



2025-2026 SEASON



SEASON FAREWELL



Music for Modern Times

Circa 1600

Directed by Robert Worth

Saturday, May 16, 3 P.M.

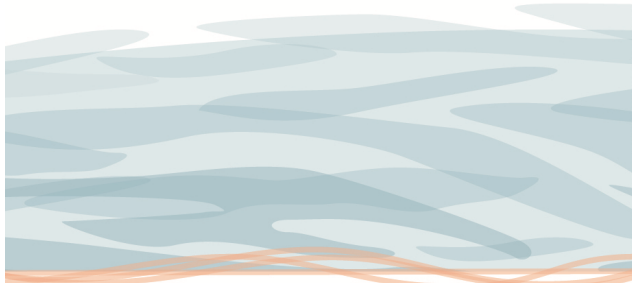
Sunday, May 17, 3 P.M.

SCHROEDER HALL

ROHNERT PARK



Rose Barton, *The Thames at Charing Cross*, from *Familiar London*, 1904.



One Long River of Song

If you've attended our concerts over the years, you no doubt have noticed that Sonoma Bach's sweet spot is the music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, roughly from 1400 to 1750. On occasion, we've extended our reach backward into the 14th century, and fast-forwarded into the Classical era (Mozart), the Romantic period (Brahms), and even into the 20th century (Britten and others). But these forays have been relatively rare, generally a result of chasing a theme backward or forward.

Inspired by a powerful memoir by the late, great author Brian Doyle—whose book title we have borrowed for our 2025–2026 season—we've been bringing to life in one season nearly the entire history of European polyphonic music in the classical tradition. And we're doing it in one fell swoop, from roots in sacred monophonic chant through the development of polyphony, touching lightly—like a skipping stone—on successive styles and achievements right up to the 21st century—a long river indeed!

In our Opening Recital, the Green Mountain Consort began with chant, then moved into the development of 13th-century polyphony, progressing in the second half of our concert to the 'modern music' of Guillaume de Machaut and Johannes Ciconia. Circa 1600's Harvest Time concerts featured *a cappella* music from the Renaissance (roughly 1400–1600), including plenty of sacred and secular music by some of our usual suspects—Josquin Desprez, G.P. da Palestrina, and Orlande de Lassus—and by many others. Then, in our 14th-annual Early Music Christmas, the Sonoma Bach Choir, under its new director, Amanda McFadden, joined with early brass and viols in *A Three-Nation Celebration*, featuring 17th-century music from Germany, France, and England.

In January, the wonderful organist Anne Laver joined us once again for our annual Organ Recital, this time featuring 18th-century high Baroque music—especially Bach and Vivaldi—as well as the Viennese composers Haydn and Mozart. The recital also featured the debut of our Wild Rose Treble Ensemble.

In March, our Consort fast-forwarded to the rich repertoire of a cappella sacred music in the 19th-century. Brahms and Mendelssohn elbowed less iconic (though nonetheless fabulous) composers as Moritz Hauptmann, Amy Beach and Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, all in the peerless surroundings of the Church of St. Seraphim.

In April, we closed out the 19th-century with an all-Brahms program, opening with his one-of-a-kind *Schicksalslied* (a piece which asks more questions than it answers), and closing with his inimitable—and über-comforting—*Ein deutsches Requiem*, accompanied by Live Oak Baroque Orchestra.

And now the long river has wended us into the 20th-century, as we step across a line we've rarely crossed, into the world of (gasp!) Modern Music. Today for you Circa 1600, along with our organist Evangeline Wolfe, will traverse the 20th century, featuring works by Debussy, Britten, Barber, Hindemith, and many others; and we'll even dip our feet into some of the magnificent choral repertoire which has been composed in this 21st-century.

What a trip! We're so glad you're here to join us as we sail into our last port upon *One Long River of Song*.

Robert Worth, Music Director

Amanda McFadden, Associate Director

Dianna Morgan, Executive Director



Season Farewell:
Music for Modern Times

FEATURING

Circa 1600

Evangeline Wolfe, organ

Robert Worth, Music Director

Amanda McFadden, Associate Director

Saturday, May 16 at 3PM
Sonoma State University
Schroeder Hall

Sunday, May 17 at 3PM
Sonoma State University
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Music for Modern Times

Grant us Peace

Für Jan van Eyck (Agnus Dei of the Roman Catholic Mass).....Arvo Pärt (1935-)

Lullabies and Nightsongs

Selections from Lullabies and Nightsongs (1965).....Alec Wilder (1907-1980)

The Elephant Present (Poem by William Engvick, 1914-2012)

The Starlighter (Poem by Arthur Guitermann, 1871-1943)

The Answers (Poem by Robert Clairmont, 1902-1971)

The Wonders of Love

Dieu! Qui la fait bon regarder.....Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Poem by Charles D'Orleans (1394-1465)

Mary Hynes.....Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Poem by James Stephens (1880-1950)

And blessed them till they flew away

Il bianco e dolce cigno.....Bruno Bettinelli (1913-2004)
Poem by Giovanni Guidiccioni (1500-1541)

The Birds.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
Poem by Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953)

The Prayer of the Little Bird.....Ivor R. Davies (1901-1970)
Poem by Carmen Bernos de Gasztold (1919-1995)

For Unto Us

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen.....Hugo Distler (1908-1942)
Poet unknown

Vom Himmel hoch, O Englein kommt.....Hugo Distler (1908-1943)
Poet unknown

In Memoriam

No Mark.....Cecil Effinger (1914-1990)
Poem by Thomas Hornsby Ferrill (1896-1988)

To all, to Each.....William Schumann (1910-1982)
Poem by Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Rejoice in the Lamb I

Rejoice in the Lamb.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
Poem by Christopher Smart (1722-1791)

Tutti:

Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter

Hallelujah from the heart of God

INTERMISSION

Rejoice in the Lamb II.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
Treble solo: For I will consider my Cat Jeffry – Dianna Morgan, soprano
Alto solo: For the Mouse is a creature of great personal valor – Erica Dori, alto
Tenor solo: For the flowers are great blessings – Will Meyer, tenor
Tutti: For I am under the same accusation with my Savior

Creatures Featured

A noiseless patient spider.....Roberto Valor (1952-)
Poem by Walt Whitman (1819-1892)
Little Lamb.....Sivert Ellingsen (1992-)
Poem by William Blake (1757-1827)
La biche.....Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)
Poem by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

Many Waters Cannot Quench Love

The lover in Winter plaineth for the Spring.....Ned Rorem (1923-2022)
Anonymous 16th-century poem
The Coolin.....Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Poem by James Stephens (1880-1950)
Set Me as a Seal upon your Heart.....René Clausen (1953-)
Text from the Song of Songs

Birds Everywhere

And my Love Loves Me! *from Bird Raptures*.....Lucy Walker (1998-)
Poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)
Un cygne.....Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)
Poem by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

From Holy Week to Pentecost

Jesu, deine Passion.....Hugo Distler (1908-1942)
Poem by Melchior Vulpius (1570-1615)
Komm, heiliger Geist.....Hugo Distler (1908-1942)
Poem by Georg Vetter (1536-1599)

A Ball and a Doll

On a round ball.....Ross Lee Finney (1906-1997)
Poem by John Donne (1571-1631)
dominic has.....Peter Schickele (1935-2024)
Poem by e.e. cummings (1894-1962)

Finale: Rejoice in the Lamb III.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Bass solo: For H is a spirit – Andrew Hathaway, bass
Tutti: For the instruments are by their rhimes
For at that time malignity ceases
Reprise: Hallelujah from the heart of God

Welcome to our Season Finale!

As almost anyone who loves music knows, the 20th century brought a whole new array of musical techniques, tastes and effects onto the stage. As an early music organization, who are we to represent this modern music in song?

Well, as noted above, our season-closing concert set is the culmination of our representation, over many months, of the ever-changing kaleidoscope of music for vocal ensemble in the Western tradition. There is no question that, at each step along our thousand-year voyage, there have been additions and enrichments added to what came before, and many of these changes have been demonstrated in our repertoire to date.

There have also been disjunctions, especially in the 20th century, when the One Long River seems to have reached a sort of delta, a dividing-off of multiple threads and aesthetic approaches and musical techniques. You will probably notice that in this concert we hew closely to musical techniques and approaches which connect back to the past. Yes, the dissonance level is often higher than in earlier centuries, and a variety of new metrical and rhythmic techniques have crept their way into the music you will hear today.

But I think you'll find this music to be eminently accessible, challenging at times, but ultimately resting upon the same basic principle: To bring music and words together to tell stories, to highlight both peak moments and low points, to wend their way into our hearts and souls, as perhaps only music can.



Notes, Texts and Translations

Notes by Amanda McFadden and Robert Worth

Grant us Peace

Für Jan van Eyck (Agnus Dei of the Roman Catholic Mass).....Arvo Pärt (1935-)

Based on the *Agnus Dei* from Pärt's *Berliner Messe* (1989), *Für Jan van Eyck* is a placid and reflective work that is simultaneously easy on the ears and challenging on the voice. Pärt composed this specific version in 2020 to commemorate the restoration of Jan van Eyck's 15th-century masterpiece, the *Ghent Altarpiece*. The piece employs Pärt's signature "tintinnabulation" technique, anchoring a melodic line with a second voice to create a dialogue of wide vocal leaps. Pärt describes this compositional duality as a manifestation of grace: "One line is who we are, and the other line is who is holding and taking care of us. Sometimes I say that the melodic line is our reality, our sins - but the other line is forgiving our sins."

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
Miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the
world: Have mercy upon us.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
Miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the
world: Have mercy upon us.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
Dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the
world: Grant us peace.

Lullabies and Nightsongs

We boldly follow our ethereal opening song with something entirely different. Alec Wilder's songs, to diverse poems ranging from the ridiculous to the sublime, are here presented in three tiny settings for choir.

Selections from *Lullabies and Nightsongs* (1965).....Alec Wilder (1907-1980)

The Elephant Present

Elephants can be lots of fun,
they're big and warm and pleasant.
Where am I going to find you one,
find you an elephant present?

Maybe I can go to the elephant zoo,
with lumps of sugar to trap him,
And quickly mail him home to you,
when I find out how to wrap him.
--William Engvick (1914-2012)

The Starlighter

When the bat's on the wing,
and the bird's in the tree,
Comes the old starlighter,
whom none may see.

First in the west where the low hills are,
He touches his wand to the evening star.
Then swiftly he runs on his rounds on high,
'Til he's lit ev'ry lamp in the dark blue sky.
--Arthur Gutterman (1871-1943)

The Answers

'When did the world begin and how?'
I asked a lamb, a goat, a cow,
'What's it all about and why?'
I asked a hog as he passed by.

How will the whole thing end, and when?'
I asked a duck, a goose, a hen,
And I copied all the answers too:
A quack, a honk, an oink, a moo!
--Robert Clairmont (1902-1971)

The Wonders of Love

Love has of course—even before the Long River of Song began to flow—been an item of fascination and concern for as long as humans have been around. Here we offer a pair of complementary love songs, actual paeans of praise, to two ladies in very different styles. Debussy's offering—from his *Trois Chansons*—is simultaneously laid back and ecstatic, no mean musical feat. Barber's setting of 'Mary Hynes' begins in utter excitement, contrasting with a slower passage which balances the thrill with a still deeper connection.

Dieu! Qui la fait bon regarder.....Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Poem by Charles D'Orleans (1394-1465)

Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder,
La gracieuse bonne et belle;
Pour les grans biens que sont en elle,
Chascun est prest de la louer.
Qui se pourroit d'elle lasser?
Tousjours sa beauté renouvelle.

Lord! how good to look on her,
The good and fair and gracious lady;
For the high qualities within her,
All are eager to praise her.
Who could ever tire of her?
Her beauty always increases.

Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder,
La gracieuse bonne et belle!
Par deça, ne delà, la mer,
Ne scay dame, ne damoiselle
Qui soit en tous biens parfaits telle!
C'est un songe d'y penser.
Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder!

Lord! how good to look on her,
The good and fair and gracious lady!
The ocean knows of no woman in any quarter,
Married or single, who is as perfect
As she in every way.
You would never dream of such a thing;
Lord! how good it is to look on her!

Mary Hynes.....Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Poem by James Stephens (1880-1950)

She is the sky of the sun!
She is the dart of love!
She is the love of my heart!
She is a rune!

Lovely and airy
the view from the hill
that looks down from Ballylea!

She is above the women
of the race of Eve,
as the sun is above the moon!

But no good sight is good,
until you see
the blossom of branches
walking towards you, airily.

And blessed them till they flew away

Birds have always held a fascination for us. In this triptych we encounter an expressive modern setting of a famous 16th century poem; an intimate Benjamin Britten song of the child Jesus with the birds; and a touching setting of the thoughts of a bird on the Ark who needs desperately to sing.

Il bianco e dolce cigno.....Bruno Bettinelli (1913-2004)

Poem by Giovanni Guidiccioni (1500-1541)

Il bianco e dolce cigno
cantando more, ed io
piangendo giung' al fin del viver mio.
Stran' e diversa sorte,
ch'ei more sconcolato
ed io more beato.
Morte che nel morire
m'empie di gioia tutto e di desire.
Se nel morir, altro dolor non sento,
di mille mort' il di sarei contento.

The white and sweet swan
dies singing, and I,
weeping, reach the end of my life.
Strange and different fate,
that he dies disconsolate
and I die a blessed death,
which in dying fills me
full of joy and desire.
If in dying, were I to feel no other pain,
I would be content to die a thousand deaths a day.

The Birds.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Poem by Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953)

When Jesus Christ was four years old,
The angels brought Him toys of gold,
Which no man ever had bought or sold.

And yet with these He would not play.
He made Him small fowl out of clay,

And blessed them till they flew away.
Tu creasti, Domine.

Jesus Christ, Thou child so wise,
Bless mine hands and fill mine eyes,
And bring my soul to Paradise.

The Prayer of the Little Bird.....Ivor R. Davies (1901-1970)

Poem by Carmen Bernos de Gasztold (1919-1995)

Dear God,
I don't know how to pray by myself
very well, but will You please
protect my little nest
from wind and rain?
Put a great deal of dew on the flowers,
many seeds in my way.

Make Your blue very high,
Your branches lissom;
let Your kind light stay late in the sky
and set my heart brimming with such music
that I must sing, sing, sing...
Please, Lord.
Amen.

For unto us

Over the years we have sung so much Hugo Distler! He never disappoints. In his short life, he composed an impressive body of music in a new style, sui generis. I love his music for so many reasons, but at the top of the list is for his ability to embody ecstasy in music. Also, he is not afraid of dissonance but knows how to deploy it strategically in the service of expression.

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen.....Hugo Distler (1908-1942)

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen,
aus einer Wurzel zart,
wie uns die Alten sungen,
von Jesse kam die Art.
Und hat ein Blümlein bracht
mitten im kalten Winter,
wohl zu der halben Nacht.

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming,
From tender stem hath sprung.
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
As men of old have sung;
It came, a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.
-- Anonymous

Vom Himmel hoch, O Englein kommt.....Hugo Distler (1908-1943)

Vom Himmel hoch, o Engel, kommt!
Eia, eia, susani, susani, susani,
kommt, singt und klingt, kommt, pfeift und trombt.
Halleluja, Halleluja.
Von Jesus singt und Maria.

Come from heaven, O angels come!
Eia, eia, susani, susani, susani,
Come, sing and sound, come fife and trumpet,
Halleluja, Halleluja.
Sing of Jesus and of Mary.

Singt Fried den Menschen weit und breit, ,
eia, eia, susani, susani, susani,
Gott Preis und Ehrin Ewigkeit.
Halleluja, Halleluja.
Von Jesus singt und Maria.

Here the music must be heavenly,
Eia, eia, susani, susani, susani,
For this heavenly little child.
Halleluja, Halleluja.
Sing of Jesus and of Mary.
-- Anonymous

In Memoriam

Music is of course often pressed into service when people die, as aids to memorializing the loved one, and as a sort of balm or talisman to carry in our hearts. Cecil Effinger sets to music a series of little tales of death, leading to the death in battle of a fighter pilot. Chilling stuff, especially the epigraph. William Schumann, using a Walt Whitman poem, offers an indelible impression of the inevitable and unavoidable fact of death, coming to each and all of us.

No Mark.....Cecil Effinger (1914-1990)

Corn grew where the corn was spilled
In the wreck where Casey Jones was killed,
Scrub-oak grows and sassafrass
Around the shady stone you pass
To show where Stonewall Jackson fell
That Saturday at Chancellorsville,
And soapweed bayonets are steeled
Across the Custer battlefield.

Poem by Thomas Hornsby Ferrill (1896-1988)
But where you die the sky is black
A little while with cracking flak,
Then ocean crosses very still
Above your skull that held our will.
O swing away, white gull, white gull,
Evening star, be beautiful.

To all, to Each.....William Schumann (1910-1982)
Poem by Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving,

In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

Rejoice in the Lamb I

Rejoice in the Lamb.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
Poem by Christopher Smart (1722-1791)

There is nothing quite like Benjamin Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* (1943). It was commissioned by the Reverend Walter Hussey (who later also commissioned Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*) for the 50th anniversary of St. Matthew's Church, Northampton. For his text, Britten chose the visionary, eccentric poetry of the 18th-century poet Christopher Smart. A scholar who struggled with what his contemporaries called "religious mania," Smart was confined to an asylum for several years. It was during this confinement he wrote *Jubilate Agno* (Rejoice in the Lamb), a sprawling, antiphonal poem that calls upon all of creation - from biblical characters to tiny animals - to join in praise. Follow along with the aid of Mark Riddles' outline of the different sections of the piece starting with the Opening Hymn below.

I. Opening Hymn: Call to Worship-processional-hymn: The work begins with a "Call to Worship," emerging from a hushed, unison that feels like chant - at once familiar and otherworldly. The second section kicks into gear with a processional hymn, voiced through Smart's vivid descriptions of biblical characters and their animal companions. We meet familiar figures like Daniel and his Lion as well as more obscure characters like Ithamar (youngest son of Aaron the High Priest) and his Chamois (mountain goat-antelope). This opening section culminates in a tender, dancing "Hallelujah," a celebration that signals the shift from the call to worship to the intimate portrayals that are to come.

Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues;
Give the glory to the Lord,
And the Lamb.
Nations, and languages,
And every Creature
In which is the breath of Life.
Let man and beast appear before him,
And magnify his name together.

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter,
Bind a leopard to the altar
And consecrate his spear to the Lord.

Let Ishmail dedicate a tyger,
And give praise for the liberty
In which the Lord has let him at large.

Let Balaam appear with an ass,
And bless the Lord his people
And his creatures for a reward eternal.

Let Daniel come forth with a lion,
And praise God with all his might
Through faith in Christ Jesus.

Let Ithamar minister with a chamois,
And bless the name of Him
That cloatheth the naked.

Let Jakim with the satyr bless God in the dance.

Let David bless with the bear
The beginning of victory to the Lord,
To the Lord the perfection of excellence.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnificent and mighty.

Hallelujah.

INTERMISSION

Rejoice in the Lamb II

Rejoice in the Lamb.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Poem by Christopher Smart (1722-1791)

II. Animistic Praise: God in all: indwelling spirit of animal and plant life: We open the second half of our concert with three special solos that feel like looking at life under a microscope, observing the minute movements and characteristics of the creatures of earth. Britten composes with a sense of play and careful observation, capturing the “elegant quickness” of the cat Jeoffry, the “personal valor” of a mouse, and the lyrical “poetry” of flowers. Throughout these portraits, the music reflects Smart’s belief that a divine, indwelling spirit resides in every part of nature.

For I will consider my Cat Jeoffry.
For he is the servant of the living God.
Duly and daily serving him.
For at the first glance
Of the glory of God in the East
He worships in his way.
For this is done by wreathing his body
Seven times round with elegant quickness.
For he knows that God is his saviour.

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For this is a true case--
Cat takes female mouse,
Male mouse will not depart,
but stands threat'ning and daring.

For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers have their angels,
Even the words of God's creation.
And the root parries the adversary.

For God has bless'd him
In the variety of his movements.
For there is nothing sweeter
Than his peace when at rest.
For I am possessed of a cat,
Surpassing in beauty,
From whom I take occasion
To bless Almighty God.

If you will let her go, I will engage you,
As prodigious a creature as you are.
For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For the Mouse is of an hospitable disposition.

For the flower glorifies God.
For there is a language of flowers.
For the flowers are peculiarly
The poetry of Christ.

III. Lament: Smart's anguish and faith: This section of the piece is filled with the sense of despair and struggle that Smart faced during his years of confinement and much of the second half of his life. Britten introduces a nagging musical motif for the phrase “silly fellow” even before the choir sings the text, signaling an unkind inner voice that follows the singers like a shadow. The music eventually descends into a haunting, Byzantine-style minor scale as the singers recount their twelve specific hardships. Yet, as Smart’s poetry always does, the movement ultimately finds its way through the darkness to the quiet, steadfast knowledge that God is watching over all.

For I am under the same accusation
With my Savior, For they said:
He is besides himself.
For the officers of the peace
Are at variance with me,
And the watchman smites me with his staff.

For silly fellow, silly fellow, is against me,
And belongeth neither to me nor to my family.
For I am in twelve hardships,
But he that was born of a virgin
Shall deliver me out of all.

Creatures Featured

Poets love to depict animals, their traits, their attractions, in their writing. Here we offer a Spider—brave, unstoppable even against the vastness of the universe and the tininess of his own self. Only Connect! And a Lamb—wooly, soft, approachable, a creature you can't help yourself from hugging—who is also, somehow, the King of Kings. And Rilke's faun, balanced on a knife-edge between trust and terror.

A noiseless patient spider.....Roberto Valor (1952-)
Poem by Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

A noiseless patient spider,
I mark'd where on a little promontory
it stood isolated,
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
It launch'd forth filament, filament, out of itself,
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,
Surrounded, detached,

in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing,
seeking the spheres to connect them,
Till the bridge you will need be form'd,
till the ductile anchor hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling
catch somewhere, O my soul.

Little Lamb.....Sivert Ellingsen (1992-)
Poem by William Blake (1757-1827)

Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee,
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
Little lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and He is mild,
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb,
We are called by His name.
Little lamb, God bless thee!
Little lamb, God bless thee!

La biche.....Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)
Poem by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

O la biche: quel bel intérieur
d'anciennes forêts dans tes yeux abonde;
combien de confiance ronde
mêlée à combien de peur.

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

O doe, what lovely ancient forest
depths abound in your eyes;
how much open trust
mixed with how much fear.

All this, borne by the brisk
gracility of your bounds.
But nothing ever disturbs
that unpossessive
unawareness of your brow.

Many Waters Cannot Quench Love

In any style and in any era, it's not hard to find great songs about love. Ned Rorem's offering—from his set of songs, 'From an Unknown Past'—calls into service a tiny old poem to arouse our feelings of loss and longing. Our second Samuel Barber setting presents a most touching and sensuous poem of love gained and

love shared. We close this set with René Clausen's straightforward (but remarkably powerful) setting of lines from the Song of Songs.

The lover in Winter plaineth for the Spring.....Ned Rorem (1923-2022)

O Western wind, when will thou blow,
That the small rain down can rain?
Christ, that my love were in my arms,
And I in my bed again!

The Coolin.....Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Poem by James Stephens (1880-1950)

Come with me, under my coat,
and we will drink our fill
of the milk of the white goat,
or wine if it be thy will.
And nothing is left to do,
but an eye to look into an eye,
and a hand in a hand to slip;
and a sigh to answer a sigh;
And a lip to find out a lip!
What if the night be black!
And the air on the mountain chill!

And we will talk,
until talk is a trouble, too,
out on the side of the hill.

Where all but the fern is still!
Stay with me, under my coat!
and we will drink our fill
of the milk of the white goat,
out on the side of the hill!

Set Me as a Seal upon your Heart.....René Clausen (1953-)

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm,
For love is strong as death.

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm,
For love is strong as death.

Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can the floods drown it.

Birds Everywhere

We were intent upon presenting at least a few pieces created in this our 21st century. 'Für Jan Van Eyck', by Arvo Pärt, which you heard at the beginning of our concert, qualifies; but as Amanda mentions in her notes, it's an arrangement of a late 20th-century work. Lucy Walker's setting, however, was freshly composed in 2025! As you'll hear, it's the real thing, a brilliant evocation of its Coleridge poem, pretty much guaranteed to make you smile. Make sure to look up the entire triptych on YouTube when you get home. And we return to Paul Hindemith, here depicting the image (from Rilke) of the swan floating in stately and undisturbed fashion on the surface of the waters.

And my Love Loves Me! *from Bird Raptures*.....Lucy Walker (1998-)

Poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

Do you ask what the birds say?
The Sparrow, the Dove,
The Linnet and Thrush say " I love and I love!"
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong;
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, & blossoms, & sunny warm
weather, And singing and loving,
all come back together.

But the Lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings; and forever sings he --
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me!"

Un cygne.....Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)

Poem by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

Un cygne avance sur l'eau
tout entouré de lui-même,
comme un glissant tableau;
ainsi à certains instants
un être que l'on aime
est tout un espace mouvant.

A swan moves over the water
ringed all around by itself,
like a painting that glides;
thus, at certain moments,
a being that one loves
is a whole moving space.

Il se rapproche, doublé,
comme ce cygne qui nage,
sur notre âme troublé ...
qui à cet être ajoute
la tremblante image
de bonheur et de doute.

It draws near, bent double,
like the drifting swan,
over our troubled soul ...
adding to that being
the trembling image
of gladness and of doubt.

From Holy Week to Pentecost

I couldn't resist adding another Distler set, this one continuing around the church year by means of two chorales: 'Jesu, deine Passion', a solemn prayer to the crucified Christ; and Distler's inimitable setting of the glad Pentecost hymn, 'Komm heiliger Geist'.

Jesu, deine Passion.....Hugo Distler (1908-1942)

Poem by Melchior Vulpius (1570-1615)

Jesu, deine Passion will ich jetzt bedenken;
wollest mir von Himmelsthron
Geist und Andacht schenken.
In dem Bilde jetzt erschein,
Jesu, meinem Herzen,
wie du, unser Heil zu sein,
littest alle Schmerzen.

Jesus, to your Passion will I consider;
May you wish from Heaven's throne
To fill me with courage and devotion.
In this image now appearing,
Jesus, to my heart
show yourself to be
Our salvation beyond all pain.

Komm, heiliger Geist.....Hugo Distler (1908-1942)

Poem by Georg Vetter (1536-1599)

Komm, Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott,
Erfüll mit deiner Gnaden Gut
Deiner Gläubigen Herz, Mut und Sinn,
Dein' brünstig Lieb' entzünd' in ihn'n!

Come, Holy Spirit, Lord God,
fill with the goodness of your grace
the heart, spirit and mind of your believers,
kindle in them your ardent love!

O Herr, durch deines Lichtes Glast
Zu dem Glauben versammelt hast
Das Volk aus aller Welt Zungen;
Das sei dir, Herr, zu Lob gesungen:
Halleluja! Halleluja!

O Lord, through the splendour of your light
you have gathered in faith
people from all the tongues of the world;
so that in your praise Lord, may there be sung:
Halleluja! Halleluja!

A Ball and a Doll

In my early days as a young choir director—the early 1980's—I got the chance to lead a small choir called Mantichorus. (This was a pun upon the Manticore, a mythical beast with a lion's body, huge wings, a scorpion's tail, said to charm its victims by singing in beautiful flute-like tones.) We gathered diverse

repertoire from diverse sources and wove them into integrated 'shows'. Among our many gleanings were these very different songs about a ball and a doll.

On a round ball.....Ross Lee Finney (1906-1997)
Poem by John Donne (1571-1631)

On a round ball
A workman that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,
And quickly make that, which was nothing, all;
So doth each tear which thee doth wear.

A globe, yea world, by that impression grow,
Till thy tears mix'd with mine do overflow
This world; by waters sent from thee, my heaven
dissolved so.

dominic has.....Peter Schickele (1935-2024)
Poem by e.e. cummings (1894-1962)

dominic has a doll wired,
to the radiator of his ZOOM DOOM
icecoalwood truck

a wistful little clown whom somebody buried
upsidedown in an ashbarrel

so of course dominic took him home
& mrs dominic washed his sweet dirty face &
mended his bright torn trousers

(quite as if he were really her & she but)
& so that 's how dominic has a doll

& every now & then
my wonderful friend dominic depaola
gives me a most tremendous hug

knowing i feel that we & worlds
are less alive than dolls & dream

Rejoice in the Lamb III.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
Poem by Christopher Smart (1722-1791)

IV. Mystic Praise: God in all: incantation, cosmic, harmony, axis mundi: Rounding out our quartet of soloists, the bass leads us into a world of "Mystic Praise," where Christopher Smart finds divinity within the very structure of language. He recounts a spiritual alphabet, culminating in "M is musick," which serves as the catalyst for a lively celebration. Here, the choir and organ rejoice in the specific rhymes of various instruments - each possessing a unique melodic connection to God.

Bass: For H is a spirit And therefore he is God.
For K is king And therefore he is God.
For L is love And therefore he is God.
For M is musick And therefore he is God.

For the cymbal rhimes are toll soul and the like.
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth and the like.
For the flute rhimes are suit mute and the like.
For the bassoon rhimes are pass class and the like.
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place and the like.
For the clarinet rhimes are clean seen and the like.
For the trumpet rhimes are sound bound and the like.
For the trumpet of God is a blessed intelligence
And so are all the instruments in Heav'n.
For God the Father Almighty plays upon the harp
Of stupendous magnitude and melody.

Tutti: For the instruments are by their rhimes,
For the shawm rhimes are lawn fawn and the like.
For the shawm rhimes are moon boon and the like.
For the harp rhimes are sing ring and the like.
For the harp rhimes are ring string and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are bell well and the like.

V. Closing Hymn: Response and benediction: Emerging from the celebration of instruments, Britten brings the ensemble into a moment of profound tranquility. Through pure unison lines and ethereal chords, the music captures what Smart calls the "remarkable stillness and serenity of soul." This serenity serves as a bridge back to the familiar, dancing Hallelujah heard at the very beginning of the work. After all the ups and downs of the journey through Smart's poetry, we return home to a place of childlike praise - a conclusion that carries the bright, enlivening energy of a Christmas morning.

For at that time malignity ceases
And the devils themselves are at peace.
For this time is perceptible to man
By a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.

Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnificent and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.



Circa 1600

Robert Worth, music director · Amanda McFadden, associate music director

<i>Soprano</i>	<i>Alto</i>	<i>Tenor</i>	<i>Bass</i>
Claire Coleman	Dana Alexander	Michael Fontaine	Sebastian Bradford
Peg Golitzin	Harriet Buckwalter	Paul Haile	Andrew Hathaway
Rebecca Matlick	Erica Dori	Kristofer Haugen	David Kittelstrom
Dianna Morgan	Cinzia Forasiepi	Ole Kern	Alex Margitich
Esther Rayo	Amanda McFadden	Will Meyer	Bob Worth
	Stephanie Nowak		

Amanda McFadden joined Sonoma Bach as a singer in 2019 and has served as Associate Music Director since 2022. She is the director of the Sonoma Bach Choir and the Wild Rose Treble Ensemble and sings with Circa 1600 and Green Mountain Consort. Since 2012, Amanda has taught music both in and out of the classroom, leading a wide range of courses - including instrumental and choral music as well as musicianship - for students from fourth grade through adult learners, most recently including serving as temporary faculty at Sonoma State University in the Fall of 2025, directing both the Sonoma State University Concert Choir and SonoVoce. Amanda earned her Master of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Delaware, where she also conducted the Neuro Notes, a choir for people with Parkinson's disease, and served as Assistant Director of the Rainbow Chorale of Delaware. She also holds a Bachelor of Music in Music Education and a Teaching Credential in Music from San José State University where she worked closely with Dr. Amanda Quist and Dr. Charlene Archibeque.

A native of Ithaca, New York, **Evangeline Wolfe** grew up in a musical family and has been playing piano and singing from an early age. She studied piano with Malcolm Bilson, Trudy Borden, Zelma Bodzin, and Edmund Niemann. She graduated from Cornell University and is a trained Waldorf teacher. Evangeline currently serves as organist and assistant choir conductor at St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley. She has played, sung, and directed groups both in New York and in the Bay Area. Most recently, she has performed with American Bach and Sacred & Profane Chamber Chorus. In addition to performing as a soloist and chamber musician, she has worked extensively as a piano and organ accompanist for vocalists, instrumentalists, choirs, and dancers.

Robert Worth is the founding music director of Sonoma Bach. In 2010, he retired as Professor of Music at Sonoma State University, where he taught choral music, early music and many other subjects for 29 years. Bob has a specialty in musicianship training, and for ten years ran the ear-training program at SSU. He was deeply involved in the Green Music Center project in its early years, working with staff and architects on such issues as acoustics, choral performance facilities and the John Brombaugh Opus 9 pipe organ in Schroeder Hall. Bob received his BA in music at SSU in 1980, and his MA in musicology at UC Berkeley in 1982. He and his wife Margaret live on Sonoma Mountain with two Black Labrador Retrievers, Gemini and Daphne.