] quickly,” or “look ahead”).

Now celebrating its 31st season, Volti showcases American contemporary music and composers and introduces contemporary music from around the world to Bay Area audiences. Working with some of the most creative and original established and emerging American composers, the professional singers of Volti present multiple premieres and commissions each season. With over 500 performances to its credit, the group has become one of America’s renowned choirs, repeatedly recognized as a pioneering force in the contemporary choral performance field. In June of 2009 the American Society for Composers and Publishers (ASCAP) awarded Volti its Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music for the sixth time. Volti is the first and only chorus to receive this award so many times. Bob Geary says he thinks of Volti as “the R&D arm of the choral world.”

In addition to its commissioning and concert programs, Volti sponsors an educational outreach program, the Choral Institute for High School singers. The Institute begins with an intensive weekend retreat at which several high school choirs combine forces to learn new music under the mentorship of a composer in residence -- this year, Morten Lauridsen, next year, Kirke Mechem -- with the guidance of Volti’s professional singers, Geary, and the high schools’ choir conductors. Later in the school year, after continued rehearsal, the choirs reunite for a public performance. This year, that performance will be held May 14 at First Congregational Church in Berkeley, with Morten Lauridsen playing the piano part to accompany the massed choirs in a performance of his *Nocturnes*.

San Francisco critics have praised Volti’s “stunning performances” of “unique and ambitious program[s].” Critic Jules Langert of the San Francisco Classical Voice called the group “an important and formidable local asset, immensely rewarding to hear in repertoire that no one else seems to be taking on.” In 2008, SFCV’s Georgia Rowe called the group “one of the Bay Area’s most consistent musical treasures.” Joshua Kosman of the San Francisco Chronicle notes Volti’s “irresistible blend of vigor and bonhomie,” and Charles Amirkhanian of Other Minds praises Volti’s “innovative and visionary spirit that is willing to push boundaries and take an active role in shaping our musical landscape and future.”

This is not your grandmother’s choir.

www.voltisf.org



PROGRAM NOTES

VOLTI

Zêteô (2009)
2009 Volti Commission

Jean Ahn (b. 1976)

Born in South Korea, Jean Ahn began to study piano and composition as a child. She earned her B.A. and M.M. degrees at Seoul National University under professor Baek Byoung Dong and, in 2008, her Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley, under Edmund Campion. She has taught at Berkeley and is currently a lecturer at University of the Pacific in Stockton. She has been a choir director for more than five years in Korea, and is now an arranger for Richmond Korean Baptist Church. She lives in the East Bay with her husband and two children.

Several notable contemporary groups in the Bay Area, Los Angeles, New York, Korea, Japan and China have performed her music, and she has been awarded many prizes in the U.S. and Korea.

Composer's note:

"The text of **Zêteô**, Greek 'to seek', is taken from the Biblical verse in Deuteronomy 4:29 (New International Version):

But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul.

"God is waiting for us to seek Him, but, as human beings, it is not easy for us to seek. 'Seeking' is a constant act to be undertaken with the whole heart and soul. I wanted to describe the journey of 'seeking' in this music. Confusion, misleading, hardship and perseverance are all there and must be endured on the path to the ending of the piece, where we are granted the gift of God."

The text consists of deconstructions of the three major Greek words from the biblical passage:

ζητεω (zêteô), to seek,
καρδια (kardia) heart, and
ψυχη (psyche) soul

with the final phrase, in English

"And you will find him."

The component sounds of the words are passed among the voices, some singing on the vowels while others produce the consonants. There is a steady and increasing development of density and dynamic tension that becomes more rhythmic and culminates in an outburst of frustrated anguish, resolved in the gentle rising pyramid of voices in the closing phrase.

Volti Singers:

Soprano

Kristen Brown
Pam Igelsrud
Lindsey McLennan
Amy Schaner
TJ Togasaki

Alto

Julie Fabrizio
Marjorie Gómez
Verah Graham
Julia Metzler
Emily Ryan

Tenor

Michael Eisenberg
Paul Ingraham
David Kurtenbach
Roderick Lowe
Joseph Sargent

Bass

Sidney Chen
Joshua Fishbein
E.E. "Chip" Grant IV
Philip Saunders
Joseph Trumbo

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Robert A. Geary

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Volti extends special thanks to:

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John Vlahos, Greek language coaching;

all of our donors and patrons,

and each of our devoted and supportive Board members.

PROGRAM NOTES

VOLTI and ENSEMBLE

Luna, Nova Luna (2010)

Mark Winges (b. 1951)

2010 Joint Commission,

Volti and Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir

Mark Winges, born in Louisville, Kentucky, currently resides in San Francisco, where he is composer / advisor for Volti. He is a graduate of the College-Conservatory of Music - University of Cincinnati, SF State University, and has studied at the Musikhögskolan in Stockholm, Sweden. His principal teachers have been Ellsworth Milburn, Henry Onderdonk, and Arne Mellnäs. His works have been performed by the New Jersey Percussion Ensemble, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Earplay, Works-in-Progress: Berlin, the Emyrean Ensemble, pianist Teresa McCollough, Volti, the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir, the San Francisco Girl's Chorus, the Pharos Music Project (NY), Carmina Slovenica (Slovenia), the Guangdong Choir (China), Volti, the Marin, Berkeley and Piteå (Sweden) Symphonies and many others. Gramophone magazine has characterized his music as "Stylistically adventurous in setting, but strongly beholden to conventional means."

Composer's note:

"In agrarian societies, the power of the moon, in all its manifestations, was worshiped, celebrated and feared. Even today, some of that fascination persists: who of us has not looked up at the night sky and been drawn in by the moon's silvery presence? *Luna, Nova Luna* is my own response to the recurring patterns of the moon: its nightly rising, its longer cycle of waxing and waning.

"The origin of the piece is a bit unusual. It started with *The Moon-Dance*, which was composed as an independent piece for the Piedmont Choir in 2002. When planning *Luna, Nova Luna*, it seemed quite natural to use the earlier work as a centerpiece to and from which other pieces of the moon-story could relate. The plan for a symmetrical structure (a favorite of this composer's moon-added brain) was the first idea, before any of the notes were written. Thus, processions at both the beginning and the end of the work, and music of welcome and praise (movements two and four) that lead up to and away from the central dance. I found the expansion of the overall story, with the dance as merely one component of that story, satisfying in a very different way than the original piece.

"Having the expanded forces of two choirs allowed for more dramatic contrasts in sound: treble voices alone, mixed voices alone, younger treble voices with men, a multi-hued treble sound (using both adult and younger sopranos and altos as a unit), and of course, the full sound of both choirs together. The way these different forces are used and where they occur in the piece is a part of the unfolding drama of the music.

"Composing for each of these inspiring ensembles individually is a joy I've experienced many times. Being able to work with both of them in combination has been a treat, and has opened my own ears to new possibilities in choral sound. I am sure that hearing them together will open your ears as well."

I. Procession I

Luna, nova luna,
panem bis scinde,
et nobis dona
semissem tibi,
salutem mihi.

- Latin version by Ciara Sanker

Moon, new moon,
cut the bread in two
and give us
half to thee,
health to me

- Romanian prayer for the new moon

II. Welcome

Welcome, precious stone of the night,
Delight of the skies, precious stone of the still night
Mother of stars, precious stone of the night skies
Child raised by the sun, precious stone of the silent night
Excellency of stars, precious stone of the night

- Anon. translation of a pre-11th century Gaelic poem

III. The Moon-Dance

gotta dance
moon gotta dance
moon roll
sky roll

La luna blanche
Votre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et
bergamasques
- Verlaine *Clair de lune*

Dans l'giron
Du Patron,
On y danse, on y danse
Dans l'giron
Du Patron
On y danse tous en rond.
- Laforgue *Complainte de cette bonne lune*

La lune se lève
O route en grand rêve
O route sans terme
- Laforgue *Solo de lune*

The white moon
Your soul is a landscape rare
Where masks and bergamasks
charming pass

On the lap
Of our Master
We are dancing, fast and faster
On the lap
Of our Master
Dancing faster in a ring.

See the moon climb,
Dream road beyond time,
Dream road without end

La luna cava un blanco abismo
de quietud, en cuya cuenca
las cosas son cadáveres
y las sombras viven como ideas
- Lugones *La blanca soledad*

The moon carves a white abyss
of silence, socket in which
objects are corpses
and shadows alive like ideas

É a lúa que baila
na Quintana dos mortos
- Lorca *Danza da lúa en Santiago*

It is the moon that dances
in the courtyard of the dead

La luna está redonda
La luna se ha hecho láminas
como un pan de oro blanco
- Lorca *Juego de lunas*

Moon is round
Moon's become a gilt leaf
like a loaf of white gold

countdown claptrap moon-prints rock-box
- Plomer *To the Moon and Back*

cheese
no door
no more

sail off in a wooden shoe
Wynken, Blynken and Nod
- Field *Wynken, Blynken and Nod*

midsummer not-to-call night in the white and walk of the morning
paring of paradisaical fruit
A cusp still clasped him, a fluke yet fanged him, entangled him
- Hopkins *Moonrise*

The moon's a steaming chalice
of honey and venom-wine
- Lindsay *What Semiramis Said*

IV. Nuntius Noctis

nuntius noctis
primas referens tenebras
clarius quanto micat orbe pleno
cum suis ignes coeunte cornu
iunxit et curru properante pernox

erit vultus rubicunda Phoebe
nec tenent stellae faciem minores;

talis est, primas referens tenebras,

nuntius noctis.

- Seneca (4 BCE – 65 CE) *Phaedra*

Messenger of the night
who brings back the first shadows
more lovely than the full-orbed moon
your beauty shines more brightly
when with meeting horns she has
joined her fires,
and with speeding chariot Phoebe
shows her blushing face
and the lesser stars fade;
it is the one,
who brings back the first shadows,
messenger of the night.

- *trans. adapted from F. Miller*

V. Procession II

Luna, nova luna,
panem bis scinde,
et nobis dona
semissem tibi,
salutem mihi.

- *Latin version by Ciara Sanker*

Moon, new moon,
cut the bread in two
and give us
half to thee,
health to me

- *Romanian prayer for the new moon*

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PROGRAM NOTES

ALL CHOIRS

Dona Nobis Pacem.....Ko Matsushita (b. 1962)

Dona nobis pacem.

Grant us peace.

The choruses join together for Matsushita's triple choir piece "Dona Nobis Pacem" (Grant Us Peace). Reminiscent of the Venetian multiple-choir school, the sound literally surrounds you, ever striving upwards – a yearning for peace. This piece was written originally for treble voices and presented at the International Kodomo (Children) Choir Festival in Kyoto, Japan in 2005.

Born and raised in Tokyo, Ko Matsushita graduated at the top of his class from the Kunitachi College of Music, Tokyo. His musical education includes studies in composition, conducting, and vocal studies, as well as master classes in choral conducting at the Kodály Institute in Kecskemét, Hungary. A keen composer and arranger of choral pieces, and one of the most sought after choral conductors in Asia, Matsushita's works have been performed throughout Japan, Europe and Asia. Currently, Matsushita lectures at Kunitachi College of Music. Ko Matsushita is the first Asian to receive the Composer and Choral Conductor awards as recipient of the Robert Edler Prize for Choral Music in 2005.

* PREVIEW OF COMING ATTRACTIONS *

PIEDMONT EAST BAY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

April 25 at 5:00, First Congregational Church Berkeley:

Piedmont East Bay Children's Choirs and Jubilate Orchestra present Carissimi's great oratorio *Jephthah*, along with works by Michael Haydn, JS Bach, Henry Purcell, Nicola Porpora, Johann Adolph Haase, Antonio Vivaldi and Mozart. See PiedmontChoirs.org for more information.

June 25 at 7:00, location tbd:

Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir Ensemble and Ancora present a farewell concert before leaving on tour. Music of Kortekangas, Kostianen, Bohlin, Wings, Tuan and much more. You don't want to miss this!



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May 14, 8 PM
First Congregational Church, Berkeley
Morten Lauridsen joins Volti
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with Choral Institute Choirs
Acalanes HS, Head-Royce School,
Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir,
and San Francisco School of the Arts
also featuring
Donald Crockett's *Daglarym/My Mountains*
and premieres by Robin Estrada and Ted Hearne

May 15, 8 PM
St. Mark's Lutheran Church, San Francisco
The intimate version of the same program
(without the Choral Institute choirs)

WWW.VOLTISF.ORG/TICKETS

*The music of **Morten Lauridsen** occupies a permanent place in the standard vocal repertoire of the Twentieth Century. His works have been recorded on over a hundred CDs, three of which have received Grammy nominations, and have become the all-time best-selling choral octavos distributed by Theodore Presser, in business since 1783. Dr. Lauridsen was named an "American Choral Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2006. In 2007, he was the recipient of the National Medal of Arts from the President in a White House ceremony, "for his composition of radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power and spiritual depth that have thrilled audiences worldwide." The National Medal of Arts is the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the United States government.*

