

FROM FOUR CENTURIES

Choral Music for Advent:

Bach, Schütz, Cooman, Vaughan Williams, Walton

5pm, Sunday, Dec 11, 2016

University Lutheran Church
66 Winthrop Street, Cambridge

8pm, Friday, Dec 16, 2016

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
15 St. Paul Street, Brookline

5pm, Sunday, Dec 18, 2016

First Lutheran Church of Boston
299 Berkeley St, Boston

Walter Chapin, Director

Caroline Harvey, asst. Director

www.orianaconsort.org

Admission \$20
Seniors and Students \$15



ORIANA CONSORT

Choral music from seven centuries

From Four Centuries

Actually, about a month ago this title became incorrect. The original draft of this concert program did include music by composers from exactly four centuries — Heinrich Schütz from the 17th, J. S. Bach from the 18th, Ralph Vaughan Williams and William Walton from the 20th, and Carson Cooman from the 21st. But an additional piece was needed for this concert program, one which was to be played by the instrumental ensemble alone, without voices. A month or so ago this additional piece was found: it was a harmonization by Georg Rhau, a 16th-century German composer, of the chorale tune *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* (Come, Savior of nations), which this composer wrote in the year 1544, or a few years before that, and which was the same tune that J. S. Bach used in his identically-named cantata that concludes this program. Thus the title technically should have become From Five Centuries.

But the concert publicity was already out, and anyway it didn't matter. For the point of the title was to suggest that not only was a great deal of Advent music that is still worth hearing and knowing today written a very long time ago, but also that music of this nature has been written recently, and continues to be written at this very moment. This would suggest that the writing of such music is some kind of an eternal process, or something approaching that. (A bit of additional evidence: the original version of *Nun komm* was the Latin hymn *Veni, redemptor gentium*, said to have been written by Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, back in the fourth century A.D.)

So why is much Advent music, of both yesterday and today, still worth hearing and knowing? Obviously Advent music celebrates the coming Nativity, the all-important event that marks the beginning of the Christian calendar, and this can bring us feelings of deep joy. But these feelings don't seem to be necessarily linked to the Christian Advent, which occurs, after all, at the turn of the year, a time when the shortening and subsequent lengthening of daylight tends to bring us some sort of mixture of trepidation and joy. For all cultures have their Advents; the one we experience only happens to be our local form of it.

Perhaps what Advent does (in whatever form we experience it) is to bring us a feeling that we are not independent and alone, but that we are actually a part of something much larger than ourselves. Perhaps this concert will bring a tiny hint of that feeling. We hope so.

***Please join your fellow audience members and Oriana's
singers at the reception that immediately follows this concert !***

***Please disable any device that could emit sound,
and take no videos, photos, or recordings during the performance.***

I Two Advent Carols from England

Wassail, wassail!

English ballad arranged by
Ralph Vaughan Williams 1872-1958

Make we joy now in this fest

Macaronic verses from medieval England
arranged by William Walton (1902-1983)

II The Christmas story, as told in four Advent motets by...

Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

O lieber Herre Gott, wecke uns auf*

O dear Lord God, awaken us

Sei begrüßet, Maria*

Be greeted, Mary

Ein Kind ist uns geboren*

A child is born to us

Das Wort ward Fleisch*

The word became flesh

III Three choral songs for Advent

Carson Cooman (b. 1982)

The Eternal Dove

Kings are Sleeping

Love Came Down at Christmas

intermission

IV Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

Come now, savior of nations

played by the instrumental ensemble
harmonized by Georg Rhau (1488-1548)

V Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

harmonized by J. S. Bach, from his Cantata BWV 62

VI Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, Cantata BWV 61

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

- 1 Overture**
- 2 Recitative**
- 3 Aria**
- 4 Recitative**
- 5 Aria**
- 6 Chorale**

**directed by Caroline Harvey*



ORIANA CONSORT

— Choral music from seven centuries —

MEMBERS

Laura Amweg • Melanie Armstrong • Nicole Beauregard
Michael Bennett • J. William Budding • Thomas Carroll
Richard Chonak • Alex Conway • Katheryn Currie
Anand Dharan • Laura Frye • Adrienne Fuller • Gary Gengo
Daniel Gostin • Caroline Harvey • Kristina Jackson
Paulina Jones-Torregrosa • Frank S. Li • Kathryn Low
Ashley Mac • Dennis O'Brien • Tami Papagiannopoulos
Anupama Pattabiraman • Christopher Pitt • Margaret Ronna
Irl Smith • Lauren Syer • James Tresner
Charles Tyler Turner • Nic Tuttle • Lisa Wooldridge

Walter Chapin, *Director*

Caroline Harvey, *Assistant Director*

Ensemble of 18th-century instruments

Yi-Li Chang, violin 1 Karen Burciaga, violin 2

Hayley Murks-Abdikadirova, viola 1 Eve Boltax, viola 2

Denise Fan, violoncello Mai-Lan Broekman, violone

Hendrik Broekman, chamber organ

The Oriana Consort gradually evolved 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 the Oriana Consort's founding year. From about 2002 to 2006 the group further evolved toward its present form: an *a cappella* chorale of about thirty singers, auditioned to very high standards, who rehearse and perform primarily without accompaniment, tuning only to their own voices. The group's size is intimate enough for motets and choral songs for small choir (such as all the music in this performance), yet large enough to perform demanding choral works such as Samuel Barber's *Agnus Dei*, J. S. Bach's *Magnificat*, Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, and Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* and *Mass in G Minor* (all of which Oriana has sung recently), and Aaron Copland's *In The Beginning* (to be performed in the spring of 2017).

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 and Renaissance-era instruments — and the name stuck.

(The name “Oriana” is taken from *The Triumphes of Oriana*, a 1601 collection of madrigals by the English composer Thomas Morley and his composer colleagues. Morley specified that every madrigal in the collection was to mention an idolized woman named “Oriana”. This name may have been a coded reference to Queen Elizabeth I, and Morley may have intended this madrigal collection to be in her honor.)

The Oriana Consort prepares two or three programs each year and presents each program in some subset of Cambridge, Boston, Brookline, Concord, Somerville, and Jamaica Plain. The group’s eclectic repertory is drawn from the 15th through the 21st centuries — the seven centuries during which polyphonic choral music spread throughout Europe and, eventually, the Americas — hence the motto under our logo on the opposite page. 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 Oriana’s December programs.

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 the Consort was one of four Boston-area chorales to participate in a master class presented by Peter Phillips, director of the world-renowned Tallis Scholars.

Oriana was the opera chorus for “Italian Night at the Opera”, the gala concert presented in May of 2011 by the Waltham Philharmonic. The group has given three performances in the odd-year Fringe Concert Series of the Boston Early Music Festival, the most recent of which was a performance of the *Mass for Five Voices*, William Byrd’s monumental work of 1595. Oriana will present its fourth BEMF “Fringe” in June of 2017.

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

Oriana has presented the premieres of four significant choral works:

The group did the premiere performance in December 2012 of *Ani Adonai (I, the Lord)*, a setting of words of Isaiah by the Boston-area composer

Adam Jacob Simon, and which Oriana commissioned.

In the spring of 2014 the group presented the East Coast premiere of *The Waking*, a setting of a Theodore Roethke poem by Abbie Betinis, a noted young composer from the Upper Midwest.

In December of 2015 Oriana presented the Massachusetts premiere of *The Longest Nights*, a setting of seven winter poems (by seven different poets) by Timothy C. Takach, another composer from the Upper Midwest. Oriana, together with one choir in each of forty-one other states of the USA, had the honor to participate 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 scholarship; nor that any transcription of the composer’s manuscript 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 might 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.

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. He has directed amateur choral groups in the Boston suburbs, and has taught conducting and directed choruses at Boston University and at the high school level. As a pianist, he accompanies dancers at the José Mateo Ballet Theatre in Cambridge. In his other-than- musical life he is a retired-but-still-active computer information systems designer and programmer, and a husband, father, grandfather, and carpenter.

Caroline Harvey, a native of Iowa, earned a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from Valparaiso University and a Master of Music in Collaborative Piano from the Longy School of Music of Bard College. She pursued graduate studies at Florida State University, where she worked with the Florida State Opera. She is an active pianist and vocal coach, an accompanist of voice students in the Cambridge studio of Emily Romney, and the organist for the choir of First Parish in Cohasset. She was for five years a staff accompanist for the Boston Children’s Chorus. She joined the Oriana Consort as an alto in the spring of 2009, and was named Assistant Director in the fall of 2010.

I *Two Advent Carols from England*

Ralph Vaughan Williams arranged and published *Five English Folk Songs* in 1913, the first four of which Oriana presented as the opening of its concert program a month ago, "From the Land." The fifth song in this collection was the composer's arrangement of *Wassail, Wassail!*, which like the other four was an early 19th-century English broadside ballad, but which was the only one of the five that had a Christmas theme.

The lyrics of *Wassail, Wassail!* originate from medieval England. The Middle English expression *waes hael* meant "be in good health". This became the name of a (probably alcoholic) drink made from apple cider, which was kept in a bowl of maple wood, as maple was flavorless and would not alter the taste of the drink. As Christmas approached, a group of "wassailers" would wander from house to house offering drinks from the bowl, with the expectation of food in return.

Vaughan Williams' unique contribution to English music was to recognize the folk music of his native land for the musical treasure that it was, and to fashion from its musical elements the basis of his own compositional style. His arrangement of this merry and ancient ballad gives us a glimpse of a jolly Christmas custom that we might do well to revive.

William Walton, a prolific composer whose most widely heard compositions may have been his scores for the Laurence Olivier films *Henry V* (1944), *Hamlet* (1948), and *Richard III* (1955), wrote a good amount of large-scale choral music, including the 1931 oratorio *Belshazzar's Feast* and music for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1952. His smaller choral works include four carols, written between 1931 and 1970, all based on English medieval texts; one of these was *Make we joy now in this fest*.

The lyrics of this brief piece are in the so-called "macaronic" style. This type of poetry, popular in medieval universities, featured lines of Latin that alternated with lines in the vernacular, with a final word of a line in one language that rhymed with a final word of a line in the other. The word "macaronic", derived indeed from the Italian *maccheroni* (considered to be peasant food), was quite likely intended as a pejorative to mock the juxtaposition of "uneducated" with "educated" language.

But there is nothing pejorative about the lyrics of *Make we joy*, for they are clever as can be: not only do their six verses refer to every element of the Nativity story in a most compact manner, but every one of the twelve Latin phrases in is the title of a medieval Latin hymn!

One of the Latin phrases in the first verse is *Veni, redemptor gentium* — a hymn about which there will be more to say in the second half of this concert.

Wassail, wassail!

English ballad arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1968)

Wassail, wassail all over the town!
Our bread it is white and our ale it is brown;
Our bowl it is made of the green maple tree;
In the wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his right eye!
Pray God send our master a good Christmas pie,
A good Christmas pie as e'er I did see,
In the wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his right horn!
Pray God send our master a good crop of corn,
A good crop of corn as e'er I did see,
In the wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his long tail!
Pray God send our master a good cask of ale,
A good cask of ale as e'er I did see,
In the wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Come, butler, come fill us a bowl of the best;
Then I pray that your soul in heaven may rest;
But if you do bring us a bowl of the small,
May the Devil take butler, bowl, and all!

Then here's to the maid in the lily white smock,
Who tripp'd to the door and slipp'd back the lock;
Who tripp'd to the door and pulled back the pin,
For to let these jolly wassailers walk in.

Wassail, wassail all over the town!
Wassail!

Make we joy now in this fest

Macaronic verses from medieval England,
arranged by William Walton (1902-1983)

Make we joy now in this fest,
In quo Christus natus est!
Eia, eia, eia!

A Patre unigenitus
Is through a maiden come to us.
Sing we of him, and say, welcome!
Veni, redemptor gentium!

Agnoscat omne seculum
A bright star made three kings to come,
Him for to seek with their presents,
Verbum supernum prodiens.

A solis ortus cardine,
So mighty a Lord is none as he,
And to our kind he hath him knit,
Adam parens quod poluit.

Maria ventre concepit;
The Holy Ghost was aye her with.
Of her in Bethlem born he is,
Cونسors paterni luminis.

O lux beata trinitas!
He lay between an ox and ass,
Beside his mother maiden free;
Gloria tibi, Domine!

*In which Christ is born!
Hurray, hurray, hurray!*

The only-begotten of the Father

Come, Savior of nations!

Let every age perceive that...

The approaching heavenly Word.

From the rising of the sun,

Which Adam, our parent, defiled.

Mary conceived in her womb;

Consort of the Father's light.

O Trinity, blessed light!

Glory to you, Lord!

II *The Christmas story,* as told in four Advent motets by... Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

This group of Oriana's December program was assembled by searching for a group of motets that would outline the thoughts and events of the Nativity story. Heinrich Schütz was the obvious choice of composer: he wrote an enormous number of motets during his long lifetime, so surely one could expect to find a group of motets that would fill this condition, and his motets tend to be dramatic in nature and very well-suited for choral voices.

The search resulted in the selection of four motets: one from Schütz' collection known as *Kleine geistliche Konzerte II* (Little Spiritual Concertos, Vol. 2) of 1639, and three from another collection, *Geistliche Chormusik* (Spiritual Music for Choir) of 1648. All these works were written with an optional continuo of bass instrument and choir organ to support the voices. In all four motets, doubling of the choral voices by instruments is also optional. One motet has a passage for instruments only, conventionally called a *Symphonia*.

It may be of historical interest to note that the *Kleine geistliche Konzerte* were written for a limited number of performing forces, while the *Geistliche Chormusik* was intended for larger choirs. The former work came out in 1639, and the latter in 1648 — the year that the Thirty Years' War ended, when musicians, whose ranks had dwindled during the conflict, were once again available in greater numbers.

(Heinrich Schütz' works are identified by "SWV" numbers. SWV, or Schütz-Werke-Verzeichnis (Catalogue of Schütz' Works), was developed in the 1950's by Werner Bittinger as a way of indexing his *Neue Schütz Ausgabe* (New Schütz Edition), his comprehensive edition of Schütz' entire output. In general, SWV numbers parallel the chronological sequence of the compositions.)

The text of *O Lieber Herre Gott, wecke uns auf* (O dear Lord God, awaken us), SWV 381, from the *Geistliche Chormusik*, is a non-scriptural Advent hymn; it is a prayer that we may be ready for Jesus' coming.

Sei gegrüßet, Maria (Be greeted, Mary), SWV 333, is from *Kleine geistliche Konzerte II*. After the piece commences with a charming instrumental *Symphonia*, its text, from Luke 1:28-38, narrates the meeting between the angel Gabriel and Mary. But Schütz doesn't simply quote the text; he shapes it into a fascinating drama: in the original scripture Mary asks "What kind of a greeting is this?" only once. But in Schütz' setting she has to ask it three times, always interrupting the angel, distraught by her disbelief and incomprehension of his reason for visiting her. When Mary finally gets the angel's message, she then has to ask him not once, but twice: "How can that be, since I know not a man?". After the angel's lengthy explanation of how that can be, she finally understands, saying confidently "See; I am a maid of the Lord" — a thought which the choir, after a reprise of the *Symphonia*, immediately confirms by echoing it.

The miraculous birth is narrated by a vocal sextet in *Ein Kind ist uns geboren* (To us a child is born), SWV 384, from *Geistliche Chormusik*. Its

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English text, so familiar to us from Handel's Messiah, is from the Book of Isaiah, thought to be the prophecy of the Nativity.

Jesus' divinity in human form is expressed, in a passage from the Gospel of John, in *Das Wort ward Fleisch* (The word became flesh), SWV 385, from *Geistliche Chormusik*.

O lieber Herre Gott, wecke uns auf

O lieber Herre Gott, wecke uns auf,
daß wir bereit sein,
wenn dein Sohn kommt,
ihn mit Freuden zu empfangen,
und dir mit reinem Herzen
zu dienen,
durch denselbigen,
deinen lieben Sohn,
Jesum Christum, unsern Herren.
Amen.

O dear Lord God, awaken us

*O dear Lord God, awaken us,
that we be ready,
when your son comes,
to receive him with joy,
and with a pure heart
to serve you,
through that same one,
your dear son,
Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.*

Sei begrüßet, Maria

with Melanie Armstrong as Mary, and Laura Frye as the angel
(instrumental Symphonia)

DER ENGEL

Sei begrüßet, Maria,
du holdselige!

THE ANGEL

*Be greeted, Mary,
you most blessed!*

MARIA

Welch ein Gruß ist das?

MARY

Which [manner of] greeting is that?

DER ENGEL

Der Herr ist mit dir,
du gebenedeite unter den Weibern!

THE ANGEL

*The Lord is with you,
you blessed amongst women!*

MARIA

Welch ein Gruß ist das?

MARY

Which manner of greeting is that?

DER ENGEL

Fürchte dich nicht, Maria,
du hast Gnade bei Gott funden.
Siehe, du wirst schwanger werden
im Leibe,
und einen Sohn gebären...

THE ANGEL

*Fear not, Mary,
you have found favor with God.
See, you will be with child
in your body,
and will bear a son...*

MARIA
Welch ein Gruß ist das?

MARY
Which manner of greeting is that?

DER ENGEL
...des Namen sollst du Jesus heißen.
Der wird groß, und ein Sohn
des Höchsten genennet werden.

THE ANGEL
*...whose name you shall call Jesus.
He will become great, and will
be named a son of the Most High.*

MARIA
Wie kann das zugehen, sintemal
ich von keinem Mann weiß...

MARY
*How can that come to pass, since
I know of no man...*

DER ENGEL
Fürchte dich nicht, Maria!

THE ANGEL
Fear not, Mary!

MARIA
...sintemal ich
von keinem Mann weiß?

MARY
*...since I
know of no man?*

DER ENGEL
Der heilige Geist wird
über dich kommen,
und die Kraft des Höchsten
wird dich überschatten;
darum auch das Heilige,
das von dir geboren wird,
wird Gottes Sohn genennet werden.
Und siehe, Elisabeth,
deine Gefreundin,
ist auch schwanger
mit einem Sohne in ihrem Alter,
und gehet jetzt im sechsten Monat,
von der man saget
daß sie unfruchtbar sei.
Denn bei Gott
ist kein Ding unmöglich.

THE ANGEL
*The holy spirit will
come over you,
and the power of the Most High
will overshadow you;
because of that, also, the Holy One
that will be born of you
will be named the Son of God.
And see, Elisabeth,
your cousin,
is also with child
with a son in her old age,
and is now in the sixth month,
of whom people would say
that she is barren.
For with God
nothing is impossible.*

MARIA
Siehe, ich bin des Herren Magd;
mir geschehe,
wie du gesagt hast.

MARY
*See, I am a maid of the Lord;
may it happen to me
as you have said.*

(reprise of the instrumental Symphonia)

CHOR (Marias Worte widerhallend)
Siehe, ich bin des Herren Magd;
mir geschehe,
wie du gesagt hast.
Alleluja.

CHORUS (echoing Mary's words)
See, I am a maid of the Lord;
may it happen to me
as you have said.
Alleluia.

Ein Kind ist uns geboren

To us a child is born

Ashley Mac, Lauren Syer, Tami Papagiannopoulos, James Tresner,
Michael Bennet (12-11, 12-18), Tyler Turner (12-16), Nic Tuttle

Ein Kind ist uns geboren,
ein Sohn ist uns gegeben,
welches Herrschaft ist auf
seiner Schulter;
und er heißt wunderbar,
Rat, Kraft, Held,
ewig Vater, Friedefürst;
auf daß seine Herrschaft
groß werde,
und des Friedens kein Ende,
auf dem Stuhle David
und seinem Königreiche,
daß er's zurichte and stärke
mit Gericht und Gerechtigkeit
von nun an bis in Ewigkeit.
Solches wird tun
der Eifer des Herren Zebaoth.

*To us a child is born,
to us a Son is given,
whose power is upon
his shoulder;
and he is called wonderful,
councillor, strength, hero,
eternal Father, prince of peace;
upon whom his power
will be great,
and of whose peace will be no end
upon the throne of David
and his kingdom,
which he prepares and strengthens
with judgement and justice
from now until eternity.
Such will be done by
the zeal of the Lord of Hosts.*

Das Wort ward Fleisch

The word became flesh

Das Wort ward Fleisch
und wohnt unter uns,
und wir sahen seine Herrlichkeit
als des eingebornen Sohns
vom Vater,
voller Gnade und Wahrheit.

*The word became flesh
and dwells among us,
and we saw his glory
as of the only-begotten Son
of the Father,
full of grace and truth.*



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III *Three choral songs for Advent*

Carson Cooman

1917-1987

Boston-area composer Carson Cooman has written hundreds of works in many forms, from solo instrumental pieces to operas, and from orchestral works to hymn tunes. His music has been performed on all six inhabited continents in venues that range from the stage of Carnegie Hall to the basket of a hot air balloon; his music appears on over forty recordings. His primary composition studies were with Bernard Rands, Judith Weir, Alan Fletcher, and James Willey. As an active concert organist, he specializes in the performance of contemporary music; over 150 new compositions by more than 100 international composers have been written for him. Cooman is also a writer on musical subjects, producing articles and reviews frequently for a number of international publications. He serves as an active consultant on music business matters to composers and performing organizations, specializing particularly in the area of composer estates and archives. More about him can be found at www.carsoncooman.com.

The *Eternal Dove*, which Cooman wrote in his early undergraduate years for Harvard's Memorial Church Choir, is a setting of a brief poem by the 17th-century British theologian Joseph Beaumont. In both of the two verses, the first two lines are set to chordally expansive passages, while the second two lines begin with quiet, closely-spaced, mildly dissonant chords that soon crescendo into a widely-spaced, open harmony. The fourfold "Hallelujah's" that follow are at first forte, then quiet; they then grow to a triumphant conclusion. How the lovely words of this poem should be interpreted is perhaps an open question, but one possible meaning is that they are a metaphor for the Nativity.

Connecticut-based Richard Leach is a clergyman, poet, and writer of contemporary hymns. In the whimsical *Kings Are Sleeping*, written for the choir of Old South Church in Boston, we quickly gather that the most important people in the world are not kings. Cooman's setting of the poem holds the listener's interest through its ever-changing musical meters and its insistent repeated melody, which we first hear in unison, then, contrastingly, over bold supporting harmonies.

Love Came Down at Christmas, Cooman's setting of a poem by the 19th-century Christina Rossetti, an Englishwoman of Italian parents, was also written for the Memorial Church Choir, a decade after *The Eternal Dove*. Unlike the first two pieces, in which we hear wandering tonalities, *Love Came Down* sticks to a firm D major, although its familiar-seeming harmonies are frequently flavored with intriguing dissonances. Cooman does something very interesting to emphasize the poem's message: he borrows the final line of Rossetti's first verse, "*Star and angels gave the sign*", and makes a refrain out of it by repeating these words four times, so that the refrain has the same duration as each of the three verses. (Thus the use of that line for a refrain is Cooman's idea, not Rossetti's; this is shown by the italics in the text below.) This charming

framework makes the poem's three verses nicely-spaced and easy to follow, and lets the quiet second verse, sung as a section solo by the basses, not be heard too soon. The final refrain concludes with an attractive variation: its last line repeats the opening words, but with one word added ("Love came down at Christmas time").

The Eternal Dove

Fountain of sweet! Eternal Dove!
Which leav'st thy glorious perch above,
And hov'ring down, vouchsafest thus
To make thy nest below with us.

Soft, as thy softest feathers, may
We find thy love to us today,
And in the shelter of thy wing
Obtain thy leave and grace to sing: Hallelujah!
Joseph Beaumont (1616-1699)

Kings are Sleeping

Kings are sleeping, let them sleep.
Shepherds watch beside the sheep.
Far from royal pomp and might,
shepherds see the heav'nly light.
Kings are sleeping, let them sleep.

Kings are dreaming, let them dream:
Royal fear and royal scheme.
In the field that light has blurred
shepherds hear the angel's word.
Kings are sleeping, let them sleep.

Kings are sleeping, let them sleep.
Shepherds rise, and leave the sheep;
Kneel beside a manger bed,
whisper what the angel said.
Kings are sleeping, let them sleep.
Richard Leach (b. 1953)

Love Came Down at Christmas

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine,
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and Angels gave the sign.

Star and Angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine,
Worship we our Jesus,
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Star and Angels gave the sign.

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and to all the world,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

Star and Angels gave the sign.
Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

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May, 13, 2017, 3 pm

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Photo: Chris Dempsey

IV *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* Come now, Savior of nations played by the instrumental ensemble harmonized by Georg Rhau (1488-1548)

The cantata by J. S. Bach with which Oriana will conclude its program is known as a “chorale cantata”; that is, it is a cantata in which the melody of a chorale (as a hymn is called in the Lutheran Church) is the central musical element of the entire work, and in which the parts of the cantata that are not the chorale are used to elaborate and expand upon the thoughts expressed in the chorale verses.

The great body of chorales in the Lutheran Church, which was already being collected in the very years that the Protestant Reformation took place, are central to that church’s liturgy and theology. One key figure in the process of collecting and organizing chorales was the German composer Georg Rhau, who was not quite thirty in 1517, the year when Martin Luther is said to have posted his ninety-five theses on the door of a church at Wittenberg (and who was only five years younger than Luther himself).

In 1544 Rhau brought out a monumental collection of harmonized chorale tunes entitled *Neue Deutsche Gesänge* (New German Songs). One of these tunes was a German translation of an ancient Latin hymn, *Veni, Redemptor Gentium* (Come, Savior of nations), said to have been written in the fourth century by Ambrose, Bishop of Milan. The Latin title, in its German translation, became *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*.

It is with Rhau’s harmonization of this hymn, which became one of the most important Lutheran chorales, that we begin the second half of our concert program. Some one hundred and seventy years passed before Johann Sebastian Bach used this chorale tune in his cantata that bears the chorale’s name. Bach, in using chorales as the basis of the music in so many of his chorale cantatas and organ works, was working in a tradition that was already almost two hundred years old.

Finally, there is another very interesting link between Georg Rhau and Johann Sebastian Bach: In 1518 Rhau became Kantor of the Thomaskirche (Church of St. Thomas) in Leipzig. Two hundred and five years later, in 1723, Bach assumed the very same post at the very same church.

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V *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* harmonized by J. S. Bach, from his Cantata BWV 62

We need to take one more step before moving from Rhau's harmonization of Nun komm to Bach's cantata: we would like to present the chorale melody in a form that is as plain as Bach could make it (for Bach, in his cantata, introduces the chorale in a highly elaborate form that is not at all as recognizable as the unadorned tune). To take this step, we present a harmonization of the Nun komm melody that Bach used in another cantata (BWV 62). This harmonization didn't use the first verse of Nun komm; words from another verse were fitted to it. But that is no matter, for the words of the first verse fit the harmonization as well as those of any other verse.

Here, then, is the unadorned Nun komm. Listen well to this tune, for you'll have to hunt for it when listening to the cantata!

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland,
der Jungfrauen Kind erkannt,
des sich
wundert alle Welt
Gott solch Geburt ihm bestellt.

VI *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland: Cantata BWV 61* Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Bach actually wrote two Advent cantatas that bore the title Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland. The first (BWV 61) dates from 1714, during Bach's employment at the ducal court at Weimar, and it is this cantata that we present here. Bach apparently thought well of it, for he is known to have performed it during many an Advent when he was later at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig (1723-1750). While at Leipzig, he wrote the second cantata with the same name (BWV 62); both use the Nun komm chorale melody as musical material.

(BWV, like SWV, stands for Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis (Catalogue of Bach's Works). The BWV was developed in the 1950's by Wolfgang Schmieder, as a system of indexing Bach's compositions — of which there are over eleven hundred.)

In naming movement 1, the Overture, Bach wrote in his score the equivalent French word "Ouvverture". And for good reason: the musical style of this movement is the French Overture style, which is characterized by an insistently repeated "long-short" rhythmic pattern in the accompanying string instruments — like an alarm to signal the importance of the imminent coming of Jesus. The first phrase of the Nun komm melody (hopefully now very

familiar, after our preparations) is sung four times: first by the sopranos, then by the altos, then by the tenors, and finally by the basses, while the violins sail, independently, high over the voices and lower strings — again as though to say this is important; pay attention! The second phrase of the melody is sung in harmonization by the choir. And then the third phrase — about how the world is astonished — suddenly abandons the French Overture style entirely, and breaks out into a kaleidoscope of color, in which the four choral voices all chase each other in exuberant counterpoint! After a lot of this, the insistent French Overture style returns to frame the fourth and final phrase of the chorale.

The words of the chorale we just heard were uttered as though an enormous crowd were speaking in one voice. But now, in movement 2, a recitative for tenor, there begin the words for this cantata that were written by the theologian Erdmann Neumeister (1671-1756): these words are now longer the words of a crowd, but are those of a single individual who is on the point of entering into a highly personal relationship with the Savior. In movement 3, an aria, the same individual implores Jesus to come to his church.

And now, in the recitative that is movement 4, comes the briefest yet perhaps the most dramatic moment of the cantata: the baritone soloist is the *Vox Christi*, or the Voice of Christ. He speaks Jesus' words from the Book of Revelation: "I stand before the door and knock! Someone will open it; with that one will I hold communion." And listen to the strings here! They are all insistently plucking pizzicato — they are the knock at the door.

Movement 5 follows, an aria for soprano, which returns to Neumeister's libretto: Someone has opened the door! Again it is the voice of an individual, one who is confident that, however lowly one might feel, Jesus will enter the heart (for which the door was a metaphor). The individual cannot help overflowing with joy: *O wie selig werd' ich sein! O how blessed I will be!*

In Movement 6 the voice of the crowd returns, as though the crowd had heard the voices of the two individuals and are now echoing them. Like the individuals, the crowd cannot wait for the coming of Jesus! Here Bach uses a very clever trick: to have the crowd say "Amen" to the thoughts of the two individuals, he brings in a totally different chorale, but only the second half of it. This new tune is *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* (How Brightly Shines the Morning Star, found in many Protestant hymn books). The second half of this chorale tune begins with the word "Amen", and ends with the sopranos' dramatic descent down every note of the major scale; and again, the violins soar independently and triumphantly over everything else.

We may not often think of Bach as being a dramatist, but this cantata shows us that he surely was. This is the way he celebrated Advent: with earnestness, joy, and unwavering faith; and with music that gave audible and tangible substance to all of these.

1 Overture

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland,
der Jungfrauen Kind erkannt,
des sich
wundert alle Welt;
Gott solch Geburt ihm bestellt.

*Come now, Savior of nations,
recognized as the child of the virgin,
about whom
all the world is astonished;
God ordained such a birth for him.*

2 Recitative; 3 Aria

William Budding, tenor

Der Heiland ist gekommen;
hat unser armes Fleisch
und Blut an sich genommen,
und nimmet uns
zu Blutsverwandten an.

*The Savior has come;
has taken our poor flesh and blood
unto himself,
and accepts us
as [his] blood relations.*

O, allerhöchstes Gut,
was hast du nicht an uns getan?
Was tust du nicht noch täglich
an den Deinen?

*O, highest good of all,
what have you not done for us?
What do you not do daily
for those who are yours?*

Du kommst und läßt dein Licht
mit vollem Segen scheinen.

*You come and let your light shine
with [your] full blessing.*

Komm, Jesu, komm
zu deiner Kirche,
und gib ein selig neues Jahr!

*Come, Jesus, come
to your church,
and give [us] a blessed new year!*

Befördre deines Namens Ehre,
erhalte die gesunde Lehre,
und segne Kanzel und Altar.

*Convey the honor of your name,
maintain sound doctrine,
and bless pulpit and altar.*

4 Recitative

Anand Dharan, baritone (12-11, 12-18); Daniel Gostin, baritone (12-16)

Vox Christi:

The voice of Christ:

Siehe, siehe, ich stehe vor der Tür
und klopfe an!

*See, see, I stand before the door
and knock!*

So jemand

Thus someone

meine Stimme hören wird

will hear my voice

und die Tür auftun;

and open the door;

zu dem werde ich eingehen,

into that one will I enter,

und das Abendmahl mit ihm halten,
und er mit mir.

*and hold communion with him,
and he with me.*

5 Aria

Nicole Bearegard, soprano (12-11, 12-18); Lisa Wooldridge, soprano (12-16)

Öffne dich, mein ganzes Herze;

Open, my whole heart;

Jesus kommt und ziehet ein.

Jesus comes and enters [into me].

Bin ich gleich nur Staub und Erde,
will er mich doch nicht verschmähn;
seine Lust an mir zu sehn,
daß ich seine Wohnung werde.

*Even if I am only dust and soil,
he does not wish to spurn me
from seeing his yearning for me,
so that I become his dwelling.*

O wie selig werd' ich sein!

O how blessed will I be!

6 Chorale

Amen!

Amen!

Komm, du schöne Freudenkrone,
bleib nicht lange!

*Come, you beautiful crown of joy,
do not tarry long!*

Deiner wart ich mit Verlangen.

For your [coming] I wait with longing.



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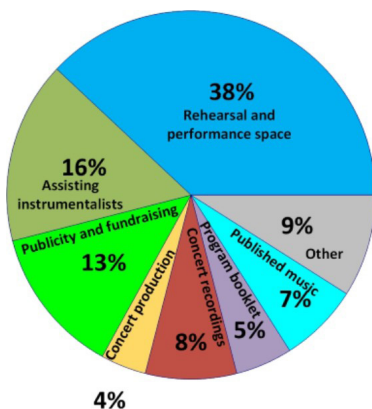
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Cantilena: A Women's Chorale, 617-484-5748, Jennifer Kane, Dir. Dec. 4, "Winter's Joy", Rheinberger, Ola Gjeilo, Nicola Porpora; May 7, 2017, "Radiant Sister", contemporary American composers, Susan LaBarr, Gwyneth Walker, Ellen Voth commission, Kenneth Seitz, Scott Wheeler. Both concerts at First Parish UU, Mass Ave, Arlington. www.cantilena.org

Choral Art Society of the South Shore, Danica A. Buckley, Artistic Dir./Cond. 508-577-1466. Dec. 4, 4 PM: Let There Be Peace on Earth, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Scituate. Join us in Scituate for Open rehearsals Jan.10 and 17, 7:30-9:30pm. May 7, 4 PM: Mozart Requiem, Ave Verum, and Regina Coeli, K.276. Location TBD. www.choralartsociety.org

Chorus pro Musica, Jamie Kirsch, Dir., 617-267-7442. Nov. 4, 8 PM: Beethoven, Missa Solemnis, Jordan Hall. Dec. 16, 8 PM: Candlelight Christmas, Old South Church. Mar. 4, 8PM w/ NEP: Tippett, Child of Our Time, BU Tsai Ctr.; Apr. 14, 8 PM w/ BPO: Mahler, Symphony No. 2, Symphony Hall. May 13, 8 PM: Gershwin, Of Thee I Sing. www.choruspromusica.org

Commonwealth Chorale, David Carrier, dir. Nov. 19, 8pm, Holy Name Church, 1689 Centre St., W. Roxbury: Van Ness, Nocturnes; Jongen, Messe en l'honneur du Saint-Sacrement; Pinkham, Christmas Cantata. Brass ensemble & organ. March 12, 3pm, Holy Name: Mozart's Requiem & Exsultate jubilate, J. Mongardio, sop. May 13, 8pm, Second Church, 60 Highland St, W. Newton: Schubert, Mirjams Siegesgesang, Brahms, An die Heimat; Copland songs. commonwealthchorale.com

Concord Chorus, Kevin Leong, Music Director, 978-254-1551. Dec. 10, 2 & 5 PM: Winter Holiday Concerts—Elgar, Thompson, Dove & carols, Middlesex School Chapel (1400 Lowell Road, Concord). May 20, 8 PM: Bach's "Mass in B Minor" with prof. soloists & period orchestra, Church of St. Brigid (1981 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington). www.concordchorus.org

Concord Women's Chorus, Jane Ring Frank, Dir. Dec.17, 3 PM: Wrapped in Song, works by Vivaldi, MacMillan, Orban, Betinis, Trinity Episcopal, Concord, MA. May 13, 4 PM: Fountain in a Wood: From Walden to Loch Lomond. Newly commissioned work by Beth Denisch, Scottish ballads, more. Rehearsals Tuesdays 9:30-noon. www.concordwomenschorus.org

Coro Allegro, David Hodgkins, Artistic Dir. 617-266-4011 Nov 13, 3pm: Bach, Magnificat, Barber & Kodaly. Mar 12, 3pm: Haydn Lord Nelson Mass & Pinkham, The White Raven, both @ Sanders Theatre, Cambridge. May 21, 3pm: 25th Anniversary Celebration Rachmaninoff, Poulenc, Thompson, premieres by Van Ness, Eldridge, & Higdon. Church of the Covenant, Boston. www.coroallegro.org

First Unitarian Society in Newton, Anne Watson Born, Music Dir. Nov. 13, 10.15am, Music Sunday – music by Elder, Warland, Walker, Barnwell; February 12, 3pm Musicians Concert; March 19, 10.15am Beethoven Choral Fantasy; May 24, 7pm Germany Tour Kickoff Concert www.fusn.org

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Call numbers listed for chorus information or 978-595-2293 / gbccinfo@gmail.com

Harvard Pro Musica, Carey Shunskis, Dir., 978-456-5039. Multi-generational regional chorus. December 3, 7:30 PM, Holiday Concert: Liszt's Missa Choralis, Kodaly's Veni Veni Emmanuel, and seasonal carols. April 2017: Intensive Workshop and Concert with guest conductors. (UU Church, 9 Ayer Road, Harvard, 01451) www.harvardpromusica.org

Highland Glee Club, David Tiedman, Mus.Dir. 508-655-8232. Dec. 4, 3PM, First Bap&st Church, 858 Great Plain Avenue, Needham. Works by Mozart, St. Saens, Bach, Buxtehude, seasonal carols. Tickets \$20, under 18 free. April 23, 3PM, Newton City Hall, War Memorial Auditorium, 1000 Comm. Ave. African –American composers, songs from WWI, music scholarship winner. www.highlandgleeclub.com

The Master Singers of Lexington, Adam Grossman, Dir., 781-729-7975. First Parish Church, 7 Harrington Road: Oct. 29, 8 pm: Britten, Fauré. Dec. 11, 4 pm: Vivaldi (Gloria), R. Thompson, Argento, Caldara. Mar. 4, 8 pm: Pops! Ellington, Foster, Gershwin, Lennon & McCartney, Raposo, Weill. Follen Church, 755 Mass. Ave.: May 7, 4 pm: Mendelssohn Piano Concerto (A minor), Haydn Little Organ Mass, Whitman Brown (commission), Eric Mazonson, piano. www.themastersingers.org

Meridian Singers, Michael Barrett, Dir., Jan. 17, 1 PM: A cappella settings, Renaissance through 20th century, of Classical texts (Virgil, Horace, Catullus), MIT Chapel, 48 Mass. Ave. Cambridge. web.mit.edu/meridians/

Metropolitan Chorale, Lisa Graham, Music Dir. Nov. 5, 8pm, First Church, Cambridge, Choral Britannia: Masterpieces from the Cathedral Tradition and Beyond with Ian Watson, organist; Mar. 4, 8pm, All Saints Parish, Brookline, Handel: Dixit Dominus; May 12, 8pm, Sanders Theatre, Cambridge, Songs of Innocence with David Vanderwal, tenor, and Handel & Haydn Society's Young Women's Chorus, directed by Alyson Greer. www.metropolitanchorale.org.

MIT Women's Chorale, Kevin Galiè, Dir., Dec. 10, 5 PM: Galuppi Dixit Dominus & Nunc dimittis, Harvard-Epworth United Meth. Church, Harvard Sq., Cambridge. Open dress rehearsal, Dec. 3, 1 pm, MIT Chapel, 48 Mass. Ave. Cambridge. Spring concert, May 6, 5 pm Harvard-Epworth Church. web.mit.edu/womensleague/womenschorale/

Nashoba Valley Chorale, Anne Watson Born, Dir. Nov. 19, 8 PM: Bach Motet #3, Gjeilo Sunrise Mass, Littleton (MA) HS. Dec. TBD, 3 PM: Messiah Sing, First Church UU, Littleton. April 29, 8 PM: Brahms Ein Deutsches Requiem, Littleton HS. May 21, 4 PM: Dvorak Te Deum, with Worcester Youth Symphony, Mechanics Hall, Worcester. www.nashobachorale.org

New England Classical Singers, David Hodgkins, Artistic Dir. Dec 10, 7:30 PM, Pike School, Andover, MA and Dec 11, 3 PM, Christ Church, Andover, MA, Handel's Messiah, Pt. 1 and Victoria's Magnificat Secundi Toni. Mar 4, 7:30 PM, Pike School, Andover, MA, Whitbourn's Annelies. May 7, 4 PM, Corpus Christi Parish, Lawrence, MA, TBD, free concert sponsored by Catherine McCarthy Memorial Trust Fund. www.newenglandclassical.org

Night Song, Daryl Bichel, director. Weekly compline liturgy featuring chant and Renaissance polyphony, First Church in Cambridge. Sundays, 7pm Nov.-Apr, 8:30pm May-Oct. Free. www.nightsong.org

Oriana Consort, Walter Chapin, Caroline Harvey, Dirs., 339-203-5876. Nov. 6, 5 PM; Nov. 11, 8 PM: Vaughan Williams, Poulenc, Brahms, Stravinsky et al. Dec. 11, 5 PM; Dec. 16, 8 PM; Dec. 18, 5 PM: Bach, Schütz, Cooman et al. Mar. 26, 5 PM; Mar. 31, 8 PM; Apr. 2, 5 PM; Apr. 8, 8 PM: Jaquequin, Monteverdi, Copland et al. Venues at www.orianaconsort.org

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Quincy Choral Society classical, Broadway and popular December 11, 2016, 4:00pm, Central Middle School, 875 Hancock St., Quincy March 5, 2017, 2:00pm, Quincy Catholic Academy, 370 Hancock St., Quincy May 7, 2017, 4:00pm, Central Middle School, 875 Hancock St., Quincy www.quincychoral.org

Reading Community Singers, Beth Mosier, Dir. 781-944-8354. Dec. 3, 7:30PM, Dec. 4, 3:00PM: "In the Spirit of Peace-A Holiday Celebration," Old South United Methodist Church, 6 Salem St. Reading. Spring Concert May 6, 2017, 7:30PM Parker Middle school 45 Temple St. Reading. www.readingcommunitysprings.org.

Seraphim Singers, Jennifer Lester, Dir. Nov 6, 13: Howells 'Requiem' and MacMillan 'Cantos Sagrados,' Newton/Cambridge. Feb 5, 10, 12: 'Visions of War, Peace, & Paradise' Revelations-themed program, Cambridge/ Boston/ Concord. Apr 30, May 6: Byrd Mass and singers' favorite works mark Seraphim's 20th year, Boston/Cohasset. \$15-20, SeraphimSingers.org.

The Spectrum Singers, John W. Ehrlich, Dir, 617-492-8902. Nov. 19: Christmas Prelude with brass and organ: Schuetz, Praetorius, Pinkham, Dello Joio, Gabrieli; Mar. 18: Britannia Rules: Purcell, Vaughan Wms; May 20: Celebrate America: Fine, Schuman, Copland, Kern, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Gershwin. All concerts 8 PM at 1st Cong Camb. \$45/\$30/\$15. spectrumingers.org

Westford Chorus Parish Center for the Arts in Westford, MA. Winter Concert "A Baroque Festival" Handel, Bach, Vivaldi and Zelenka, 1/28 7:30p.m. at United Methodist, Westford, 1/29 3:00p.m., Trinity Lutheran, Chelmsford westfordchorus.org

Zamir Chorale of Boston, Josh Jacobson, Art. Dir., 617-244-6333. Nov. 14, 7:30 PM: The Majesty of Hallel, Temple Shalom of Newton. Dec. 18, 4 PM: A Light Through the Ages, Central Reform Temple, Boston. June 14, 7:30 PM: Awe-Psalms, Temple Emanuel, Newton. www.zamir.org

Nashoba Valley Chorale, www.nashobachorale.org

Neponset Choral Society, Inc., www.ncschorus.org

New England Classical Singers, www.newenglandclassical.org

New World Chorale, www.newworldchorale.org

Newton Community Chorus, www.NewtonCommunityChorus.org

Oriana Consort, www.theorianaconsort.org

Persephone's Daughters, www.persephonesdaughters.org

Pilgrim Festival Chorus, www.pilgrimfestivalchorus.org

Polymnia Choral Society, www.polymnia.org

Quincy Choral Society, www.quincychoral.org

Reading Community Singers, www.readingcommunitysingers.org

Seraphim Singers, www.seraphimsingers.org

Sharing A New Song, www.sharinganewsong.org

SingPositive, www.singpositive.org

Somerville Community Chorus, www.somervillechorus.com

Sound and Spirit, www.soundandspirit.net

Sounds of Stow Festival Chorus & Orchestra, www.soundsofstow.org

Spectrum Singers, www.spectrumingers.org

Treble Chorus of New England, treblechorusne.org/

Triad Choral Collective, triadchoir.org

Voices of Metrowest, voicesofmetrowest.com

Wellesley Choral Society, www.WellesleyChoralSociety.org

Westford Chorus, www.westfordchorus.org

Zamir Chorale of Boston, www.zamir.org

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