

10th New Music for Treble Voices

# *Hands Upon the Plow*

**PENINSULA WOMEN'S CHORUS • MUSAE •  
PIEDMONT EAST BAY CHILDREN'S CHOIR ANCORA**

**Saturday, March 14, 2020 at 3pm**

• *Pre-Concert Discussion at 2pm* •

All Saints' Episcopal Church • 555 Waverley St, Palo Alto, CA

The Peninsula Women's Chorus Presents

The Tenth Festival of

# New Music for Treble Voices

*Hands Upon the Plow*

• Peninsula Women's Chorus •

• Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir Ancora •

• Musae •

Martín Benvenuto, Festival Director

## Combined Choirs

The March of the Women

Ethel Smyth (1858-1944)

## Peninsula Women's Chorus

Rise Up

Jake Runestad (b. 1986)

*Commissioned by the ACDA Women's Choir Commissioning Consortium*

Seikilos

Joanne Metcalf (b. 1958)

Kyle Sofman, Petra Dierkes-Thrun, Jennifer Song, *soloists*

Hold On

arr. Stacey Gibbs

## Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir Ancora

Lost Queens

Tonia Ko (b. 1988)

Before Color

Tonia Ko

Martes

Joseph Gregorio (b. 1979)

*Commissioned by PWC*

## Musae

Spring, the Sweet Spring

Ēriks Ešvalds (b. 1977)

This Shall Be for Music

Eric Tuan (b. 1990)

Magical Prayer, from "The Dawning Light"

Carson Cooman (b. 1982)

## Combined Choirs

Hands upon the Plow

Jocelyn Hagen (b. 1980)

*World Premiere, commissioned by PWC*

*This concert is being professionally recorded. We ask that you turn off cell phones and refrain from the use of recording devices. Thank you.*

# Sexts & Program Notes

## COMBINED CHOIRS



### **The March of the Women**, Ethel Smyth

Dame Ethel Smyth was an English composer and a close friend of both leading English suffragist Emmeline Pankhurst and author Virginia Woolf. Pankhurst made a tremendous impression on Smyth, who dedicated much of her life and work to the suffrage movement. Her "The March of the Women" was sung at rallies, meetings, marches, prisons, vigils during hunger strikes, etc. and became the de facto anthem for the women's suffrage movement in England and the U.S. Smyth's opera *Der Wald* was the first opera composed by a woman to be performed at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, and remained the only one for the next 113 years. Smyth was one of 100 women who answered the call to break a window in the house of any politician who opposed votes for women. This action led to two months in Holloway Prison in London, where she rejoiced in conducting her battle song with a toothbrush. "The March of the Women" was sung by over 3,000 women at the launch, in September 1915, of a caravan that traveled from San Francisco to the east coast to garner nationwide support for a federal amendment.

Shout, shout, up with your song!  
Cry with the wind, for the dawn is breaking;  
March, march, sing you along,  
Wide blows our banner, and hope is waking.  
Song with its story, dreams with their glory,  
Lo! they call, and glad is their word!  
Loud and louder it swells,  
Thunder of freedom, the voice of the Lord.

Comrades, ye who have dared  
First in the battle to strive and sorrow,  
Scorned, spurned, nought have ye cared,  
Raising your eyes to a wider morrow.  
Ways that are weary, days that are dreary,  
Toil and pain by faith ye have borne;  
Hail, hail, victors ye stand,  
Wearing the wreath that the brave have worn.

Life, strife, these two are one,  
Nought can ye win but by faith and daring;  
On, on that ye have done  
But for the work of today preparing.  
Firm in reliance, laugh a defiance,  
(Laugh in hope, for sure is the end.)  
March, march, many as one,  
Shoulder to shoulder and friend to friend.

## PENINSULA WOMEN'S CHORUS



### **Rise Up**, Jake Runestad, text by Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906)

The text of "Rise Up" was adapted from speeches and writings by U.S. suffrage leader Susan B. Anthony. The energetic drive of the music sets Anthony's rhetoric imploring women to "deepen your sympathy then convert it to action."

- turn to next page for text

Rise up!

There shall never be another season of silence.  
Deepen your sympathy then convert it to action.

Pray every single second of your life, not on your knees but with your work.

Think your best thoughts,  
speak your best words,  
do your best work. There is so much yet to be done.

Rise up!

**Seikilos**, Joanne Metcalf, Greek text from the Epitaph of Seikilos, ca. 1st century CE  
"Seikilos" is based on an ancient Greek text from the tombstone epitaph dedicated to Seikilos's wife. It is the oldest surviving complete, notated musical composition from anywhere in the world. Says composer Joanne Metcalf: "...the text of "Seikilos" calls upon the listener to live life to its fullest for the duration of this mortal existence and to let the knowledge of its inherent brevity cast no shadow. I have long loved the close dissonant harmonies that are common to the choral music of traditional Bulgarian women's choirs, and I take them as my inspiration here to highlight the rugged, primordial nature of this ancient exhortation, which was carved upon a burial stone in the 1st century CE."

Hoson zês, phainou,  
mêden holôs su lupou;  
pros oligon esti to zên,  
to telos ho chronos apaitei.

*For as long as you live, shine,  
do not be distressed in any way;  
life exists for a short while,  
and Time demands its due.*

**Hold On**, arr. Stacey Gibbs

Just as Alice Paul reminded us "when you put your hand to the plow, you can't put it down until you get to the end of the row," the spiritual "Hold On" reminds us that the human spirit ultimately cannot be broken. This rousing version by Stacey V. Gibbs, one of the leading arrangers of spirituals active today, tells us to keep our hands on the plow as we climb higher and higher.

**[Refrain]:**

(Jus') keep yo' han' on de plow an' hold on, jus' hold on.

Nora, Nora let me come in,  
de doors all fastened an' de winders pinned.

Nora said, "You done los' yo' track,  
well, you can' plow straigh' an' keep a-lookin' back."

If you wanna get to heaven, let me tell you how.  
Jus' keep yo' han' on de gospel plow.

If dat plow stays ina yo' han'  
lan' you straigh' into de Promise Lan'.

Mary had a golden chain  
an' ev'ry link spelled mah Jesus' name.

Keep on climbin' an' don' you tire  
'cause every rung goes high'r an' high'r.



**Lost Queens**, Tonia Ko, text by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

Lost Queens reflects upon the loss of two important Hawaiian icons over the last 200 years, the monarchy and several endemic birds. The 'o'o bird has long been associated with royalty, for its yellow feathers were used in ancient times to create capes of the ali'i, or chiefs. Princess Ka'iulani was heir to the throne when the kingdom was overthrown in 1893. Like the untimely extinction of the 'o'o birds she died an early death at the age of 23.

Forth from her land to mine she goes,  
The Island maid, the Island rose;  
Light of heart and bright of face:  
The daughter of a double race.

Her islands here, in Southern sun,  
Shall mourn their Kaiulani gone,  
And I, in her dear banyan shade,  
Look vainly for my little maid.

But our Scots islands far away  
Shall glitter with unwonted day,  
And cast for once their tempests by  
To smile in Kaiulani's eye.

**Before Color**, Tonia Ko, text by Italo Calvino (1923-1985)

*Le Cosmicomiche* (Cosmic Comics), published in 1965, is a set of 12 short stories creating imaginary situations out of scientific facts. The text of "Before Color" is taken from "Without Colors" and is based on the premise that everything was grey before there was atmosphere.

Before the atmosphere:  
Without air in the air,  
The moon shown grey upon the rocks.

Hidden from sight  
Hidden from sounds  
Whispers on sighs  
For an eternity.

Rocks  
to earth  
to mud  
to liquid mass--  
The sun shines color on the ocean blue.

The air fills the air  
with atmosphere.

Tonia Ko's creative evolution is largely guided by three conceptual pillars: texture, physical movement, and the relationship between melody and memory. These ideas permeate her recent works across a variety of media—from instrumental solos and large ensemble pieces, to paintings and sound installations. No matter how traditional or experimental the medium, Ko's work reveals a core that is at once whimsical, questioning, and lyrical.

Recipient of a 2018 Guggenheim Fellowship, Ko's music has been lauded by The New York Times for its "captivating" details and "vivid orchestral palette." She has been commissioned by leading soloists and ensembles, and performed at venues such as Walt Disney Concert Hall, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, and the Tanglewood Music Center, Aspen Music Festival, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. Internationally, her work has been featured at the Royaumont Académie Voix Nouvelles, Shanghai Conservatory New Music

Week, Young Composers Meeting at Apeldoorn, and Thailand International Composition Festival, where she was awarded the 2014 Rapee Sagarik Prize. Ko has received grants and awards from the Harvard University's Fromm Music Foundation, Chamber Music America, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) as well as residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Copland House, Kimmel Harding Nelson Center, and Djerassi Resident Artist Program. She served as the 2015–2017 Composer-in-Residence for Young Concert Artists.

Presenters of her work encompass a broad range of the music scene, including the Minnesota Orchestra, New York Youth Symphony, Los Angeles-based collective Wild Up, percussion/cello duo New Morse Code, oboist Olivier Stankiewicz, and the Da Capo Chamber Players. Recent and upcoming projects include Starting Places for Volti, Plain, Air, a large-scale piece for the Spektral Quartet in conjunction with Openlands Lakeshore Preserve, Simple Fuel for the Chicago-based Grossman Ensemble, a collaboration with violist/composer Kurt Rohde, as well as a project with noted choreographer Antonia Franceschi.

Ko was born in Hong Kong in 1988 and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii. She earned a B.M. with Highest Distinction from the Eastman School of Music and an M.M. from Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. At IU, she served as Associate Instructor of Music Theory and was awarded the Georgina Joshi Commission Prize. She holds a D.M.A. from Cornell University, where she studied with Steven Stucky and Kevin Ernste. In 2018, she became the second Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Chicago's Center for Contemporary Composition and was appointed Honorary Research Fellow at City, University of London for the 2019–2020 academic year.

**Martes**, commissioned by the Peninsula Women's Chorus (2009), Joseph Gregorio

The proverb springs from a superstitious belief, in Spanish speaking countries, that Tuesday is a day of bad luck. Something of the superstition's cultural resonance can be understood when one considers that the title of Friday the 13th, a horror movie, was rendered in Spanish as Martes 13.

Martes, ni te cases, nit te embarques, ni de tu casa te apartes!  
(On Tuesday, don't get married, don't go on a trip, and don't leave your house!)

Joseph Gregorio's compositions have been commissioned by numerous performers, ensembles, and organizations including the Peninsula Women's Chorus, Cantus, the American Choral Directors Association, The Esoterics, and the Ives Collective. Also active as a conductor, Gregorio is director of choirs at Swarthmore College. From 2011–2016 he directed chamber choir Ensemble Companio, which he founded in 2011 and which won the 2012 American Prize in choral performance. Gregorio has co-conducted the Yale Recital Chorus and the Yale Repertory Chorus, and has guest-conducted the Swarthmore College Orchestra, the Cornell University Glee Club, and the Mansfield University Concert Choir. He served from 2004–2006 as the assistant conductor of the San Francisco Conservatory Chorus, and was assistant conductor of the San Francisco Bach Choir from 2005–2007.

Gregorio has studied composition with Steven Stucky, David Conte, Richard Brodhead, and Matthew Greenbaum, and undertaken additional study with Alice Parker. He was a Presidential Fellow at Temple University, where he earned a D.M.A. in music composition. Gregorio also holds a M.M. in composition with departmental honors from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, a M.M. in choral conducting from Yale University, and a B.A. magna cum laude in music from Cornell University. He was a professor of music theory and musicianship at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music from 2008–2009.



**Spring, the Sweet Spring**, Ēriks Ešņvalds, text by Thomas Nashe (1567-1601)

Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king,  
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,  
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing:  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,  
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,  
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay:  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,  
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,  
In every street these tunes our ears do greet:  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to witta-woo!  
Spring, the sweet spring!

**This Shall Be for Music**, Eric Tuan, text by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

I will make you brooches and toys for your delight  
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.  
I will make a palace fit for you and me  
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,  
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom,  
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white  
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near,  
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear!  
That only I remember, that only you admire,  
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

**Magic Prayer** from "The Dawning Light," Carson Cooman, text Traditional Inuit-Yupik

I arise from rest with movements swift  
As the beat of a raven's wings  
I arise  
To meet the day.  
My face is turned from the dark of night  
To gaze at the dawn of the day,  
Now whitening in the sky.



NEW MUSIC  
FOR TREBLE  
VOICES



**Hands upon the Plow**, Jocelyn Hagen, text by Barbara Saxton

Although I have tremendous respect for all three of our *Trailblazers* women honorees, I feel the greatest gratitude and personal empathy toward suffragist and women's rights champion Alice Paul. I have voted in every election since 1968, and doing so is a right I've taken for granted. Of course, I was aware of "the Movement," but until I researched the life and work of Alice Paul and other women's rights pioneers, I didn't realize how long they had labored nor how deeply they suffered to obtain this *gift* of rightful participation in the democratic process for American women! Alice never married or had children. She organized, marched, confronted for decades—she was even painfully force-fed through a nose tube while on a hunger strike. She knew exactly how difficult it was to wield that heavy plow through the muddy fields of prejudice, distrust and ignorance women faced as they tried to obtain even the most basic rights in a democracy. And that is why she entreated women to never stop pushing for equal rights until we reached the end of each row, or obstacle. We've come a long way, but we're not there yet...

Some of the lines of my poem are quotes from Alice herself—e.g., "the movement as mosaic" and "no new worlds without female power." Other original lines were inspired by her incredible bravery and persistence, ending (as any poem or song about Alice and her fellow suffragists must) with an exhortation to lift our voices and VOTE! —Barbara Saxton

She likened our Movement  
to mosaic tiles—more vibrant  
and stronger when linked  
by the mortar of women,  
our undaunted will.

She placed trembling hands  
upon the true plow;  
told us not to let go,  
to push hard till we reach  
the end of each row.

She claimed No New Worlds  
without female power—  
peace, progress, discovery all grow  
in our hearts, our wise voices,  
our votes.



**Alice Paul** (January 11, 1885 - July 9, 1977), Women's Suffrage Champion, raises a glass in front of the ratification banner, August 26, 1920.



## New Music For Treble Voices

The idea for the New Music for Treble Voices Festival (NMFTV) came about in 2008 with the realization that the Bay Area is home to several acclaimed treble choirs, all national and international leaders in commissioning and performing new music. Founding groups were Volti, a professional choir dedicated to American contemporary music, Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir (both conducted by Robert Geary), and the Peninsula Women's Chorus (PWC), conducted by Dr. Martin Benvenuto.

Hosted and produced by the PWC since 2013, this invitational festival under the direction of Martin Benvenuto brings together experienced treble choirs with an affinity for innovative new music. In line with PWC's mission of creating and performing diverse, dynamic, and adventurous music, we believe maintaining a forum for new music is essential as it inspires and enriches our singers and audiences.

## PWC's Trailblazers Project

For over fifty years, the Peninsula Women's Chorus has inspired and enriched its singers and audiences through the creation and performance of diverse, dynamic and adventurous music. We are nearing the culmination of an ambitious, multi-year commissioning project, "Trailblazers," which focuses on three pioneering American women.

In 2020 we are celebrating Alice Paul, one of the main leaders and strategists of the campaign for the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits sex discrimination in the right to vote. Paul initiated and, along with Lucy Burns and others, strategized events such as the Woman Suffrage Procession and the Silent Sentinels, which were part of the successful campaign that resulted in the amendment's passage in 1920.



2018 Project

**Harriet Tubman**

*Abolitionist & Humanitarian*



2019 Project

**Miss Major Griffin-Gracy**

*Transgender Rights Leader*



2020 Project

**Alice Paul**

*Women's Suffrage Champion*

*"So me there is nothing complicated about ordinary equality."*

- Alice Paul



Since 1966, the Peninsula Women's Chorus (PWC) has become synonymous with artistic excellence in choral music. Known for its adventuresome programming and recognized as one of the leading women's choruses in the U.S. and beyond, the PWC is dedicated to commissioning new works, discovering rarely performed works, and keeping classical choral masterpieces for treble voices alive. Comprised of a diverse group of auditioned singers who share an enthusiasm for challenging repertoire, the PWC has commissioned 35 new works and released seven CD recordings over the last ten years.

Among PWC honors are: winner of The American Prize in Choral Performance in 2015, and second place winner in 2011; third prize in the 2006 Béla Bartók 22nd International Choir Competition, in Debrecen, Hungary; two Chorus America/ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming (2003 and 1999); finalist in the 2000 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence; and second prize at the 1994 Tallinn International Choral Competition in Estonia. Other noted performances include four appearances (in 2016, 2001, 1993, and 1987) at American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) conferences. In addition to extensive performances throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, the chorus has been heard on National Public Radio, and has appeared on television both nationally and internationally.

With its commitment to exciting outreach programs PWC adds to its reputation as a dynamic force in music making and community building. Since 2007, the PWC has produced an annual or biennial New Music for Treble Voices (NMFTV) festival, bringing together diverse local and national choruses in the study and performance of innovative, contemporary works. The PWC also offers a Mentorship Program to provide outstanding local high school women singers an opportunity to study and rehearse challenging works, culminating in a performance in the NMFTV festival. The PWC celebrated its 50th anniversary season in 2016-17, and looks forward to another 50 years of enriching its community with vibrant music.

## **The Peninsula Women's Chorus gratefully acknowledges these 2019-2020 Corporate Sponsors for their generous support:**

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### **Program Sponsors**

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## **Martín Benvenuto, Artistic Director**

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

Recognized for his exacting technique, and a passion for drawing the finest choral tone, Benvenuto's repertoire is extensive. His choirs are dedicated to commissioning new works from upcoming and established composers from the U.S. and abroad, and have been selected to perform at

Chorus America and American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) conferences.

His choirs have also earned honors and high marks in international competitions in Argentina, South Africa, Canada, Hungary, and Spain. Of particular note are PWC's American Prize in Choral Performance (winner in 2015, second place in 2011), the 2010 Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker award, which recognized Women Sing for programming recently composed music that expanded the mission of the chorus, and the Third Prize awarded to the PWC at the 2006 Béla Bartók International Choir Competition, one of the most prestigious on the European circuit.

Benvenuto highly values artistic collaborations: his choirs have collaborated with Veljo Tormis, Joseph Jennings, Karmina Silec and Carmina Slovenica, Charles Bruffy, Quinteto Latino, California Shakespeare Theater, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, and the Golden Gate Men's Chorus, among others.

Benvenuto has prepared choirs for organizations such as the San Francisco Opera, the Oakland East Bay Symphony, the Redwood Symphony, and the Kronos Quartet. He has also has appeared as tenor soloist with leading Bay Area ensembles.

Benvenuto holds a D.M.A. 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, where he studied with Joseph Flummerfelt, majoring both in Choral Conducting and in Voice Performance and Pedagogy. His undergraduate degrees in choral conducting and composition are from the Universidad Católica Argentina.



## **Margaret Fondbertasse, Accompanist**

Margaret Fondbertasse has devoted her adult years to finessing the art of accompanying, chamber music and teaching. A former student of John McCarthy, Anne Crowden and Janet Guggenheim, she earned a Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Chamber Music from the University of California, Berkeley where she was the recipient of the Eisner Prize for piano performance. This was followed by an auspicious grant, the Hertz Fellowship, which enabled her to pursue postgraduate studies with John Wilson at the Royal College of Music in Manchester, United Kingdom.

Margaret made her solo orchestral debut playing Beethoven's Choral Fantasy with the Coastside Community Orchestra. In addition to the PWC, she accompanies the Skyline College Concert Choir under the direction of Jude Navari. A former staff accompanist at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, she currently serves as Faculty Accompanist at Skyline College, collaborates with mezzo-soprano Meghan Dibble as Katzenduo, and is the proud mother of her science nerd son, Zachary.



## Peninsula Women's Chorus NMFTV Roster

### Soprano 1

Jenn Davidson Kim  
 Susan Hogben  
 Jennifer Katz  
 Danni Redding Lapuz  
 Andra Marynowski  
 Katie Sanwick  
 Kyle Sofman  
 Michelle Staley  
 Judy Sweet  
 Jane Walker  
 Sophie-Anne Wood\*

### Soprano 2

Sara Asher  
 Vicki Brown  
 Jan Cummins  
 Barbara Hennings  
 Rebecca Holtzman  
 Petra Dierkes-Thrun  
 Robin Mulgannon  
 Eithne Pardini  
 Jillian Price  
 Mindy Tauberg  
 Smriti Vaidyanathan\*  
 Nichole Young Clarke  
 Helen Yu

### Alto 1

Veronica Bain\*  
 Ann Crichton  
 Sarah Etheredge  
 Julia Fearon  
 Lauren Haney  
 Betsy Landergren  
 Holly Liberatore  
 Kathryn MacLaury  
 Debbie Romani  
 Kate Roseman  
 Jennifer Song  
 Hoai-Thu Truong  
 Deanne Tucker

### Alto 2

Morgan Ames  
 Kate Andrade  
 Tricia Baldwin  
 Lisa Collart  
 Lynne Haynes-Tucker  
 Yiting Jin  
 Martha Morgan  
 Susan Rooke  
 Barbara Saxton  
 Barbara Zoeller

*\*PWC Mentorship Program students*



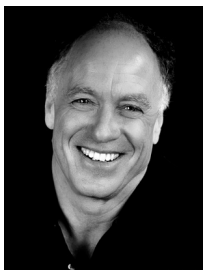
## PWC MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The PWC has had the pleasure of welcoming and working with several talented young women in the 11th year of our Mentorship Program. This program for high school age singers with choral experience offers a unique opportunity to attend PWC's weekly rehearsals and perform with us at the New Music for Treble Voices Festival.

We sincerely thank each and every mentee for sharing her voice with us!

For more info about the PWC Mentorship Program, visit [www.pwchorus.org/mentorship](http://www.pwchorus.org/mentorship)

The four Performing Department choirs – **Concert Choir, Ensemble, Ecco, and Ancora** – represent the pinnacle of children's choral training and performance. The singers in these groups have studied music for several years, and are admitted into the groups by audition. Ancora under the direction of Artistic Director Emeritus, Robert Geary, is a stunning treble chamber group made up of high school age treble singers who pass a rigorous vocal audition. Being a part of Ancora is the realization of many years of hard work and dedicated choral excellence in the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir. In Performing Choirs, promising young singers reach new heights of personal expression; their relationship with music deepens and gains new subtlety. Singers begin to form their own musical personalities and identities, and they make deep, lifelong bonds with like-minded friends. They become proud ambassadors of the Choir through local performances, professional collaborations, and on tour at international competitions and festivals.



**Robert Geary, Founding Artistic Director**

Geary has put the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir in the musical vanguard. Under his direction, PEBCC has won awards nationally and internationally, including multiple ASCAP awards and top honors in competitions in Canada, Poland, Austria, Italy, Hong Kong, Russia, Germany, Slovakia, and the United States. With Susan Rahl, he also founded the triennial Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choral Festival in 1991. Since 1979 Geary has also served as founding Artistic Director of Volti, a professional new music vocal ensemble, and since 1995, as Artistic Director of the San Francisco Choral Society.



**Sue Bohlin, Associate Conductor**

Performing Department and Accompanist Sue joined our staff in 1984 and is a recipient of PEBCC's Founders Award. A collaborative pianist, conductor, & producer, she works with choirs, orchestras, schools, recording studios, professional theater, opera, multimedia companies and conducts a choir in Gualala. Her music, published by Santa Barbara Music Publishers and Alliance Music, includes "In Anchor Bay", a piece she composed for the children's choir she led from 2004-2013. Sue graduated from the Conservatory at UOP, attended Holy Names Univ. for solfeggio, & studies at Berkeley Jazzschool.

**Ancora**

Madeline Ashburn, Mia Atkinson, Erin Bartholomew, Roxanne Bostian, Lucy Dunn, Alexandra Fiske, Elizabeth Fiske, Sydney Gong, Kimiye Hendee, Gina Ledor, Emma Leibowitz, Michaela Lim, Milla Munn, Zia Pao-Ziegler, Anni Robinson, Abigail Sanchez, Phoebe Schmidt, Emily Schweizer, Talia Young Skeen





Musae is a women's vocal ensemble based in San Francisco. The group takes its name from the original "ladies of song," the classic nine Muses of Greek mythology. Since its founding in 2004,

Musae has performed diverse and accessible music throughout the Bay Area, and continues to stretch the boundaries of traditional repertoire for women's voices.

Musae functions as a musical collective in which each singer identifies as a leader and soloist contributing actively to the artistic process. The group's singers are trained in the choral tradition, but not bound by it. Each singer may sing a range of voice parts based on the aesthetic demands of the music, and the group performs largely without conductor.

In 2016, Laney McClain Armstrong became Musae's artistic director. She is a singer and conductor who has made choral music and choral music education her life's work. As a conductor and educator, Dr. Armstrong strives to cultivate a love of music in each singer through quality programing, building skills and musicianship, and devotion to the music and texts.



### **Laney McClain Armstrong, Artistic Director**

Laney McClain Armstrong is a singer and conductor who has made choral music and choral music education her life's work. As a conductor and educator, Dr. Armstrong strives to cultivate a love of music in each singer through quality programing, building skills and musicianship, and devotion to the music and texts. She has toured internationally with the San Francisco Girls Chorus and the Harvard University Choir as a singer, and was one of the founding members of the Choral Fellows program at Harvard University in 2001. As a recipient of a Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship in 2009, she studied the Estonian language and culture and assisted in cataloguing entries in the University of Washington's Baltic Choral

Collection. Dr. Armstrong has worked with singers of many ages, including teaching middle- and high-school choir in Virginia, working with elementary-aged students in Bay Area schools with limited music programs, leading introductory music classes to five- and six-year-old girls, and directing the San Francisco Girls Chorus' Alumnae Chorus. Dr. Armstrong was the Associate Artistic Director and Director of Musicianship at the Cantabile Youth Singers of Silicon Valley, where she worked with children and young adults ages eight to eighteen. She currently works as a music teacher at the Renaissance International School in Oakland. Dr. Armstrong has been Musae's artistic director since 2016.

Dr. Armstrong holds a Bachelors of Arts from Harvard University in Afro-American Studies, a Masters of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Oregon, where she studied with Dr. Sharon Paul, and a Doctorate in Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from the University of Washington, where she studied with Dr. Geoffrey Boers. Dr. Armstrong holds a Level I Certification in Kodaly teaching, and has prepared singers to sing with the San Francisco Opera, the San Francisco Symphony, and Opera Parallel. She lives in Oakland with her husband and four girls under the age of five.

### **Musae**



Sabrina Adler  
Rebecca Blume  
Sara Chalk  
KaTrina Clay  
Kirstin Cummings  
Christine Ensley  
Robin Flecha  
Rachel Herbert  
Katie Innes  
Anjali Jameson  
Namita Kallianpurkar  
Allison Lynk  
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Tiffany Ou  
Danielle Schickele  
Lauren Schwartz

# Upcoming Concerts

## ANCORA

### **JAZZ & BEYOND**

**Monday, May 11, 2020 @ 8pm**

Yoshi's, Oakland

Join us at legendary jazz club Yoshi's for an eclectic evening of music presented by the talented musicians of Ecco and Ancora. Alongside vocal jazz, lighthearted contemporary works, and the latest a cappella stylings, enjoy the talents of individual singers in solos, duets, and small groups.

### **SPRING SING CONCERT**

**Saturday, May 30, 2020 @ 3pm**

Oakland Inter-Skate Center

The entire PEBCC family joins together for this musical celebration of community. We'll hear from all ten of our Training and Performing Department ensembles; revel in the glorious sound of all 300 singers lifting their voices together; and honor the accomplishments of the graduating class of 2020.

**More info: [www.piedmontchoirs.org](http://www.piedmontchoirs.org)**

## MUSAE

### **NIGHT TO DAY**

**Saturday, May 2, 2020 @ 4pm**

Old St. Hilary's Landmark, Tiburon

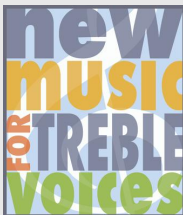
**Sunday, May 3, 2020 @ 4pm**

St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church, SF

As the days lengthen and spring turns toward summer, join Musae to take a musical journey through the daily cycle of dark to daybreak. This concert will prominently feature "The Dawning Light," a multi-movement work by American composer Carson Cooman, a work for treble voices that was premiered by the Lorelei Ensemble in 2015. Other contemporary composers round out this musical journey, including Eric Barnum, Ēriks Ešēnvalds, and Eleanor Daley. There is no parking at Old St. Hilary's in Tiburon. Please park at the Boardwalk Shopping Center and take a shuttle to the concert. Shuttle service begins at 3:30 pm.

**More info: [www.musae.org](http://www.musae.org)**

*Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @musaesf*




**Thanks for joining us!!!**

*- PWC, Ancora, & Musae*



# Upcoming Concert



**PENINSULA  
WOMEN'S  
CHORUS**

**SPRING CONCERT  
FOR CRYING OUT LOUD**  
...tears of joy, pain, and reconciliation

**Sunday, May 3, 2020 @ 4:00pm**  
**Saturday, May 9, 2020 @ 2:30pm**  
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto

Joy, pain, laughter, reconciliation...

We arrive at the culmination of our Trailblazers Project, our voices ringing out in celebration of heroic women across the ages.

From Emma Lou Diemer's lighthearted "Five Limericks" to struggles of women workers' rights in Bussewitz-Quarm's "The Radium Girl," to Kristina Boerger's heartbreaking "Ballade with Christine de Pisan," we are reminded of the myriad ways emotions can strike our hearts.

"Mari," crying out loud on behalf of Mother Nature, and nourishing self-renewal in "Gaur Arbola" by Basque composer Eva Ugalde, will both travel with us musically during our June 2020 Spain tour.

**More info:** [www.pwchorus.org](http://www.pwchorus.org)

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