

# Choral Echoes

Saturday, April 15, 2023 • 7:30 p.m.  
Plymouth United Church of Christ

## Harmonia Chorus

**William White**, conductor



JAKE RUNESTAD (\*1986)

*Nyon Nyon*

CLARA SCHUMANN (1819–1896)

*Drei Gemischte Chöre*

*Abendfeier in Venedig • Vorwärts • Gondoliera*

**Anjali Chudasama**, conductor

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

*Vier Gesänge, Op. 17*

*Es tönt ein voller Harfenklang • Lied von Shakespeare • Der Gärtner • Gesang aus 'Fingal'*

**Laurie Heidt**, horn • **Robin Stangland**, horn • **Juliet Stratton**, harp

JOHN TAVENER (1944–2013)

*The Lamb*

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913–1976)

*Rejoice in the Lamb, Op. 30*

**Kiki Hood**, soprano • **Nori Heikkinen**, alto • **William Ekstrom**, tenor • **Jeremy Pfister Schneider**, bass • **Sheila Bristow**, organ

— **intermission** —

JACOBUS GALLUS (1550–1591)

*Ave Maria*

FRANZ BIEBL (1906–2001)

*Ave Maria*

**Ralph Cobb**, tenor • **William Ekstrom**, tenor • **William Willaford**, bass • **Sheila Bristow**, conductor

HENRY PURCELL (1659–1695)

*Hear My Prayer O Lord, Z. 15*

WILLIAM C. WHITE (\*1983)

*O Clavis David*

**Sheila Bristow**, organ

STEPHEN PAULUS (1949–2014)

*Pilgrims' Hymn*

KEN BURTON (\*1970)

*A Prayer*

REENA ESMAIL (\*1983)

*Tuttarana*

*Please silence cell phones and other electronics, and refrain from the use of cameras and recording devices during the performance.*

---

### Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus

William White, music director • George Shangrow, founder

1916 Pike Pl. Ste 12 #112, Seattle WA 98101 • 206-682-5208 • [www.harmoniaseattle.org](http://www.harmoniaseattle.org)

## Maestro's Prelude

Welcome to "Choral Echoes," Harmonia's first genuine choir concert in a good many years!

Allow me to explain: Harmonia is an orchestra and a chorus under one musical banner. Most of our concertizing is done as a choral-orchestral unit, but once each season our orchestra plays a symphony concert separately. Where does this leave our splendid chorus? For too long, it's left them without their own opportunity to explore the rich world of choral music—but no longer!

Programming a choral concert is a totally different experience than programming an orchestral (or, by extension, a choral-orchestral) concert. With symphonic music, you generally choose one large, multi-movement work, and then program smaller bits to complement it. But in the world of choral music, the vast quantity of the literature is "smaller bits." So how do you make a concert of short works coalesce into a satisfying whole?

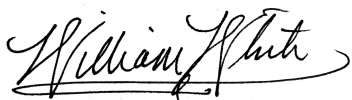
To assemble this evening's program, I considered our season theme, "Dialogue." Each work is paired with a counterpart to create a conversation. For example, we have music by Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms, lifelong friends who corresponded frequently about their music. We have two mid-20th century English choral works about lambs. (Metaphorical lambs, of course.) We even have musical dialogue carried out across the centuries, exemplified by two *Ave Marias*, one from the 1570s, the other from 1959.

I've contributed one of my own works to the proceedings, *O Clavis David*, which was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists on behalf of St. Mark's Cathedral here in Seattle. In this work, I explicitly wanted to reference the style of Henry Purcell, hence Mr. Purcell is represented with his *Hear My Prayer, O Lord*.

The program is bookended with music by two of the brightest stars in the world of contemporary choral music, Jake Runestad and Reena Esmail. To represent each composer, I've chosen a short, energetic work that avails itself of nonsense syllables and vocal percussion.

Another consideration for a choral concert is that one can choose pieces to highlight the variety of accompaniment forms. Tonight we'll hear a *cappella* works as well as music for choir and organ, but also one very special piece with an accompaniment of harp and horns. On the organ tonight, we are accompanied by the sure-fingered Sheila Bristow, Harmonia's superb choral accompanist, orchestral keyboardist and collaborative composer.

Here's to the founding of a new annual tradition! We hope you enjoy it very much.



P.S. If at any point this evening you find yourself missing the Harmonia Orchestra, fret not. Our musical forces will reunite down the street at Benaroya Hall on May 7 for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. Secure your tickets forthwith!

## Program Notes

"When I was in college," composer **Jake Runestad** told the *International Choral Bulletin*, "I put together a small choir of my friends in order to practice conducting and to perform new music. I wrote a work for them called *Nyon Nyon* that incorporates unique vocal sounds, beatboxing and non-sense words. At the time, I thought it was just a fun way to make music, but little did I know that this work would become my most-performed piece, receiving thousands of performances around the world!"

**Clara Schumann** composed her only choral work, the three part-songs heard this evening, in 1848 as a birthday present for her husband, Robert. Setting words by German poet Emanuel Geibel that evoke Venice, they received their first performance in Dresden on June 10 of that year by members of a chorus that Robert had recently founded. "The first ('Evening Celebration in Venice')," writes Dennis Shrock, "lauds an *Ave Maria* sung during the ringing of bells from the many towers in Venice; the second ('Forward') chides the artist to stop dreaming and wavering and to press onward in art; and the third ('The Gondolier') paints a picture of lovers on a gondola in Venice under the moonlight."

In 1859 Friedchen Wagner, one of **Johannes Brahms'** piano students in his hometown of Hamburg, requested that he arrange some folk songs she could sing with her sisters. "After a short time," she wrote, "several young ladies came to take part in the singing and thus gradually a women's chorus was formed in my parents' home." Among several works Brahms composed for the group is a set of four choral songs (written in February 1860) featuring the unique accompaniment of two horns and harp (the latter suggested by the text of the first song, the horns by the folk-music style Brahms employed). Clara Schumann encouraged this choice, calling it "most uncommon," "full of feeling" and even "spellbinding." Brahms selected for the texts of these songs two German poems and two English texts in German translation, conducting the Hamburg Women's Chorus in the first public performance on January 15, 1861.

British composer **John Tavener** received an early career boost when John Lennon and Ringo Starr took an interest in his 1969 cantata *The Whale*, which was subsequently recorded on the Beatles' Apple label, as was Tavener's *A Celtic Requiem*, which prompted Benjamin Britten to recommend him for a Royal Opera commission. Tavener wrote *The Lamb*, a setting the poem of the same name from William Blake's 1789 *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, in 1982 "while being driven by my mother from South Devon to London. It came to me fully grown so to speak, so all I had to do was to write it down. It was inspired by Blake and by my three-year-old nephew, Simon." The work was premiered on December 22, 1982, at Winchester Cathedral.

**Benjamin Britten's** "festival cantata" *Rejoice in the Lamb*, for chorus (including vocal solos) and organ, was commissioned in 1943 by Rev. Walter Hussey for the 50th anniversary of St. Matthew's Church in Northampton. The text comes from the religious poem *Jubilate Agno* by Christo-

pher Smart (1722–1771), first published in 1939 and written during Smart’s confinement on a “Commission of Lunacy.” The first section, writes Hussey, “sets the theme,” while the second gives examples of people “being summoned from the pages of the Old Testament to join with some creature in praising and rejoicing in God. The third is a quiet and ecstatic Hallelujah.” The fourth uses Smart’s “beloved cat as an example of nature praising God by being simply what the Creator intended it to be,” continued in the fifth with a mouse. The sixth “speaks of the flowers—the poetry of Christ.” The seventh refers to Smart’s “troubles and suffering, but even these are an occasion for praising God.” The eighth “gives four letters from an alphabet, leading to a full chorus in section nine which speaks of the musical instruments,” while the final section “repeats the Hallelujah.”

The late-Renaissance composer **Jacobus Gallus** (also known as Jacob Händl and Jakob Petelin) was born in what is now Slovenia and as a teenager travelled to Austria, where he worked for a time as a choirmaster. He spent the last years of his life as organist in Prague, where in 1587 he published his six-part *Opus musicum*, consisting of 374 motets for use throughout the church year. His *Ave Maria* motet heard this evening was long attributed (mistakenly) to the Spanish composer Tomás Luis de Victoria.

The Bavarian choirmaster and organist **Franz Biebl** wrote his *Ave Maria* motet for TTBB chorus in 1959, telling Wilbur Skeels that “he had in his church choir a fireman. It was common for companies, factories, police and fire departments, etc. to sponsor an employees’ choir, which often would participate in choral competitions and festivals with other similar choirs. This fireman asked Biebl to please compose something for his fireman’s choir for such an occasion. The result was the *Ave Maria*.”

The eight-part choral anthem *Hear my prayer, O Lord*, composed around 1682 by **Henry Purcell**, sets the first verse of Psalm 102. Purcell’s music is a favorite of Harmonia music director **William C. White**, and the same Psalm 102 text opens his choral anthem *O Clavis David*, written on commission for the 2022 American Guild of Organists convention, where it received its premiere at St. Mark’s Cathedral on July 5. “The idea behind the O Antiphons (familiar from the hymn ‘O Come, o come Emmanuel’),” writes the composer, “is that Jesus is described in a sequence of seven Messianic titles: ‘O Wisdom,’ ‘O leader of the House of Israel,’ ‘O Root of Jesse,’ etc.” In “O Key of David,” Jesus “is viewed as the key that will unlock the gates and set the prisoners

free. It seemed clear to me that this could be a very strong prison abolition/social justice piece. So I went hunting for other biblical passages that pertain to this theme.” He settled upon several such passages as well as excerpts from letters by Elizabeth Hooton (1600–1672), the first female Quaker minister, who was repeatedly imprisoned for her beliefs. Her “letters from prison decry the conditions and the widespread imprisonment of innocent people who were locked up behind bars (or in many cases, those who may have been locked up because of unjust laws). She was a regular 17th-century Martha Stewart!”

“In April 1997 I had a one-act opera called *The Three Hermits* (based on a short story by Leo Tolstoy) premiered at the House of Hope Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, Minnesota,” writes composer **Stephen Paulus**. A friend “encouraged me to have the final chorus in the opera published as a separate work” and “eventually I sort of grudgingly adapted and extracted a short choral work from the opera consisting of just the final chorus. I printed up 1,000 copies at a local print shop” as the first piece published by his own company. These “sold out quickly and we eventually started printing up 3,000 copies and then 10,000 copies at a time.” The work was subsequently sung at funeral services for Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan.

British composer, conductor, keyboardist, singer and television judge **Ken Burton** composed *A Prayer* for the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, who premiered it in London on March 28, 2021. The text is by Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906), the son of emancipated American slaves. Burton characterizes his work as “like a reflective evening hymn in its use of a consistent, rhythmically simple melody” requiring sounds ranging from “the Middle-Ages *organum* style” to “a contemporary vocal approach.”

Indian-American composer **Reena Esmail** writes that the title of *Tuttarana* “is a conglomeration of two words: the Italian word *tutti* means ‘all’ or ‘everyone,’ and the term *tarana* designates a specific Hindustani (North Indian) musical form, whose closest Western counterpart is the ‘scat’ in jazz. Made up of rhythmic syllables, a *tarana* is the singer’s chance to display agility and dexterity. While a Hindustani *tarana* is a solo form, I wanted to bring the *tarana* into an ensemble setting.” The original SSA version was commissioned by Mount Holyoke Glee Club and premiered on January 17, 2015 in South Hadley, Massachusetts; the composer has subsequently made arrangements for SATB chorus (heard this evening), as well as brass quintet.

#### Soprano

Barb Anderson  
Ann Bridges  
Sue Cobb  
Karen Dunstan  
Susanna Erber  
Kiki Hood  
Peggy Hudson  
Genevieve Hurlocker  
Peggy Kurtz  
Sophia Parker

Veena Ramakrishnan  
Nancy Shasteen  
Cassie Van Pay

#### Alto

Sharon Agnew  
Anjali Chudasama  
Deanna Fryhle  
Nori Heikkinen  
Jenny Hughart  
Pamela Ivezic

Ellen Kaisse  
Theodora Letz

#### Tenor

Dan Charlson  
Ralph Cobb  
William Ekstrom  
Jon Lange  
Zach Rude  
Gerald Seminatore  
Rick Thompson

#### Bass

Gus Blazek  
Timothy Braun  
Stephen Carl  
Rory Flannery  
Michael Hooning  
Jeremy Pfister Schneider  
Glenn Ramsdell  
Steve Tachell  
William Willaford  
Rick Wyckoff

## Harmonia Supporters

### Conductor Circle [\$10,000+]

ArtsWA  
4Culture  
Pamela McPeck & Bill Halligan  
Seattle Office of Arts & Culture

### Composer Circle [\$5,000–\$9,999]

Theodora Letz & Paul Blinzer  
Laurie Medill & David Savage  
Gary & Barbara Messick  
David Zapolsky & Lynn Hubbard

### Concerto Circle [\$2,500–\$4,999]

Anonymous ♪  
Susan & Hal Beals  
Jo Hansen ♪  
Jim Hattori ♪ ♪ & Lisa Peters  
Stephen Hegg ♪ ♪ & David Reyes  
Margret Hudson  
Ellen Kaisse ♪ & Gary Roberts  
Fritz Klein  
Jon & Elizabeth Lange  
Wilson Wyant

### Cadenza Circle [\$1,000–\$2,499]

Sharon & André Agnew  
Anonymous (3)  
Ben & Nancy Brodie  
Crissa Cugini  
Doug & Dana Durasoff ♪  
Jeff Eldridge ♪  
Pamela & Željko Ivezić  
Christy Johnson  
Elizabeth Kennedy  
& Robert Kechley  
Nancy Lawton  
May Family Foundation  
Steven & Katie Messick ♪ ♪  
Gregor & Kathy Nitsche  
Christopher Peterson  
Stephen Provine & Jennifer Caine  
Steven & Therese Quig ♪ ♪  
Glen Ramsdell  
Stephanie Read & Edward Walker  
Carol & Gerald Sams  
Theo & Barbara Schaad  
Nancy Shasteen ♪  
& Henry Brashen  
Kenna Smith-Shangrow ♪ ♪  
& Robert Shangrow  
James van Zee ♪  
William C. White ♪  
Rick Wyckoff & Carol Judge

### Vivace [\$500–\$999]

Barb & Tom Anderson  
Anonymous (4)

Jane Blackwell  
David & Julia Brewer ♪  
Greg Canova & Barbara Linde  
Ralph & Sue Cobb  
Lynne & Marshall Coleman  
Maryline & Robert Faaland  
Tyler Freeman ♪ ♪  
Deanna & Craig Fryhle  
Gillin Law Group, PLLC  
Jim & Joanne Hendrickson ♪ ♪  
Maria Hunt & Moc Escobedo ♪  
Pam Kummert  
Peggy & David Kurtz  
Mark Lutz  
Katherine McWilliams  
& Curt Feig  
Susan & David Ovens  
Murl Allen Sanders  
& Janet Hesslein  
June Spector & Max Lieblich ♪ ♪  
Ann Thompson  
Sam Williams  
Matthew Wyant & Bonnie Light  
Janet Young ♪ ♪

### Presto [\$250–\$499]

Julia Akoury  
William Ashby  
Judith Baernstein  
Nancy Cella  
Rodney Combellick  
Deborah Daoust  
Suzanne Denison  
Miriam Espeseth  
Kathleen Flood  
John Griffin  
Nori Heikkinen  
Sue Herring  
Jason Hershey  
Laura & Michael Hooning  
Eric Ishino & Ron Shiley  
Carol Jaeger  
Sven & Marta Kalve  
Jan Kinney  
Virginia Knight Janof  
Joseph & Helga Marceau  
Lila Woodruff May  
Mirabella Seattle  
Residents Association  
Ken & Betsy Robertson  
Terry & Karin Rogers  
Valerie Ross  
Janet & Michael Showalter  
Sheila Smith & Don Ferguson  
Steve Tachell & Kathryn Weld  
Nicole Tsong  
Amy Vandergon

Karoline Vass  
Anthony & Roselee Warren  
Meng Xu

### Allegro [\$100–\$249]

Bruce & Janice Abe  
JoAn Andenes  
Dennis Anderson  
Paul Anderson  
Anonymous (2)  
Virginia Bear ♪  
Caitlin Bird  
Tom Bird  
Cheryl Blackburn  
Timothy & Andrea Braun  
Stephen Carl  
Dan Charlson  
Julan Chu  
Jennifer Chung & Aaron Keyt  
Michael & Patricia Clarke  
Jane Cottrell  
Kathleen Dow  
Genevieve Dreosch  
Cinda Freece  
Phillip Gladfelter  
Sherman Griffin  
Laurie Heidt & Joe Jimenez  
Karen Helseth  
Peter Henry  
Elizabeth Hewitt  
Charlotte Hood  
John Hopkins & Irene Scheck  
William & Irmgard Hunt  
Kenneth Johnson  
Mary Judge  
Rabi Lahiri  
Daniel Lee  
Emily Leslie  
Wini Leung  
Anna & Jeffrey Lieblich  
Yuh-Pey Lin  
Kathleen Lofstedt  
Kevin McCarthy  
Michael McGoodwin  
German Mendoza Jr.  
Ellen Milligan  
Rebecca Minich ♪ ♪  
Christine Moss  
Thomas J. Nesbitt  
Kara Novak  
Karen & Daniel Oie  
Yvette & Eric Olson  
Lynn Phillips  
Jean Provine  
Pat Rice  
Annie Roberts  
Pacita Roberts

Rebecca Rodman  
Kathleen Sankey  
Ellen M. Smith  
Robin Stangland  
Maryann Tagney  
Richard Thompson  
Matthew Tracy  
Thurbon Tukey ♪ ♪  
Peter & Tjitske van der Meulen  
Jamie Walter  
James Whitson & Patricia Adams  
William Willaford  
Mark Wysoski  
Evelyn Yenson  
Yu Zhang

### Andante [\$50–\$99]

Mark Anstadt • Rich Baldwin  
Eva Banbury • Pamela Cahn  
Eugene Duvernoy • Cynthia Ely  
Susanna Erber ♪ • Stephanie Gale  
Emmy Hoech • Deborah Lamphere  
Catherine Lancaster • Audrey  
Livermore & Gordon Lagerquist  
Patricia Lott • Audrey Morin  
Kay Murakami • Cynthia Murphy  
Brenda Nixdorf • Erica Pardee ♪ ♪  
Jeremy Rosenberg • David &  
Barbara Sachi ♪ ♪ • Pamela Shaw  
Margaret Siple • Bonnie Steele  
Margaret & Timothy Tewson  
Lindsay Underwood • Nancy White  
Byron & Cathy Wright

♪ *George Shangrow Society*

♪ ♪ *Ostinato Giving Program*

♪ *Commissioning Club*

### In Memoriam

Philippe-Olivier Faaland (2)  
Barbara Kidder (2)  
Rebecca Cardiff McGoodwin  
Eugene Smith (3)  
Liesel van Cleeff (2)

### In Honor of

Julia Akoury  
David Brewer  
Jon Lange  
David & Susan Ovens  
Megsie Siple & John Walter (2)  
Kenna Smith Shangrow

### Matching Gifts

Amazon  
The Boeing Co.  
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
Google  
Microsoft  
Starbucks

*Harmonia, a non-profit 501(c)3 arts organization, wishes to thank all of the supporters who have made our first half-century possible. The above list includes tax-deductible gifts received from August 1, 2021, through April 1, 2023. Please e-mail [giving@harmoniasattle.org](mailto:giving@harmoniasattle.org) if you notice omissions or inaccuracies. Contributions are fully tax-deductible. To make a donation, please visit [harmoniasattle.org/support](http://harmoniasattle.org/support) or call 206-682-5208.*