

QERDDORION

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

James John

Artistic Director

PRESENTS

Timeless Muse



Friday, May 31, 2019, 8 pm
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
199 Carroll Street, Brooklyn

Sunday, June 2, 2019, 3 pm
St. Ignatius of Antioch
87th Street & West End Avenue, Manhattan

THE PROGRAM

Sicut Cervus Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c. 1525–1594)

Sicut Cervus Nancy Wertsch (b. 1948)

Jamie Carrillo, alto; Gerard Gallagher, tenor



O Sacrum Convivium William Byrd (1538–1623)

O Sacrum Convivium Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)



Columba Aspexit Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179)

Allegra Kuney, alto; Rich Dikeman, burdy-gurdy

O Eucharisti David Avshalomov (b. 1946)

❖❖❖ *Intermission* ❖❖❖

Leve-toi, et viens (*world premiere*) Karen Lemon (b. 1961)

Vadam et Circuibo Tomas Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)

The Fair-Hair'd Girl (*world premiere*) Martin Sędek (b. 1985)



Ave Maria Anton Bruckner (1824–1896)

Ave Maria (*world premiere*) Jordan Andrew Davis (b. 1981)

Jennifer Oates, soprano



Locus Iste Tarik O'Regan (b. 1978)

Locus Iste Anton Bruckner

THE ARTISTS

Now completing its twenty-fourth season, **CERDDORION** (Welsh for “musicians”) is one of New York’s most highly regarded volunteer choral ensembles. A chamber group of up to twenty-eight mixed voices, it is known for its eclectic repertoire, encompassing music from the Renaissance to the contemporary. Audiences have come to appreciate the group’s interpretive depth and technical excellence in many styles. Cerddorion has also frequently commissioned new works by such composers as Paul Moravec, David Schober, Lisa Bielawa, David Lang, Elliot Z. Levine, Robert Dennis, Julie Dolphin, and Martha Sullivan.

In addition to producing its own annual three-concert season, Cerddorion undertakes numerous collaborations and guest appearances. Most recently, the group performed in the “Mile-Long Opera: a biography of 7 o’clock.” For eight nights in October 2018, the High Line became the stage for a massive multimedia performance created by architect Liz Diller, composer David Lang, and librettists Anne Carson and Claudia Rankine.

Other guest appearances include an invited performance at the November 2016 New York State American Choral Directors Association Conference in Garden City, NY; a featured performance on the cable television series American Music in February 2016; and a collaborative concert with Sweden’s highly acclaimed professional choir Voces Nordicae in June 2015. In 2011, the men of Cerddorion sang with esteemed French organist Francis Chapelet in the second inaugural recital of the Manton Memorial Organ at the Church of the Ascension. Other collaborations have included the North American premiere of Sir John Tavener’s all-night vigil, *The Veil of the Temple*, performed at Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall (with Dessoif Choral Consortium and choristers from London’s Temple Church); several appearances with the Christopher Caines Dance Company; and Baroque opera performances with the early music instrumental ensemble Concert Royal.

September 2007 marked the release on the Tzadik label of *A Handful of World*, Cerddorion’s first commercial recording. The CD is dedicated to vocal works by New York composer Lisa Bielawa and includes Cerddorion’s performance of her *Lamentations for a City*, which was commissioned and first performed by Cerddorion in 2004.

Cerddorion is a proud member of the New York Choral Consortium and Vocal Area Network, and an Artist in Residence at the Church of St. Ignatius of Antioch.



JAMES JOHN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JAMES JOHN is in his ninth season as Artistic Director of Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble. He is also Professor of Conducting and Director of Choral Activities at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College–CUNY, where he conducts the Queens College Choir, Vocal Ensemble, and Choral Society, and heads the graduate program in choral conducting. Under his leadership the choral program at the School of Music has become recognized as one of the finest collegiate choral programs in the region, with performances by the Queens College Choir at both the New York State School Music Association Winter Conference (2010), and the Eastern Division Conference of the American Choral Directors Association (2012).

Dr. John's guest conducting appearances include Brahms's *Requiem* and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the Tokyo Oratorio Society and Oratorio Sinfonica Japan; Avery Fisher Hall's annual *Messiah* Sing-In; a concert of American choral music with the Virginia Chorale; and honor choirs throughout New York State. He has given presentations at both divisional and national conferences of the American Choral Directors Association, and is in demand as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the United States.

As a teacher and scholar, Dr. John has served as guest lecturer in conducting at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany, and has presented seminars on American choral music in Basel and Stockholm. His dissertation on Brahms won the Julius Herford Prize from the American Choral Directors Association, and will be published in revised form as a book by Edwin Mellen Press. From 2011 to 2016 he served as Editor of *American Choral Review*, published semiannually by Chorus America, and he has also served as a member of ACDA's National Research and Publications Committee.

Dr. John received his Doctor of Musical Arts in Conducting from the Eastman School of Music. His prior appointments include Director of Choral Activities at both Tufts University (Boston, MA) and Nassau Community College (Garden City, NY), as well as Conducting Fellow at Dartmouth College. He received his Master of Arts in Conducting from the Aaron Copland School of Music.



THE WINNERS OF CERDDORION'S SEVENTH ANNUAL EMERGING COMPOSERS COMPETITION

Karen Lemon (First Prize) holds a PhD in Musicology from the University of Sydney, Australia, but is a relative novice as a composer. Despite minor studies in composition during her undergraduate days, it has only been in recent years that Karen has returned to writing music. With this performance by Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble, she can now add New York to Sydney, Los Angeles, and Cambridge (UK) as among the prominent classical music hubs where she has been privileged to have her work performed. Karen has composed music on request for Hourglass Ensemble and the University of Bristol Schola Cantorum, and several of her works have won other composition prizes, including the Gesualdo Six Composition Competition, the Renée B. Fisher Awards, and Opus Dissonus. Karen has worked as a lecturer in musicology at the Universities of Sydney and Tasmania in Australia. She currently divides her time between Australia and France. More information about Karen can be found at www.karenlemon.com.

Jordan Andrew Davis (Second Prize) is an award-winning composer who lives and works in San Diego, California. His choral music has been performed throughout the United States and Europe, including Mass at St. Peter's Basilica. He has studied composition with Philip Lasser and David Conte and arranging with Vince Mendoza. Jordan is also an experienced conductor, music director, and bassist who has toured and performed across the country with many different artists.

Educated at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Montclair State University (MSU), and Rutgers University, **Martin Sędek** (Honorable Mention) has studied composition with Tarik O'Regan, Robert Aldridge, and Matthew Harris and has undertaken additional studies with Steven Stucky, Chen Yi, and Steven Sametz. He is composer-in-residence with the Harmonium Choral Society and The Baldwin Festival Chorus of New York City and is currently the music director and conductor of the Choral Art Society of New Jersey and associate conductor for The Masterwork Chorus. At MSU's John J. Cali School of Music, Martin serves as assistant conductor for the MSU Chorale and as a visiting professor of music theory. His notable composition awards include the Yale Glee Club Emerging Composer Award (2015) and the Stephen Paulus Prize (2018).

TIMELESS MUSE

A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

“Stories lean on stories. Art on art... any great city is built upon the bones and stones of its ancestors.” --Jane Yolen, *Touch Magic*

“I will not stop singing the Muses who set me dancing.”
—Anne Carson, *Grief Lessons: Four Plays by Euripides*

I have always found it fascinating to pair choral settings of the same text. The myriad musical responses that a single poem can evoke often seem astounding, even miraculous. Our program emerged from this simple idea, magnified by the separation of time, tinted with the colors of influence and inspiration.

Perhaps these juxtapositions will prompt you to hear old works in new ways, or cause the contemporary works to resonate more deeply, knowing that the living composers who wrote them are hearing the same stories in the news and still finding ways to create beauty for us all to partake of. In an ever-changing world, there is some comfort in the fact that musicians are regularly able to breathe new life into sources that might have seemed worn out or exhausted. The muse of artistic inspiration often appears more palpable in instances where the material at hand seems timeless.

I am delighted that our program features the world premiere of the winning compositions from Cerddorion’s seventh annual Emerging Composers Competition, which drew thirty-two entries from throughout the United States, Europe, and Australia—the largest number of submissions ever. Each of the competition winners drew upon the past as a starting point, whether textually, musically, or both, augmenting the theme of our program with their elegant, engaging new works.

—James John



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina—*Sicut Cervus*

Nancy Wertsch—*Sicut Cervus*

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (ca. 1525–1594) **took** his name from the small town about 20 miles east of Rome where he was born. Details of his early life are not well known, but he probably received initial training at the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. He spent the remainder of his career in and around that city, where his principal appointments included *maestro di cappella* at both St. John Lateran and Santa Maria Maggiore and *magister cappellae* of the Cappella Giulia (the choir of St. Peter’s Basilica).

One of the pivotal events of Palestrina’s lifetime was the Council of Trent (1545–1563). As legend describes, his *Pope Marcellus Mass* (published in the composer’s Second Book of Masses in 1567) was written to assuage church authorities seeking to purge sacred music of licentious elements (such as *cantus firmi*, derived from ribald secular melodies) and to liberate it from the complexities of florid counterpoint, which was perceived as rendering the words unintelligible. Palestrina rose to meet these challenges with such success that he supposedly “saved” music. Though certainly an exaggeration, his style displays remarkable clarity of line, strictly controlled dissonance, and ingenious contrapuntal textures—all harnessed in service of the text and demonstrated to perfection in his beloved motet, *Sicut Cervus*, which is a setting of Psalm 42:1–3.

Composer Nancy Wertsch is an established and multi-faceted presence on New York’s professional choral scene as a soloist, chorister, teacher, choral contractor, and consultant. She is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, and her love of vocal music has led her to compose a substantial body of choral works, anthems, and concert pieces. She has received numerous commissions from prestigious New York organizations, including the New York Concert Singers, Riverside Church, and the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola; her works have been widely recorded by groups such as the Dale Warland Singers and The New York Virtuoso Singers; and her music is published by Oxford University Press, G. Schirmer, Carus-Verlag, and Nancy Wertsch Music, Ltd. In the past, she has also served as a trusted judge for Cerddorion’s Emerging Composers Competition. Regarding her setting of *Sicut Cervus*, the composer writes:

Sicut Cervus was written for the Kiitos Vocal Ensemble, who premiered it in a concert at the Episcopal Church of St. John’s in the Village in New York City. The text is the much beloved “so panteth the hart...” from Psalm 42 in the Bible, the

central theme within these beautiful words being the longing of the soul to unite with God and the age old feeling of restlessness—a longing for that which will fulfill. I chose to set this in Latin because the simple flow of that language prescribes a particular kind of music to me, helping me to express this longing in a clear, concise, and unflowery way.

The unsettled harmonies in my piece help to propel it forward in restless sections, sometimes murmuring and sometimes loudly stating the unrest. The rhythmic moving passage in the bass starting in measure 44 indicates more urgency in the emotional context of the conflict—i.e. “WHEN shall I be united with God?” The final recapitulation is a bit quieter and slower, indicating a certain resignation toward the lack of wholeness and a willingness to wait for that moment when we will find the fullness that we seek.

Sicut Cervus

Sicut cervus desiderat
ad fontes aquarum,
ita desiderat anima mea
ad te, Deus!
Sitivit anima mea
ad Deum fortem vivum:
quando veniam et apparebo
ante faciem Dei?
Fuerunt mihi lacrymae meae
panes die ac nocte,
dum dicitur mihi quotidie:
Ubi est Deus tuus?

As the hart yearns
for the water springs,
so longs my soul
for thee, O God!
My soul has thirsted
for the living God:
when shall I come and appear
before God’s presence?
My tears have been
my bread by day and night,
while it is said to me daily,
Where is your God?

William Byrd—*O Sacrum Convivium*

Olivier Messiaen—*O Sacrum Convivium!*

William Byrd (c. 1543–1623) is perhaps the most renowned and influential English composer of the late Renaissance. A Catholic in Protestant England, Byrd was forced to navigate between public persona and private conviction throughout his long career. He wrote a substantial amount of Anglican service music while working in the Chapel Royal under Elizabeth I, while at the same time privately composing works for the persecuted Catholic minority. The most famous of these are his three unusually expressive mass settings—clearly the product of deep personal faith—written between 1592 and 1595.

After completing his masses, Byrd embarked on a project to provide liturgical music for the “complete mass Propers (introit, gradual, tract or alleluia, offertory, communion) for the major feasts of the church year.” This enormous undertaking came to fruition in 1605 and 1607 with the publication of his *Gradualia I* and *II*. Byrd’s motet *O Sacrum Convivium* appeared in 1605 as part of the first volume. The text honors the Blessed Sacrament, and Byrd’s music imbues this central aspect of the liturgy with great solemnity and ardor. Subtle word painting indicative of Byrd’s incredible mastery is on display throughout the motet, especially at the words “et futurae gloriae” where the tenor line bursts into a passionate minor seventh at the promise of “future glory.”

Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992) is regarded as a unique and highly influential twentieth-century composer. *O Sacrum Convivium*, written in 1937, is his only setting of a sacred Latin text for mixed chorus, and it is a gem among the works of his early period. In addition to his colorful use of harmony, Messiaen’s use of rhythm is particularly interesting in *O Sacrum*. It may have been inspired by ancient Greek poetic meters, which Messiaen first encountered while studying the music of the sixteenth century French composer Claude Le Jeune (a style of music known as *musique mesurée*). During the second half of the piece, the vocal lines gradually rise to highlight the words “et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur” (“and the pledge of future glory is given to us”). Byrd’s version shares a similar focus on this line as a central goal of the composition. An extraordinarily beautiful setting of the word “alleluia” immediately follows this, and Messiaen’s motet concludes with a peaceful return of the opening phrase of text.

O sacrum convivium,
in quo Christus sumitur;
recolitur memoria passionis ejus;
mens impletur gratia;
et futurae gloriae
nobis pignus datur.
Alleluia.

O sacred banquet,
wherein Christ is received;
the memorial of his passion is renewed;
the soul is filled with grace;
and a pledge of future glory
is given to us.
Alleluia.

Hildegard von Bingen—*Columba Aspexit*

David Avshalomov—*O Eucharisti*

Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) was one of the most extraordinary creative personalities of the Middle Ages. An artist of great versatility and breadth, she was a composer, poetess, playwright, and naturalist who served as abbess of a small Benedictine community near Bingen, Germany. She was also a celebrated visionary and mystic whose advice was sought by leading religious and political leaders of the time. *Columba Aspexit* was inspired by Hildegard’s vision of St. Maximinus celebrating Mass and would probably

have been sung in her convent during Mass or one of the liturgical Offices. It belongs to a genre of plainchant called a *sequence*, characterized by the principle of paired repetition. In this particular piece, pairs of verses are set to varied versions of the same melody. Our performance highlights this structure by having two groups sing in alternation. We are using a *burdy-gurdy*, the modern-day equivalent of the medieval *organistrum*, to create a steady drone intoning the first and fifth degrees of the mode on which the chant is based.

Born in New York City, David Avshalomov is an accomplished composer and conductor now making his home in Santa Monica, California. He graduated from Harvard University and studied orchestral conducting at the University of Washington, the Peabody Conservatory, Aspen, and Tanglewood. His music is written “in an accessible modern romantic, neo-tonal style that balances a rich lyric gift with a characteristic rhythmic vitality and pungent harmonies.” Composed in 2006, *O Euchari* recently received first prize in the International Orange Chorale of San Francisco’s Choral Composition Contest. Avshalomov writes:

This work was commissioned by Gonçalo Lourenço for Coro Odyssea of Lisbon, Portugal. It is a faux-antique setting of a mystical devotional poem of Hildegard von Bingen directed toward Saint Euchari. His history and attributed miracles are well-known on the Iberian Peninsula.

I set this text as an ecstatic meditation. The choral projection of ecstasy builds up across a series of four connected sections (bearing interrelated melodic motives), each of which achieves a gradual incremental increase in intensity:

1. A chant-like modal melody over a drone, spreading to full pungent harmonies.
2. Shifting repetitions on “O Eucari,” settling to a drone within which the inner parts lay out another simple chant-like tune in parallel sixths.
3. The tempo picks up to dancelike energy in the men, and the women burst forth with the previous section’s inner melody in three-part harmony like a fanfare of trumpets.
4. A retained high pedal tone drops a half step to recall the opening drone-with-melody, and the last phrase closes with a poignant slow harmonization of “perfecisti.” Here is perfect, cleansed exhaustion after pure spiritual ecstasy.

Columba Aspexit

Columba aspexit
per cancellos fenestre,
ubi ante faciem eius
sudando sudavit balsamum
de lucido Maximino.

Calor solis exarsit
et in tenebras resplenduit,
unde gemma surrexit
in edificatione templi
purissimi cordis benivoli.

Iste, turris excelsa
de ligno Libani et cipresso facta,
iacincto et sardio ornata est,
urbs precellens artes
aliorum artificum.

Ipsa, velox cervus,
cucurrit ad fontem purissime aque
fluentis de fortissimo lapide,
qui dulcia aromata irrigavit.

O pigmentarii,
qui estis in suavissima viriditate
hortorum regis, ascendentes in altum
quando sanctum sacrificium
in arietibus perfecistis:

Inter vos fulget hic artifex,
paries templi,
qui desideravit alas aquile,
osculando nutricem Sapientiam
in gloriosa fecunditate Ecclesie

O Maximine, mons et vallis es,
et in utroque alta
edificatio appares, ubi capricornus
cum elephante exivit,
et Sapientia in deliciis fuit.

A dove gazed in
through a latticed window:
there balm rained down on her face,
raining from lucent
Maximin.

The heat of the sun blazed out
to irradiate the dark:
a bud burst open, jewel-like,
in the temple of his heart
(limpid and kind his heart).

A tower of cypress is he,
and of Lebanon’s cedars –
rubies and sapphires frame his turrets –
a city passing the arts
of all other artisans.

A swift stag is he
who ran to the fountain –
pure wellspring from a stone
of power – to water sweet-smelling spices.

O perfumers!
you who dwell in the luxuriance
of royal gardens, climbing high
when you accomplish the holy
sacrifice with rams:

Among you this architect is shining,
a wall of the temple,
he who longed for an eagle’s wings
as he kissed his foster-mother Wisdom
in the glorious abundance of the Church.

O Maximin, you are mountain and valley,
on your towering height
the mountain goat leapt
with the elephant,
and Wisdom was in rapture.

Tu es fortis et suavis
in cerimoniais
et in chorcatione altaris,
ascendens ut fumus aromatum
ad clumpnam laudis:

Strong and sweet in the sacred
rites and in the shimmer
of the altar,
you rise like incense
to the pillar of praise –

Ubi intercedis pro populo
qui tendit ad speculum lucis,
cui laus est in altis.

Where you pray for your people
who strive toward the Mirror of Light,
to whom is due the highest praise.

O Eucharisti

O Eucharisti,
columba virtutem illius
in signis tibi dedit,
qui olim in medio rotae clamavit:
Quem cum amplius
corporaliter non vidisti,
plena signa in umbra illius perfecisti.
Et sic in pectore eius fulsisti,
ac in Cherubim sigillum facisti.

O Eucharisti,
the dove gave you strength
through signs of Him, who once called out
from the center of the wheel:
When you no longer
saw Him in the flesh,
you carried out abundant signs in His shadow
And so, you sparkled in His soul
and took on form among the Cherubim.



Karen Lemon—*Lève-toi, et viens*

Tomas Luis de Victoria—*Vadam et circuibo civitatem*

Martin Sędek—*The Fair Hair'd Girl*

The second half of our program begins with a trio of compositions inspired by the *Song of Songs*. Australian composer Karen Lemon received first prize this year in Cerddorion's Emerging Composers Competition for *Lève-toi, et viens* ("Arise, and come away"). The composer writes:

... *les fleurs paraissent sur la terre, le temps de chanter est arrivé* ...
(...the flowers appear on the earth, the time for singing has come...)

What more timeless muse exists? And what composer could resist giving their setting of this sublime text the performance indication "With a heart full of joy and the most beautiful sound possible"?

My compositional challenge was to avoid sounding a musical cornucopia at every line; the one-dimensional result of doing so would have done the text a great disservice. So, to put on the brakes, so to speak, I chose to use fragments of the top-and-tail line, "*lève-toi, mon amie, ma belle, et viens,*" as a refrain. This allowed a more measured unfolding of the textual journey from winter to spring; musically, it facilitated the concomitant unfolding, by extension and increasing density, of the melodic and harmonic materials and texture.

That the harmonic fabric is rich, there is no question. That the vocal cantilenas ebb and flow in the most sensuous fashion is but what the text, especially rendered in French, demanded of me. I hope that at the close of the piece you will be able to hold in heart and mind, even for a brief moment, a glimpse of all that is eternally good.

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611) was the preeminent Spanish composer of the late Renaissance. His motet *Vadam et circuibo civitatem* ("I will arise and go about the city") was first published in 1572. Victoria's setting sparked Martin Sędek to write a companion piece, *The Fair Hair'd Girl*, while he was a doctoral student at Rutgers University; his composition won honorable mention this year in Cerddorion's Emerging Composers Competition. Sędek describes his process:

I began setting the text of the anonymous Irish folk ballad *The Fair Hair'd Girl* shortly after conducting *Vadam et circuibo*, and I found myself reading the pained, lovesick, and forlorn lines through the lens of Victoria's motet and leaned into that inspiration architecturally.

The first time I heard it, the motet struck me as being subtly more harmonically oriented than polyphonically; there are more repeated notes, more sustained groups of voices, rather than equally independent melodies and countermelodies. One gets a sense of a harmony-melody relationship in many parts of the motet—I took from this a more lush landscape and a slightly stronger sense of foreground and middle/background textures as compared with the more typical pillars of high polyphony.

The backbone of my setting of *The Fair Hair'd Girl*, however, is the early Renaissance-esque melody, with countermelodies built out of its own fragments and imbued with chromaticism. It is structured polyphonically, though I was keen to explore this Renaissance flavor within a setting where such polyphonic lines lived within more homophony. For me, what freshens and modernizes the material inspired by Victoria is the juxtaposition against more modern and homophonic harmony, putting the spotlight on this ancient-sounding melody while coloring it a few different ways as the piece evolves. The result, I hope, is a work that feels suspended or even lost in time—*timeless*, indeed, as the very subject matter itself.

Lève-toi, et viens

Mon bien-aimé parle et me dit:
Lève-toi, mon amie, ma belle,
et viens!
Car voici, l'hiver est passé;
La pluie a cessé, elle s'en est allée.
Les fleurs paraissent sur la terre,
Le temps de chanter est arrivé,
Et la voix de la tourterelle se fait
entendre dans nos champs.
Sur le figuier, les premiers fruits mûrissent,
Et les vignes en fleur exhalent leur parfum.
Lève-toi, mon amie, ma belle,
et viens!

Vadam et circuibo civitatem

Vadam et circuibo civitatem,
per vicos et plateas
quaeram quem diligit anima mea:
quaesivi illum, et non inveni.
Adiuro vos, filiae Jerusalem,
si inveneritis dilectum meum,
ut annuntietis ei
quia amore languero.
Qualis est dilectus tuus,
quia sic adiurasti nos?
Dilectus meus candidus et rubicundus,
electus ex milibus.
Talis est dilectus meus, et est amicus meus,
filiae Jerusalem.
Quo abiit dilectus tuus,
o pulcherrima mulierum?
Quo declinavit,
et quaeremus eum tecum.
Ascendit in palmam,
et apprehendit fructus eius.

My beloved spake, and said unto me:
Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.
For lo, the winter is past,
The rain has stopped, it has gone away;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time for singing is come.
And the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our fields.
On the fig tree the first fruits ripen,
And the vines in flower spread their scent.
Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.

I will rise, and will go about the city:
in the streets and the broad ways
I will seek him whom my soul loveth:
I sought him, and I found him not.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
if you find my beloved,
that you tell him
that I languish with love.
What manner of one is thy beloved,
that thou hast so adjured us?
My beloved is white and ruddy,
chosen out of thousands.
Such is my beloved, and he is my friend,
O ye daughters of Jerusalem.
Whither is thy beloved gone,
O thou most beautiful among women?
Whither is he turned aside,
and we will seek him with thee?
I will go up into the palm tree,
and will take hold of the fruit thereof.

The Fair Hair'd Girl

The sun has set, the stars are still,
The red moon hides behind the hill,
The tide has left the brown beach bare,
The birds have fled the upper air;
Upon her branch the lone cuckoo
Is chanting still her sad adieu;
And you, my fair hair'd girl, must go
Across the salt sea under woe!
I through love have learned three things,
Sorrow, sin, and death it brings;
Yet day by day my heart within
Dares shame and sorrow, death and sin.

Maiden, you have aim'd the dart
Rankling in my ruined heart.
Sweeter than the viol's string
And the notes that blackbirds sing,
Brighter than the dew drops rare,
Is the maiden, wondrous fair;
Like the silver swans at play,
Is her neck, as bright as day!
Woe is me that e'er my sight
Dwelt on charms so deadly bright!

Anton Bruckner—*Ave Maria*

Jordan Andrew Davis—*Ave Maria*

Anton Bruckner—*Locus Iste*

Tarik O'Regan—*Locus Iste*

Our program concludes with two well-known motets by Anton Bruckner, paired with contemporary settings of the same texts by Jordan Andrew Davis and Tarik O'Regan.

As an organist and devout Catholic, Bruckner was influenced by the Cecilian movement (a nineteenth-century effort to reform church music), which idealized *a cappella* works of the past and sought to revive composition in the style of Palestrina. Bruckner's settings of *Ave Maria* and *Locus Iste* were written in this spirit.

Though music of earlier masters can serve as a wonderful stimulus, it can also hinder creativity until an inexplicable instant of inspiration strikes, as Davis describes:

One of my greatest joys is setting old and sacred liturgical texts in a new harmonic context. But for many years I avoided setting the *Ave Maria* because it has been set to perfection by scores of composers—from Tomás Luis de Victoria to Morten Lauridsen. But on May 15, 2015, a rainy Friday in San Diego, I felt compelled to set this celebrated text. And in just a matter of hours, I had composed and completed this piece. While it took only roughly a day to write, it took over four years to find a performance!

Davis's work received second prize in this year's Emerging Composers Competition.

Born in London, Tarik O'Regan is perhaps one of today's most successful and prolific composers, with an oeuvre of more than one hundred compositions (over half of which are choral). O'Regan's setting of *Locus Iste* was composed in 1999. Dedicated to his parents, it is an early work written for the Chapel Choir of Pembroke College, Oxford, where he completed his undergraduate studies.

The piece is based on an ethereal melody first introduced by the sopranos, displaying the influence of Renaissance vocal writing in its beauty and clarity. The altos provide poignant counterpoint soon after, followed by the entrance of all four voices, leading to a powerful climax at the words "irreprehensibilis est" ("it is without reproach"). An ingenious coda ensues in which the opening melody returns, offset in double canon between sopranos/tenors and altos/basses, bringing this short motet to a powerful and pointed close on the single note G-natural.

Ave Maria

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum;
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
Et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, mater Dei,
Ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with you;
Blessed are you among women,
And blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and in the hour of our death. Amen.

Locus Iste

Locus iste a Deo factus est,
Inaestimabile sacramentum,
irreprehensibilis est.

This place was made by God,
a priceless sacrament;
it is without reproach.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Our deepest thanks to accomplished composers Sidney Boquiren and Susan Kander, who served as this year's judges for Cerddorion's Emerging Composers Competition.

Our performances would not be possible without extensive behind-the-scenes efforts by the group's members. In addition to the ongoing work of our Board of Directors, this program relied on rehearsal accompaniment by Myrna Nachman and Ethan Wagner; printing by Steve Iger; and program editing and production by Michael Klitsch.



SAVE THE DATES FOR A SEASON OF CELEBRATION!

Next year, Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary. Mark your calendars for this special season:

- **November 15 & 17, 2019—Celebrating Our Audience:** Cerddorion will perform favorite gems from our repertoire, chosen by YOU! Vote on today's program insert or at www.cerddorion.org.
- **February 2020, date TBD—Celebrating Collaboration:** We will participate in the New York premiere of *The Book of Rounds*, with world-renowned indie-pop group The October Project.
- **March 22, 2020—Celebrating Our Singers, Past and Present:** Cerddorion alumni/ae will return for a semi-staged production of Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, with period instruments.
- **May 29 & 31, 2020—Celebrating Our Commitment to New Music:** The final program of our anniversary season will feature the world premiere of a work by Sidney Boquiren celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

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Our concerts would not be possible without a great deal of financial assistance. Cerddorion would like to thank the following, who have generously provided financial support for our activities over the past year.

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Sopranos

Mavis MacNeil
Karenardini
Jennifer Oates
Jeanette Rodriguez
Ellen Schorr
Talya Westbrook

Altos

Jamie Carrillo
Linnea Johnson
Allegra Kuney
Cathy Markoff
Myrna Nachman
Katie Wilkes

Tenors

Ralph Bonheim
Gerard Gallagher
Mark Hewitt
Michael Klitsch
Ken Short
Ethan Wagner

Basses

Peter Cobb
Rich Dikeman
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