



ORIANA CONSORT

— Choral music from seven centuries —

A NEW GLADNESS

Choral music
from five
centuries by
twelve
innovators



**8 PM SATURDAY
NOV. 11, 2023**

University Lutheran
Church
66 Winthrop Street
Cambridge, MA

**8 PM FRIDAY
NOV. 17, 2023**

Trinity Episcopal
Church
81 Elm Street
Concord, MA

**5 PM SUNDAY
NOV. 19, 2023**

First Lutheran Church
of Boston
299 Berkeley Street
Boston, MA

Many creators of choral music, across the centuries, have composed in novel ways that had never occurred to their predecessors. Oriana brings the choral music of twelve of these innovators to life: Leonel Power, Johannes Ockeghem, Josquin des Prez, Heinrich Schütz, Paul Hindemith, Igor Stravinsky, Aaron Copland, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Abbie Betinis, Reena Esmail, Iryna Aleksiychuk, and Eric Whitacre.

Oriana's 20 singers are directed by Walter Chapin and Andrea Hart

General admission \$25 | Students & Seniors \$20
Available at the door or at OrianaConsort.org

A New Gladness

Choral Music from five centuries by twelve innovators

The text of the final piece on this program is Walt Whitman's poem "All seems beautiful to me." Near the end of that poem is a line that begins "I will toss a new gladness...".

Whitman's poem is about the personal renewal that comes through community. Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to think that the craft of choral composition — practiced by dozens, hundreds, thousands of musicians, over many centuries — renews itself, over time, in much the same way that people renew themselves: through imagination, discovery, and a desire to tread new ground.

In this program, Oriana presents typical works of twelve innovative composers, who lived in five of the seven centuries that include and precede our own. Each of them accomplished something, by way of writing for choral voices, that had never been done before. Some of these innovations were fundamental to the entire history of choral music; others not so much. But all of them were interesting.

In the space of this hour, by listening to the choral music of these twelve, perhaps we can get to know them, just a little. They are speaking to us: let us listen!

— Walter Chapin

Please ensure that NO device you may be carrying will make ANY sound!

Please take NO photos or videos during the performance!

**Following the concert, a reception for audience and performers
will be held in another part of the church.**

Please do join us for refreshments and conversation!

The Program

I

Leonel Power c. 1370 - 1445

Ave Regina caelorum *Hail, Queen of heaven*

Johannes Ockeghem c. 1410 - 1497

Alma Redemptoris Mater *Dear mother of the Redeemer*

Josquin des Prez c. 1450 - 1521

Ave Maria, virgo serena *Hail, Mary, serene virgin*

Heinrich Schütz 1585 - 1672

Singet dem Herrn *Sing to the Lord (Psalm 98)*

Quartet 1: Olivia Adams, Andrea Hart, Harris Fiering, James Tresner

Quartet 2: Rachel Stigers, Gary Gengo, Renugan Raidoo, Nic Tuttle

II

Paul Hindemith 1895 - 1963

La biche *The Doe*

poem by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

Igor Stravinsky 1882 - 1971

The Dove Descending

poem by T. S. Eliot (1888-1965)

Aaron Copland 1900 - 1990

Lark

poem by Genevieve Taggard (1894-1948)

Matthew Williams, baritone

Please enjoy a fifteen-minute intermission!

III

directed by Andrea Hart

Ralph Vaughan Williams

1872 - 1958

Loch Lomond

the composer's arrangement of an 18th-century Scottish folk song

Abbie Betinis

b. 1980

Prayer for Peace

words by the composer, based on sermons preached c. 1940 by Rev. Bates G. Burt

Alex Conway, baritone

Reena Esmail

b. 1983

The Unexpected Early Hour

poem by Rebecca Gayle Howell (b. 1975)

IV

Iryna Aleksyichuk

b. 1967

Мій голос до Господа *Miy golos do Gospoda*

My Voice to the Lord (Psalm 142)

Ashley Mac, soprano (Nov. 11)

Melanie Armstrong, soprano (Nov. 17, Nov. 19)

Irina Kareva, contralto

Eric Whitacre

b. 1970

All Seems Beautiful to Me

poem by Walt Whitman (1819-1892)





ORIANA CONSORT

— Choral music from seven centuries —

Olivia Adams • Gabriel Bronk • Laura Amweg
Melanie Armstrong • Alex Conway • Harris Fiering
Adrienne Fuller • Gary Gengo • Jim Harris
Andrea Hart • Irina Kareva • Ashley Mac
Dennis O'Brien • Renugan Raidoo • Irl Smith
Rachel Stigers • Lauren Syer • James Tresner
Nic Tuttle • Matthew Williams

Walter Chapin, Director

Assisted by Andrea Hart

The Oriana Consort embraces the premise that choral music, ever since its origin in Western Europe during the early fifteenth century, has been uniquely capable of expressing intense human emotion. While this of course involves words, the emotion is communicated not so much through the words that are sung, but rather through the musical medium of vocal polyphony — that is, many voice parts, with multiple singers on each part, who sing melodic lines which are dissimilar, yet which form a musical unity through governing schemes of harmony, meter, and rhythm. Vocal polyphony, through a mysterious process that is perhaps not fully understood, is somehow capable of expressing intense emotion.

The Oriana Consort was founded on this premise. The group's mission is to prepare and present choral music which will generate the kind of musical magic described above.

The Consort evolved, very gradually, from several suburban amateur choral groups that Walter Chapin had directed in the 1970s and 1980s on Boston's South Shore. In 1994 the group adopted the name "Oriana Consort," moved its focus from the South Shore to Cambridge, and began to increase its membership; thus 1994 can be regarded as Oriana's founding year.

From about 2002 to 2008 the group further evolved toward its present form: an *a cappella* chorale of twenty-odd singers, who are auditioned to very high standards, and who rehearse and perform primarily without accompaniment, tuning only to their own voices. The group's size is small enough for the performance of intimate motets such as Johannes Ockeghem's

Alma Redemptoris mater and Josquin des Prez' *Ave Maria* (which you will hear in this concert), yet it is not too small for the performance of demanding choral works such as Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, Aaron Copland's *In The Beginning*, Dominick Argento's *Seasons*, and Edwin Fissinger's *Dover Beach* (all of which Oriana has done in recent seasons).

The name "Oriana Consort" is actually a misnomer, for the group is not really a *consort*, but a *chorale*. In its founding year of 1994 it was an eight-voice ensemble that actually was a consort — in the Renaissance sense of voices combined with Renaissance-era instruments — and the name stuck. The name is taken from *The Triumphes of Oriana*, a 1601 collection of madrigals by the English composer Thomas Morley and his colleagues. Morley specified that the concluding line of the lyrics of every madrigal in the collection should be "Long live fair Oriana!" — very probably a veiled reference to Queen Elizabeth I, to whom Morley dedicated his collection. Every now and then we perform one or two madrigals from *The Triumphes of Oriana*.

Once a week Oriana's members travel from many points in the greater Boston area to University Lutheran Church in Cambridge, where they sing together and prepare programs to be presented in concert. In normal times (that is, not counting the unwelcome hiatus that was imposed by Covid from the spring of 2020 through the spring of 2021) Oriana prepares two concert programs each year, and presents each program in Cambridge, in Boston, and in a suburb. The group's eclectic repertory is drawn from the 15th through the 21st centuries — for these are the seven centuries during which the tradition of polyphonic choral music flourished, arising first in western Europe, then spreading throughout all of Europe and much of the Americas and Asia. (Hence the motto under our logo on the preceding page: *Choral music from seven centuries*.) Music of the Baroque or the early Classical era, accompanied by instrumentalists from greater Boston's outstanding early music community, usually forms a part of one of Oriana's programs during our spring half-season.

Oriana has also performed on invitation: the group has participated four times in the Candlelight Concert Series of Old Ship Church in Hingham; twice in the "3rd Sundays @ 3" concert series sponsored by the Waltham Philharmonic Orchestra; in the Vanderkay Summer Concert Series of Blue Hill, Maine; in the concert series at The Center for Arts in Natick; in the Vox Humana series of Jamaica Plain; and in the Lux Aeterna multi-chorus concert held in Boston in January of 2005 to benefit survivors of the tsunami in Southeast Asia.

In March of 2007 Oriana was one of four Boston-area choirs to participate in a master class presented by Peter Phillips, director of the renowned Tallis Scholars.

Oriana was the opera chorus for “Italian Night at the Opera”, a gala concert presented in May of 2011 by the Waltham Philharmonic Orchestra.

In June of each odd-numbered year, the Boston Early Music Festival sponsors the Fringe Concert Series, in which local groups perform period music. In June of the most recent six odd-numbered years (excepting 2021), Oriana presented a BEMF “Fringe” concert. We did our most recent “Fringe” in June of this year.

In late July and early August of 2013, Oriana undertook a four-concert tour to Germany, performing in Frankfurt am Main, in the Frankfurt suburb of Dietzenbach, and in Leipzig. In the chancel of the Thomaskirche in Leipzig — where J. S. Bach was Kantor from 1723 to 1750 — the Consort surrounded Bach’s tomb to sing him two of his motets, and provided the choir music for a Sunday service there, singing music of Bach, Mendelssohn, Barber, and Bernstein.

Oriana has presented the premieres of some notable choral works:

In 2012 the group commissioned *Ani Adonai (I, the Lord)*, a setting of the words of Isaiah by the Boston-area composer Adam Jacob Simon, and premiered this work in December of that year.

In the spring of 2014 the group presented the East Coast premiere of *The Waking*, a choral setting of a Theodore Roethke poem by Abbie Betinis, a noted young composer from the Upper Midwest. (You’ll hear other music by Betinis on this program.)

In December of 2015 Oriana presented the Massachusetts premiere of *The Longest Nights*, a choral setting of seven winter poems (by seven different poets) composed by Timothy C. Takach, also from the Upper Midwest. Oriana, together with one choir in each of forty-one other states of the USA, had the honor of participating in the joint commissioning of this work.

Also in December 2015, Oriana presented what was very likely the local premiere (and quite possibly the American premiere) of *Welcher Glanz erhellt den Dampf (What brilliance lights the mist)*, an Advent cantata written in 1717 by the prolific, gifted, yet little-known German composer Cristoph Graupner, a contemporary of J. S. Bach. We claimed that our performance of this work was “very likely the local premiere,” since a thorough search revealed absolutely no indication that any edition of this cantata had ever been published, either for performance or for scholarly study; nor that any public transcription of the composer’s manuscript score had ever been made. Since the facsimile of the composer’s 1717 manuscript of the score had ever been made. Since the facsimile of the composer’s 1717 manuscript of the score and parts of this cantata looked so very interesting, Oriana’s director undertook to transcribe it from that manuscript facsimile so that the group could perform it. We do think it likely that we were the first choral group in a

very long time to have brought life to this lively and inventive cantata.

During the Covid hiatus that began in March of 2020, Oriana experimented with virtual performance. Our virtual choir version of Stephen Paulus' *The Road Home* (engineered by Oriana's resident technical guru Nic Tuttle) has had over 2,000 views on YouTube. Our recording of Tomás Luis de Victoria's *Missa O magnum mysterium*, from our BEMF "Fringe" concert in June 2019, led by Katheryn Currie and Valerie Thomforde, was reworked into another YouTube video.

Walter Chapin, the Oriana Consort's founder and Director, has degrees from Harvard and the New England Conservatory, and did graduate study at Boston University, where he was Assistant Choral Director (under Robert Gartside), director of opera choruses, twice the director of the Boston University Summer Chorus, a teaching fellow in conducting, and director of classroom choirs whose members were studying choral music of the 16th and 17th centuries. He has directed amateur choral groups in the Boston suburbs, conducted choirs at the high school level, and led a parishioners' choir and a youth choir at King's Chapel in Boston. In his other-than-musical life he is a retired-but-still-active computer information systems designer and developer, and a husband, father, grandfather, gardener, and carpenter.

Andrea Hart, who is directing part of this program, is an active teacher, singer, pianist, flutist, and choral director. She holds a BMus. from Boston University and an EdM. from Harvard University. She teaches piano and flute privately and in schools, and is Youth Music Director at Park Avenue Church UCC in Arlington, where she directs intergenerational and youth choirs. Her professional experience includes service as General Manager for the World Music Ensemble *Libana*, and as Program Director for Creative Arts, a community school for music and the visual arts. She has sung with Boston Cecilia, the Longy Chamber Singers, the Mudville Madrigal Singers, and the Oriana Consort, and has been a vocal soloist for a number of Boston area church choirs.



Leonel Power

c. 1370 - 1445

Ave Regina caelorum

Hail, Queen of heaven

Johannes Ockeghem

c. 1410 - 1497

Alma Redemptoris Mater

Dear mother of the Redeemer

Josquin des Prez

c. 1450 - 1521

Ave Maria, virgo serena

Hail, Mary, serene virgin

Heinrich Schütz

1585 - 1672

Singet dem Herrn

Sing to the Lord (Psalm 98)

Quartet 1: Olivia Adams, Andrea Hart, Harris Fiering, James Tresner

Quartet 2: Rachel Stigers, Gary Gengo, Renugan Raidoo, Nic Tuttle

Leonel Power, active in England in the early fifteenth century, was one of the first composers to conceive of choral harmony as consisting predominantly of three simultaneously-sounding tones, each separated from the next by the interval of a third — that is, by three steps of the scale. In modern terms, we call these harmonies “triadic chords,” or “triads,” or, more commonly, just “chords.” In earlier eras vocal harmony had contained triads only incidentally, as its musical texture was predominantly made up of the intervals of open fifths and octaves. Triadic harmony was soon adopted by Power’s younger contemporary John Dunstable (c. 1390 - 1453); these two were also among the first composers to prefer multiple singers on a part, rather than just one. Thus Power and Dunstable established conventions in choral music that have been followed for the last seven centuries, and are still being followed today.

The text of *Ave Regina caelorum* — which Power set for three voices — is one of a handful of Marian antiphons on the church liturgy. These were originally single-voice Gregorian chants; later composers set them polyphonically, i.e. for two, three, or more voices sounding simultaneously in harmony.

Ave, Regina caelorum,
Ave, Domina angelorum;
Salve radix, salve porta,
ex qua mundo lux est orta.

*Hail, Queen of Heaven,
Hail, Lady of Angels;
Save us, [thou] root; save us, [thou] gate
From whom a light has arisen for the world.*

Gaude, virgo gloriosa,
Super omnes speciosa;
Vale, O valde decora,
Et pro nobis Christum exora.

*Rejoice, glorious virgin,
Lovely beyond all;
Farewell, O beautiful maiden,
And pray for us to Christ.*

The new English style of triadic harmony soon made its way across the Channel to France and the Netherlands. In France it was called “la contenance angloise,” in recognition of the place of origin of this new, full, rich sound. The style was eagerly adopted by French composers such as Guillaume Dufay (c. 1397 - 1474) and Antoine Busnois (c. 1430 - 1492). By the time Johannes Ockeghem was active, in the mid-15th century in the Netherlands, the absorption had become so thorough that triadic harmony was considered by Franco-Flemish composers to be their natural musical realm.

Following the conclusion of the Hundred Years’ War in the 1450s, and that of the Wars of the Roses in the late 1480s, England and France went their separate ways, and cross-Channel musical influence declined.

Among Ockeghem’s contributions were the expansion of the usual number of voice parts from three to four, and the introduction of textural contrast — by the simple device of having passages that are sung by all four voices alternate with passages that are sung by just two or three, thereby generating very audible changes of texture. (You’ll hear a lot of textural contrast in this piece!) Ockeghem also wrote highly expressive vocal lines, which seem to have the curious property that words that are sung at any given moment seem to have no strong connection with the music sung at that moment – beautiful as the words and the music may be, each in their own right. Modern recordings of Ockeghem’s *Alma Redemptoris Mater* demonstrate this: the words that are sung to a given passage of music in one recording will differ from the words that are sung to the same musical passage in another recording.

Ockeghem was also among the first to introduce the concept of musical imitation — in which the beginning melodic motive in a line sung by one of the four voices would immediately be repeated by another voice. Listen carefully, and you’ll hear brief points of imitation every now and then in the Marian antiphon *Alma Redemptoris Mater* — especially at the words “Redemptoris” and “prius.”

Alma Redemptoris Mater,
quae per via
caeli porta manes,
et stella maris,
succurre cadenti,
surgere qui curat populo:

Dear Mother of the Redeemer,
[you] who remain the way
to the gate of heaven,
and [you who are] the star of the sea,
[you who] aid those who fall,
rise up, [you] who care for the people:

Tu quae genuisti
natura mirante,
tuum sanctum Genitorem:
Virgo prius ac posterius,
Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud ave:
peccatorum miserere.

*You who brought forth
the wonder of nature,
your holy Creator:
[You are] virgin before and after,
[you who] heard that "hail"
from the mouth of Gabriel:
have pity on [us] sinners.*

Josquin des Prez, Ockeghem's foremost successor, continued the latter's tendency to write highly expressive choral lines, but with an important difference: the melodic substance of a line by Josquin was devised expressly for the words that were sung in that line, and for no other. The melody to which the two words "Ave Maria" are sung was written expressly for those words; the same is true for the words "gratia plena," and indeed for each new group of words that comes along. With Josquin, melody is no longer independent of the words that are sung to it, as was often the case with Ockeghem; words and melody are now inextricably bound to each other.

Ockeghem's use of musical imitation, pleasing as it is to the ear, occurs infrequently, and seems somewhat rudimentary in comparison to Josquin's. With Josquin, the entire span of a melodic line can be heard in imitation from one choral voice part to the next; and often all four parts participate in imitation. Listen carefully for it! For you can distinctly hear imitation in the melodic line of the initial two words "Ave Maria": first in the soprano, then in the alto, then the tenor, then the bass. The same is true for the words "gratia plena," "Dominus tecum," and many other groupings of words in this motet. Imitation is the very soul of this motet's musical structure!

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum, virgo serena.

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you, serene virgin.*

Ave cuius conceptio,
solemni plena gaudio,
celestia terrestria
nova replet leticia.

*Hail to her whose conception,
full of solemn jubilation,
fills heaven and earth
with new joy.*

Ave cuius nativitas,
nostra fuit solemnitas,
ut lucifer, lux oriens,
verum solem preveniens.

*Hail, whose birth
was our solemnity,
like the morning star, the rising light,
anticipating the true sun.*

Ave vera humilitas,
sine viro fecunditas,
cuius annunciatio
nostra fuit redemptio.

*Hail, true humility,
fruitful without a man,
whose annunciation
was our redemption.*

Ave vera virginitas,
immaculata castitas,
cuius purificatio
nostra fuit purgatio.

*Hail, true virginity,
immaculate chastity,
whose purification
was our purging [of sins].*

Ave preclara omnibus
angelicis virtutibus,
cuius fuit assumptio
nostra glorificatio.

*Hail, most excellent in all
angelic virtues,
whose assumption was
our glorification.*

O Mater Dei,
memento mei. Amen.

*O Mother of God,
remember me. Amen.*

After Josquin's time the Netherlands choral style migrated to Italy, where its foremost practitioners were the composers Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525 - 1594), Orlando di Lasso (c. 1532 - 1594), and Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548 - 1611). Under Giovanni Gabrieli (c. 1554 - 1612), the style underwent further development, and evolved into the Venetian polychoral style — in which a piece would be sung by not just one choir, but by two, three, or sometimes even more choirs. This new and remarkable musical feature was stimulated by the architecture of Gabrieli's church, Basilica di San Marco in Venice, which had four balconies that faced each other, enabling them to be used as separate choir lofts.

All these composers had consummate skill in devising musical settings of the Latin language — the language of church liturgy — such that the natural accentuation of Latin syllables was embedded into the melodic lines to which the Latin texts were sung. This was especially true of Gabrieli — while Claudio Monteverdi (1567 - 1643) did the same for the Italian language.

During Gabrieli's time, composers from German-speaking lands to the north started showing up in Italy, seeking inspiration from the rich new developments in Italian music. The German composer Heinrich Schütz may or may not have come to study personally with Gabrieli — this isn't certain — but he certainly knew about Gabrieli and his music. Schütz introduced Gabrieli's polychoral style to his native Germany. Many German regions had by this time converted to Lutheranism, which, without entirely discarding Latin, had encouraged the use of vernacular German in its services. A new and original contribution that Schütz made to German music was to adapt Gabrieli's skill in devising music that followed the natural accentuation of Latin to music that was devised to follow the natural accentuation of German.

Dresden, where Schütz was active as an employee of the Elector of Saxony, was a Lutheran city. It was there, in 1619, that Schütz brought out a collection of twenty-six of the Psalms of David, which he set for polychoral combinations of voices and sometimes instruments. Among them was

Psalm 98, *Singet dem Herrn*, his choral setting of the German translation of that psalm that Martin Luther had made some eighty years previously. Luther had a good ear for the vernacular German that he heard spoken around him, and he thought it was important to translate the Bible into that vernacular. Thus, to hear Luther's translation of *Singet dem Herrn*, as set for choirs by Heinrich Schutz, is to hear language of the people, sung with intensely and deeply felt.

Schütz scored *Singet dem Herrn* for two choirs. In this performance a quartet of singers forms Choir I, while the remainder of the singers forms Choir II. One quartet serves as Choir I from the beginning through "Harfen und Psalmen;" a second quartet sings Choir I from "Mit Drometen" through "Völker mit Recht." Both quartets join to sing Choir I from "Ehre sei dem Vater" until the end.

Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied,
denn er tut Wunder.

*Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he does wonders.*

Er sieget mit seiner Rechten
und mit seinem heiligen Arm.
Der Herr lässt sein Heil verkündigen;
vor den Völkern
lässt er seine Gerechtigkeit offenbaren.

*He battles with his right hand
and his holy arm.
The Lord makes known his salvation;
before the people
he reveals his righteousness.*

Er gedenket an seine Gnade
und Wahrheit dem Hause Israel.
Aller Welt Enden
sehen das Heil unsers Gottes.
Jauchzet dem Herren, alle Welt,
singet, rühmet und lobet!

*He remembers his mercy
and truth to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth
see the salvation of our God.
Rejoice in the Lord, all the earth,
Sing, praise, and praise!*

Lobet den Herren
mit Harfen und Psalmen!
Mit Drometen und Posaunen
jauchzet vor dem Herrn, dem Könige!

*Praise the Lord
with harps and psalms!
With trumpets and trombones
rejoice before the Lord, the King!*

Das Meer brause,
und was darinnen ist,
der Erdboden und die drauf wohnen.
Die Wasserströme frohlocken,
und alle Berge sind fröhlich
vor dem Herrn;
denn er kommt, das Erdreich zu richten.
Er wird den Erdboden richten
mit Gerechtigkeit
und die Völker mit Recht.

*Let the sea resound,
and everything that is in it,
the world, and all who live in it.
Let the rivers rejoice,
and the mountains be happy
before the Lord;
for he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the earth
with righteousness
and the peoples with equity.*

Ehre sei dem Vater und dem Sohn,

Honor be to the Father and the Son,

und auch dem Heiligen Geiste,
wie es war im Anfang,
jetzt und immerdar,
und von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit, Amen.

*and also to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
now, and forever,
and from eternity to eternity, Amen.*

II

Paul Hindemith

1895 - 1963

La biche

The Doe

poem by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875 - 1926)

Igor Stravinsky

1882 - 1971

The Dove Descending

poem by T. S. Eliot (1888 - 1965)

Aaron Copland

1900 - 1990

Lark

poem by Genevieve Taggard (1894 - 1948)

Matthew Williams, baritone

The Baroque choral style that had arisen in the 17th century with Gabrieli, Monteverdi, and Schütz culminated in the mid-18th century with J. S. Bach, whose choral music, though unsurpassed, was retrospective rather than innovative (thus music by Bach is not included in this program). Nor was choral music of the 19th century especially innovative, great though some of it was. It was not until the late 19th and early 20th century that the craft of choral composition experienced its next fundamental innovations, through composers such as Charles Ives (1874 - 1954), Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918), Bela Bartok (1881 - 1945), Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 - 1958), and Paul Hindemith. Hindemith's original contributions included the frequent addition of the scale intervals of sevenths and ninths to triadic chords, thus introducing the freshness of mild dissonance; and instantaneous shifts to distant keys.

Though Rainer Maria Rilke wrote most his poetry in his native German, he did write quite a bit of poetry in French. *La biche* is one of a set of six of his French poems, all of which were set by Hindemith for choral voices.

Ô la biche: quel bel intérieur
d'anciennes forêts dans tes yeux abonde;
combien de confiance ronde

*O the doe: what beautiful interiors of
ancient forests abounds in your eyes;
so much profound confidence*

mêlée à combien de peur.

Tout cela, porté par la vive
gracilité de tes bonds.
Mais jamais rien n'arrive
à cette impossible
ignorance de ton front.

mixed with so much fear.

*All that, borne by the lively
graciousness of your bounds.
But nothing ever happens
to this unimposing
ignorance of your brow.*

None of the above-mentioned 20th-century innovators, original as they were, ever abandoned one particular feature that had remained unchanged since the 17th century: to have a musical piece exist in a single key, or tonal center. That feature was abruptly cast aside by Arnold Schoenberg (1874 - 1951), in the years just after 1910, when he began to compose music that intentionally lacked a tonal center. He refined this idea, in the 1920's, with a key-less style of composition — known as atonality — in which each of the twelve musical tones had equal importance, with no one tone ever predominating over any other: there was no “home” tone, as there is in the familiar musical scale (e. g., in the scale of C, the home tone is C). Instead of having a scale be the primary building block from which a composition was devised, that function was now fulfilled by a “tone row” — a carefully devised series of tones that skipped about from one to the next, until all twelve available tones had been used. Anton Webern (1883 - 1945) and Alban Berg (1885 - 1935) were among others who soon followed Schoenberg's atonal approach to composition. Igor Stravinsky, whose music had long been innovative in many other ways, experimented with atonality in the 1950's, and was among the first to apply it to a *cappella* choral music.

T. S. Eliot wrote his poem *The Dove Descending* while working on a volunteer air raid crew in London in 1942. It forms part of his *Little Gidding*, the last of his *Four Quartets*. The poet's image of objects descending “with flame of incandescent terror” is a simultaneous reference to *both* the dove of peace (Eliot's symbol for the Holy Spirit) *and* the bombs that were falling upon London in the early years of World War II. His poem argues that the choice of which of these will descend upon us — the dove of peace, or bombs — is up to us. We will be “consumed by either fire or fire.”

This poem seems to have a great deal to say about events that have dominated the news over the past year, and especially since October 7.

Around the year 1960, Stravinsky was asked to contribute an anthem to the new Cambridge Hymnal. His choice of text was the poem by his friend T. S. Eliot, *The Dove Descending*. His atonal setting, composed in 1961, seems to reflect the sense of this poem beautifully.

The dove descending breaks the air
With flame of incandescent terror

Of which the tongues declare
The one discharge from sin and error.

The only hope, or else despair
Lies in the choice of pyre or pyre
To be redeemed from fire by fire.

Who then devised the torment? Love.
Love is the unfamiliar Name
Behind the hands that wove
The intolerable shirt of flame
Which human power cannot remove.
We only live, only suspire
Consumed by either fire or fire.

Aaron Copland's most widely recognized contribution to music was his adoption, in the 1930's, of a style of composition that reflected American themes — as can be heard in works such as *Fanfare for the Common Man*, *Appalachian Spring*, and *Billy the Kid*. Prominent features of this style were his new way of treating common chords: he avoided chord-after-chord “progressions” (such as one hears in a church hymn); instead he often used chords as static sounds that were meant to evoke a particular mood or feeling. He voiced chords with wide spacing between their notes, and made frequent use of mild but effective dissonances. In up-tempo passages he often employed bold, jagged rhythms that were reminiscent of the contemporary jazz that he liked so much to listen to.

Though Copland wrote but little *a cappella* choral music, what he did write in this genre was outstanding: perhaps his best-known choral work is *In The Beginning*, an extended setting of the opening verses of the Book of Genesis. It is the above-mentioned musical features that generate the distinctive sound of this piece. A shorter *a cappella* piece, similar in style to *In The Beginning*, is Copland's setting of Genevieve Taggard's poem *Lark*.

Taggard can be reckoned among the important American poets of the twentieth century, although she may be less widely known. About her 1936 collection of poems entitled “Western Union Calling,” a reviewer wrote: “The significant thing about these poems ... is that Genevieve Taggard has wrestled with her own past, and with the burden of today's perceptions of cities and wasted country sides, of poverty and twisted lives...” Taggard was discouraged with American society of the 1930s, not unlike the discouragement many young people felt about American society of the 1960s. To express her desire for more community and personal communication, and in the hope that people might experience an awakening, she concluded “Western Union Calling” with the poem *Lark*, which her friend Aaron Copland, in 1936, set for choral voices.

O, Lark, from great dark, arise!
O, lark of light,
O, lightness like a spark,
Shock ears and stun our eyes
Singing the day-rise, the day-rise, the great day-rise.

O Believer, Rejoicer, say
Before Evidence of Day
The Sun is Risen.

Where
No sun is, come loudly in the air;
Let ear and eye prepare
To see and hear, truly to see and hear;
To hear thy three-fold welcome in the air,
To see all dazzle after long despair,
To see what none may see now, singer, singer fair, so fair.

O, lark alert, O, lark alive,
O lovely, lovely chanting arrow-lark,
Sprung like an arrow from the bow of dark,
O, lark arise,
Sing the day-rise,
The great day-rise.

Please enjoy a fifteen-minute intermission!

III

directed by Andrea Hart

Ralph Vaughan Williams

1872 - 1958

Loch Lomond

the composer's arrangement of an 18th-century Scottish folk song

Abbie Betinis

b. 1980

Prayer for Peace

words by the composer, based on sermons preached c. 1940 by Rev. Bates G. Burt

Alex Conway, baritone

Reena Esmail

b. 1983

The Unexpected Early Hour

poem by Rebecca Gayle Howell (b. 1975)

In the early twentieth century, Paul Hindemith's contribution to choral music was his use of innovative harmonies and his discovery of new ways in which keys could relate to each other. Innovations of another kind were made by Bela Bartok and Ralph Vaughan Williams: although these two composers came from very different regions, both of them were fascinated with the folksongs of their native lands: they studied them, and discovered that the modal scales upon which they were based could be used as the foundation of a new approach to composing. Vaughan Williams set many of the folk songs of the British Isles for choral voices, a task that had not interested most British composers before him. A fine example is his setting of the Scottish folksong *Loch Lomond*:

By yon bonnie banks and by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomond,
Where me and my true love were ever wont to gae,
On the bonny, bonny banks of Loch Lomond.

O ye'll take the high road and I'll take the low road,
And I'll be in Scotland afore ye,
But me and my true love will never meet again
On the bonny, bonny banks of Loch Lomond.

'Twas there that we parted, in yon shady glen,
On the steep, steep side of Ben Lomond,
Where deep in purple hue, the Highland hills we view,
And the moon coming out in the gloaming.

O ye'll take the high road...

The wee birdies sing and the wildflowers spring,
And in sunshine the waters are sleeping.
But the broken heart it kens nae second spring again,
Though the woeful may cease from their grieving.

O ye'll take the high road...

In the second decade of the 20th century, the Reverend Bates G. Burt (1878 - 1948), the rector of an Episcopal church in Pontiac, Michigan, began to write original words and music for Christmas verses, which he would send to family members and parishioners as personal Christmas cards. In 1942, after his son Alfred Burt (1920 - 1954) had graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Music degree, Rev. Burt asked him to continue this tradition. Thus began the collection of fifteen original Christmas carols that came to be known as the "Alfred Burt Carols," which around 1955 were gathering a wide public audience. In 2001, Abbie Betinis, a great-grandniece of Reverend Burt and a grandniece of Alfred Burt, continued the tradition of her great-great-uncle and great-uncle by writing an original carol for the end

of every year, which she would circulate to friends and add to her catalogue of published choral works. The continuance of this remarkable family tradition was a unique contribution that Betinis has made to the world of choral music.

In 2004, Betinis' carol composition was *Prayer for Peace*, whose words she based on sermons that Rev. Burt had preached around 1940 and in subsequent years — a time when peace was scarce indeed.

Peace, the breath of peace is near,
it calms and cheers,
As we, with eyes of faith, look backward
through the years...
Peace, it was the Angels' song
when He was born,
Peace and Good-will to all, they sang,
on Christmas morn.

Gloria! Et in terra pax! *Glory! And peace on earth!*

Lovely, oh so lovely,
the reflected star,
The star of hope in every eye
that sought so far...
Far, they sought to love him:
Beth'hem, Calvary...
That from their want and fear all people
shall be free.

Gloria! Et in terra pax!

Softly, o'er the snow so softly
comes the sign,
A better peace descends to us
at Christmastime.
Softly, o'er the snow so softly,
then is gone -
So we wait in hope, and fear, to see
our century dawn.

Gloria! Et in terra pax!

Angels, o'er the broken, spread your silver wings,
And help us to keep sacred all the love He brings.

The title of Reena Esmail's doctoral thesis in composition at Yale was "Finding Common Ground: Uniting Practices in Hindustani and Western Art

Musicians.” Many of her compositions reflect a blending of Indian and Western musical traditions. This fusion of musical styles is Esmail’s novel and unique contribution to choral music.

The Unexpected Early Hour is the third and concluding piece of a set of choral pieces entitled *A Winter Breviary*, on poems by Rebecca Gayle Howell. The texts of this set correspond with the canonical hours of the western church; *The Unexpected Early Hour* represents the hour of Lauds, that is, dawn. The music is derived from Raag Ahir Bhairav, an Indian raga that represents dawn.

Praise be! Praise be!

The dim, the dun, the dark withdraws,
Our recluse morning’s found.
Lie down, night sky, lie down.

I feel the cold wind leaving, gone,
I feel the frost’s relief.
My tracks in the snow can still be erased;
In us, the sun believes.

Winter is, winter ends,
So the true bird calls,
The rocks cry out, my bones cry out,
All the trees applaud.

Ev’ry hard thing lauds.
Lie down, night sky, lie down.

I know the seeding season comes,
I know the ground will spring.
My fate is not night, I don’t need to try;
Behold! The dawn, within.

Horizon lights across my thoughts,
Horizon lines withdraw.
Inside of my throat a rise of the gold
Inside my chest I thaw.

Winter is, winter ends,
Nothing stays the same,
The moon strikes high, the sun strikes high and
Now I hear your name.

Earth’s Untired Change.
Praise be! Praise be!

The unexpected early hour
Grows the good night long.

Our darkness ends, O mercy sun,
Trust can warm us all.

Begin again, again, again,
Begin again, again.
O may our day begin!

IV

Iryna Aleksiychuk

b. 1967

Мій голос до Господа *Miy golos do Gospoda*

My Voice to the Lord (Psalm 142)

Ashley Mac, soprano (Nov. 11)

Melanie Armstrong, soprano (Nov. 17, Nov. 19)

Irina Kareva, contralto

Eric Whitacre

b. 1970

All Seems Beautiful to Me

poem by Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Iryna Aleksiychuk, from the Luhansk region of Ukraine, is a composer, pianist and organist. She is an associate professor of composition at the National Academy of Music of Ukraine (in Kyiv), a member of the National Union of Composers of Ukraine, and a holder of the honorary title Honored Art Worker of Ukraine.

A scholar of Ukrainian music has written: “In the most fundamental way, choral music embodies Ukrainian national mentality, and the soul of the people.” The tradition of choral art in Ukraine — which is distinct from the Russian choral tradition — extends back over a millennium. Aleksiychuk’s choral music, like that of her contemporary Ukrainian composers, draws upon this national tradition; but what sets hers apart from theirs is that it also incorporates the bold, rich harmonies and textures of the twenty-first century.

This setting of Psalm 142, entitled *Мій голос до Господа* in Ukrainian, has been performed a number of times at concerts to acknowledge the suffering of the Ukrainian people during the hostilities that began in 2014 and escalated in 2022 — to which this psalm seems eminently appropriate.

Miy golos do Gospoda — ya klychu! *My voice to the Lord — I cry aloud!*
Miy golos do Gospoda — ya blagayu! *My voice to the Lord — I am begging!*

Pered oblychchiam Yogo *I pour out before him my complaint;*
vylyvayu ya movu svoyu. *before him I tell my trouble.*
Pro nedoliu svoyu ya rozpovidayu. *I'm telling my story.*

Pravoruch poglian' i pobach: *It is you who watch over my way.*
nemaye nikogo znayomogo, *Look and see; there is no one at my hand;*
zagynuv prytulok vid mene, *no one is concerned for me;*
nikhto ne pytaye za duishu moyu. *I have no refuge; no one cares for me.*
Ya klychu do Tebe, o Gospody, *I call to you, O Lord,*
Ya kazhu: *I say:*

"Ty moye prystanovyshche, *You are my refuge,*
dolia moja u krayini zhyvykh." *my portion in the land of the living."*

Eric Whitacre holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Nevada and a master's degree from the Juilliard School of Music, both in composition. Among his many commissions are those from the London Symphony Orchestra, Disneyland, the Tallis Scholars, the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, and the King's Singers. Whitacre is the founder and director of the Eric Whitacre Singers, and is currently artist-in-residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

Colonel Don Schofield, Commander and Conductor of the The United States Air Force Band, commissioned Whitacre in 2020 to write a piece that would celebrate togetherness and community. For a text, Whitacre chose verse 5 of Walt Whitman's "Song of the Open Road," a part of the poet's epic work "Leaves of Grass." He felt that the optimistic nature of this poem was just right for the commission. Whitacre's music reflects the spirit of the poem beautifully: although the music never leaves the seven tones of the major scale, it is full of the unconventional dissonance that one hears when notes of the major scale are cleverly chosen so as to sound against each other in unconventional ways.

Although Whitacre has written extensively for instrumental ensembles, it is for his choral music that he is best known. An anonymous reviewer has described the latter as being "full of shimmering, shuddering, shifting harmonies that awaken the ear to a contemporary yet accessible voice." Whitacre was one of the composers who took the next fundamental harmonic step after Leonel Power: whereas Power made the interval of a third a basic component of choral harmony, Whitacre and several others (after seven centuries) did the same for the interval of a second.

From this hour I ordain myself loos'd of imaginary lines
Going where I list, my own master total and absolute.
Listening to others, considering well what they say,
Pausing, searching, receiving, contemplating,
gently, but with undeniable will,
divesting myself from the holds that would hold me.

I inhale great draughts of space.
The East and the West are mine,
and the North and the South are mine.

I am larger, better than I thought,
I did not know I held so much goodness.

All seems beautiful to me,
I can repeat over and over to men and women
You have done such good to me, I would do the same to you,

I will recruit for myself and you as I go,
I will scatter myself among men and women as I go,
I will toss a new gladness and roughness among them,
Whoever denies me it shall not trouble me,
Whoever accepts me he or she shall be blessed and shall bless me.

Please join us at the reception for refreshments and conversation!



Oriana's Noted Friends

The Oriana Consort gratefully acknowledges the gifts of the generous people listed on the following two pages — *without whose support these concerts would not be possible.*

Each party listed on the following two pages has very kindly made one or more tax-deductible gifts to Oriana over the past several seasons. In acknowledgement, their names have appeared in all of our program booklets for at least one full year after the gift was made.

Concert admissions typically provide about 50% of Oriana's revenue; gifts provide the remainder. Although we are equally grateful for every gift, the amounts of gifts to Oriana do vary, so in order to suggest their relative magnitudes we have borrowed names and symbols that were used during the Renaissance to designate durations of musical notes: ***Maxima, Longa, Breve, and Semibreve.***

Oriana's singers and all those listed on the following two pages form a community whose bond is a shared love of choral music. **If hearing Oriana's music has been an experience of value for you, and if you have never (or not very recently) made a gift to Oriana, we hope you will consider participating in this community by presenting Oriana with a tax-deductible gift!** Either scan this handy QR code, or email info@orianaconsort.org.



Maxima

Jack and Mary Beth Elder

Soren and Carlyn Ekstrom

James Meyers

Dennis and Lyra O'Brien

Irl and Bozena Smith

Sylvia Soderberg: in memory of Chris Pitt

Longa

Elissa and Allen Armstrong

Judy Green and Daryl Durant

Nick and Julia Kilmer

Kathryn and John Low

Sarah Guilford and William Maniscalco

Gordon Holmes

Kathy and Bill Reardon

Breve

Anonymous
John and Mary Jane Beach
Victor Brogna
Mary Carbonara: in memory of Chris Pitt
Katherine German and Denton Crews
Robert Gulick and Sara Arnold
Andrea Hart and Tony Colonnese
T. Mischa Heckler IV
Philip Pitt
Stephanie Kluter Rael and Eliseo Rael
Anne Reese
Carl and Faith Scovel
Joan Soble and Scott Ketcham

Semibreve

Charles and Chris Allen
Betty Canick
Eric Greimann
Winifred Hentschel
Gordon and Nancy Sands: in memory of Chris Pitt
Patricia Sharaf
Epp Sonin
Jack and Jill Whiting



ORIANA CONSORT

— Choral music from seven centuries —

P. O. Box 381608 — Cambridge, MA 02238 — 339-203-5876

www.orianaconsort.org

Contact us! info@orianaconsort.org

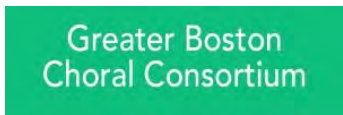
Hear us sing online! On our website, click LISTEN

Receive news about our concerts! On our website, click MAILING LIST

<i>Founder and Music Director</i>	Walter Chapin
<i>Assisting with music direction</i>	Andrea Hart
<i>Webmaster; Plenipotentiary</i>	Lauren Syer
<i>Social Media Publicity</i>	Melanie Armstrong
<i>Email Marketing</i>	Irl Smith
<i>Music Librarian</i>	Adrienne Fuller
<i>Technical Consultant</i>	Nic Tuttle
<i>Performance Setup Manager</i>	Dennis O'Brien
<i>Reception Refreshments Co-ordinator</i>	Laura Amweg
<i>Rehearsal Refreshments Co-ordinator</i>	Gabriel Bronk
<i>Transportation Co-ordinator</i>	Rachel Stigers
<i>Photography</i>	James Tresner
<i>Coaching in Ukrainian pronunciation</i>	Irina Kareva
<i>Program booklet annotations</i>	Walter Chapin
<i>Poster and Front Cover Design</i>	Robin Ratcliff, of Fyfe Design
<i>Audio and Video Recording</i>	Silken Audio
<i>Website design</i>	Rhonda Peck

The Oriana Consort is supported in part by a grant from Cambridge Arts, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

CAMBRIDGE | ARTS



The Oriana Consort is a member of The Greater Boston Choral Consortium, a cooperative association of diverse choral groups in Boston and the surrounding areas. Please see the GBCC member listing on the following page.

The Board of Directors of the Oriana Consort

Melanie Armstrong, Beth Chapin, Walter Chapin, Carlyn Ekstrom, Lauren Syer

Greater Boston Choral Consortium

A Cappella Singers, www.theacappellasingers.org
Andover Choral Society, www.andoverchoralsociety.org/
Apollo Club of Boston, <http://www.apolloclub.org/>
Arlington-Belmont Chorale, www.psarlington.org
Berkshire Choral International, [berkshirechoral.org](http://www.berkshirechoral.org)
Boston Gay Men's Chorus, www.bgmc.org
Braintree Choral Society, www.braintreesings.org
Broadmoor Chamber Singers,
www.broadmoorsingers.org
Cambridge Chamber Singers,
www.cambridgechambersingers.org
Cambridge Community Chorus,
www.cambridgechorus.org
Cantata Singers, www.cantatasingers.org
Cantemus, www.cantemus.org
Cantilena, A Women's Chorale, www.cantilena.org
Charles River Chorale, www.charlesriverchorale.net
Choral Art Society of the South Shore,
www.choralartsociety.org
Chorus North Shore, www.chorusnorthshore.org
Chorus pro Musica, www.choruspromusica.org
Commonwealth Chorale, [commonwealthchorale.com](http://www.commonwealthchorale.com)
Concord Chorus, www.concordchorus.org
Concord Women's Chorus,
[concordwomenschorus.org](http://www.concordwomenschorus.org)
Convivium Musicum, www.convivium.org
Coolidge Corner Community Chorus,
www.cccchorus.org
Coro Allegro, www.coroallegro.org
Coro-Dante, www.dantemass.org/html/coro-dante.html
Dedham Choral Society, www.dedhamchoral.org
Emmanuel Music, <http://www.emmanuelmusic.org/>
Fine Arts Chorale, www.fineartschorale.org
Gordon College Choir,
<https://www.gordon.edu/collegechoir>
Gordon College Men's Choir,
<https://www.gordon.edu/menschoir>
Greater Boston Intergenerational Chorus,
www.bostonchorus.net
Halalisa Singers, www.halalisa.org
Handel and Haydn Society, www.handelandhaydn.org
Harvard Pro Musica, <http://www.harvardpromusica.org/>
Highland Glee Club, www.highlandgleeclub.com
In Choro Novo, www.inchoronovo.org
Jameson Singers, www.jamesonsingers.org
Koleinu, Boston's Jewish Community Chorus,
www.koleinu.org

Lexington Pops Chorus, [lexingtonpopschorus.org](http://www.lexingtonpopschorus.org)
Masterworks Chorale,
<http://www.masterworkschorale.org/>
Meridian Singers, web.mit.edu/meridians
Metropolitan Chorale of Brookline,
www.metropolitanchorale.org
Mishawum Choral Society,
<http://www.mishawumchoral.org/>
MIT Women's Chorale, <http://web.mit.edu/womensleague/womenschorale/>
Musica Sacra, www.musicasacra.org
Nashoba Valley Chorale, www.nashobachorale.org
Neponset Choral Society, Inc., www.ncschorus.org
Newburyport Choral Society,
<http://www.newburyportchoralsociety.org>
New England Classical Singers,
www.newenglandclassical.org
Newton Community Chorus,
www.NewtonCommunityChorus.org
Night Song, www.nightsong.org
Oriana Consort, www.theorianaconsort.org
Polymnia Choral Society, www.polymnia.org
Quincy Choral Society, <http://www.quincychoral.org/>
Reading Community Singers,
www.readingcommunitysingers.org
Seraphim Singers, www.seraphimsingers.org
Serenades Choral Travel, <http://www.serenadeschoral.com/>
Sharing A New Song, www.sharinganewsong.org
Sharon Community Chorus, Inc., <http://scc-ma.org/>
The Sly Voxes
Somerville Community Chorus,
www.somervillechorus.com
Sounds of Stow Festival Chorus & Orchestra,
www.soundsofstow.org
Spectrum Singers, www.spectrumsingers.org
St. Ignatius Choir
Tremble Clefs Chorus (Jewish Family & Children's Service)
Voices Rising, www.voicesrising.org
Wellesley Choral Society,
www.WellesleyChoralSociety.org
Westborough Community Chorus,
<https://www.westborochorus.com/>
Westford Chorus, www.westfordchorus.org
Youth Pro Musica, www.youthpromusica.org
Zamir Chorale of Boston, www.zamir.org

www.bostonsings.org

gbccinfo@gmail.com