Cerddorion’s Upcoming Performances

Voices for Today
A Celebration of Poulenc and Britten
Selected sacred works by Francis Poulenc; Benjamin Britten’s Rejoice in the Lamb; and a rare performance of Britten’s Voices for Today, composed for the 20th anniversary of the United Nations. With guest artists the Vox Nova Children’s Chorus of the Special Music School, Kaufman Center; Emily John, director.

Saturday, June 1, at 8pm
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church
199 Carroll Street, Brooklyn

Thursday, June 6, at 8pm
St. Ignatius of Antioch
87th Street & West End Avenue,
Manhattan

Support Cerddorion
Ticket sales cover only a small portion of our ongoing musical and administrative expenses. If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution, please send a check (payable to Cerddorion NYC, Inc.) to:

Cerddorion NYC, Inc.
Post Office Box 946, Village Station
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For further information about Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble, please visit our web site: www.cerddorion.org.

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CERDDORION
VOCAL ENSEMBLE

James John
Artistic Director

PRESENTS

Mourning and Evening

Saturday, March 2 – 8pm
The Oratory Church of St. Boniface
109 Willoughby Street, Brooklyn

Saturday, March 9 – 8pm
The Basilica of St. Patrick’s Old Cathedral
263 Mulberry Street, Manhattan
The members of Cerddorion are grateful to Doug Keilitz and the Church of Saint Ignatius of Antioch for providing rehearsal and performance space for this season.

Special thanks to Paul Moravec and David Schober for serving as judges for Cerddorion’s inaugural Emerging Composers Competition.

Thanks also to Jennifer Oates, Samantha Bassler, and Michael Plant for their efforts in preparing this program.

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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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- Richard Yaeger
indigenous English music and musicians. Before the 1880s, musical standards in Britain were low, and few educational or professional opportunities existed for British musicians in their homeland. Parry was named professor of composition at the Royal College of Music in 1883, the year it opened, and in 1895 he succeeded Sir George Grove as Director, a post Parry remained in until his death. The founding of the Royal College served as the driving force behind efforts to improve music education, and encouraged a similar push for improved standards at the Royal Academy of Music under the leadership of Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie.

In his compositional career, Parry aided in establishing vital career milestones for British composers, such as securing a commission for one of the major choral festivals, retaining an academic post, and having works performed at orchestral concerts in London (at the Crystal Palace, St. James’s Hall, and by the Philharmonic Society). Musically, Parry, whose style tended to be on the conservative side, was influenced by Brahms and fully steeped in the English choral tradition. He also admired modern German music, including Wagner and early Richard Strauss.

Parry’s eloquent six motets, *Songs of Farewell* (1914-1915), are viewed by many as the peak of British a cappella choral music with their rich harmonic language and intimate emotions. Parry, knowing his time on earth was growing short, viewed the set as his spiritual farewell to a troubled world. Full of some of Parry’s most expressive choral writing, “Never Weather-Beaten Sail” is a moving, lyrical setting of the text of a well-known lute-song by the English composer-poet Thomas Campion. The initial sumptuous dissonances of the solemn motet “There is an Old Belief”, setting the words of the Scottish writer John Gibson Lockhart, give way to a chant-like intonation of the text “That creed I fain would keep,” referencing the Credo of the mass. The motet ends returning to the opulent dissonances of the beginning for the closing words “Eternal be the sleep.” Rather fittingly, “There is an Old Belief” was performed at Parry’s funeral in St Paul’s Cathedral in October 1918.

**Never Weather-Beaten Sail**

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore.  
Never tired pilgrim’s limbs affected slumber more,  
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast:  
O come quickly, sweetest Lord,  
and take my soul to rest.

**There is an Old Belief**

There is an old belief,  
That on some solemn shore,  
Beyond the sphere of grief  
Dear friends shall meet once more.  
Beyond the sphere of Time  
And Sin and Fate's control,

### The Program

**Officium Defunctorum, sex vocibus.**  
Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)

**In obitu et obsequiis, Sacrae Imperatricis** (published 1605)

**Lesson: Tuadet animam meam**

**Missa pro defunctis:**

- *Introit: Requiem aeternam – Te decet hymnus*
- *Kyrie*
- *Gradual: Requiem aeternam – In memoria aeterna*
- *Offertory: Domine Jesu Christe*
- *Sanctus*
- *Benedictus*
- *Agnus Dei I, II & III*
- *Communion: Lux aeterna*

**Funeral motet: Versa est in luctum**

**Responsory at Absolution after Mass: Libera me, Domine**

*Plainchants: Anna Harmon, Leonore Nelson, Elizabeth Hanna, Jennifer Oates, Ellen Schorr, Chris Ryan*

### Absence (2012)

*Dominick DiOrio (b. 1984)*

*World Premiere – Winner of Cerddorion’s inaugural Emerging Composers Competition*

*Anna Harmon, soprano*

### Drei Gesänge, Op. 42

*Johnannes Brahms (1833–1897)*

*Abendständchen*

*Vineta*

*Darthulas Grabgesang*

*Two Songs (from Songs of Farewell, 1916)*

*Charles Hubert H. Parry (1848–1918)*

*Never Weather-Beaten Sail*

*There is an Old Belief*
The Artists

Now in its eighteenth season, Cerddorion is one of New York’s most highly regarded volunteer choral ensembles. A chamber group of 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, and Julieolphin.

Besides presenting its own varied programs, Cerddorion is frequently invited to perform with other acclaimed artists. 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 in New York. Past 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 Dessoff Choral Consortium and choristers London’s Temple Church); several appearances with the Christopher Caines Dance Company; Baroque opera performances with the early music instrumental ensemble Concert Royal; and serving as the resident teaching ensemble for the Dennis Keene Choral Festival in Kent, Connecticut.

In 2006, Cerddorion performed at the Eastern Divisional Convention of the American Choral Directors Association the works they had commissioned from three New York composers for their tenth anniversary season. 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 Bielawa’s 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.

James John is in his third season as Artistic Director of the Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble. He is also Associate Professor 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, teaches choral conducting, and serves as advisor to the graduate program in vocal performance. Recent professional highlights include guest conducting the Tokyo Oratorio Society in a performance of Brahms’s Ein deutsches Requiem in Tokyo’s Suntory Hall, and an invited performance by the Queens College Choir at the 2012 Eastern Divisional Conference of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) in Providence, Rhode Island.

Under Dr. John’s leadership the choral program at the Aaron Copland School of Music has become recognized as one of the finest collegiate choral programs in the region. Past performances with the School of Music’s choral ensembles include Beethoven’s Missa solennis, award winning productions of Argento’s Postcard from Morocco and Monteverdi’s L’Orfeo, Requiems by Mozart and Verdi, “A Night at the Opera” with Queens College alumna Erika

Eine schöne Welt ist da versunken, ihre Träumer blieben unten stein, lassen sich als goldne Himmelsfunken oft im Spiegel meiner Träume seh’n.

Und dann möcht ich tauchen in die Tiefen, mich versenken in den Wunderschein, und mir ist, als ob mich Engel riefen in die alte Wunderstadt herein.

Wilhelm Müller (1794 – 1827)

Darthulas Grabgesang

Mädchen von Kola, du schlafst!
Um dich schweigen die blauen Strese Selmas!
Sie trauen um dich, den letzten Zweig von Thruthils Stamm!

Wann erstehst du wieder in deiner Schöné?
Schöne der Schönsten in Erin!
Du schlafst im Grabe langen Schlaf,
den Morgenrot ist ferne!

Nimmer, o nimmer kommt dir die Sonne
welche deiner Herze:
“Wach auf! Wach auf, Darthula!”
Frühling ist draußen!

“Die Lüfte säuseln,
Auf grünen Hügeln, holdesgelogene Mädchen,
Wehen die Blumen!
Im Hain walt sprachenden Laub!”

Auf immer, auf immer, so welche denn, Sonne,
Dem Mädchen von Kola, sie schlaf!
Nie erstehst sie wieder in ihrer Schöné!
Nie sehst du sie lieblich wandeln mehr.

Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803)
from an English text by James MacPherson (1736-1796)

Charles Hubert H. Parry: Two songs from Songs of Farewell

A beautiful world is sunk there, its ruins have stood fast, often sending up golden, heavenly sparks visible in the mirror of my dreams.

And then I would like to plunge into the depths, to immerse myself in the reflection, for it seems to me as if angels called me into the ancient miracle-city.

Darthula’s Burial Song

Maiden of Colla, you sleep!
Around you the blue streams of Selama are silent! They mourn for you, the last branch of Truthil’s line!

When will you rise again in your beauty?
Fairest of the Fair in Erin!
You sleep the long sleep of the grave;
The glow of morning is distant.

Never, o never will the sun come to your resting place and awaken you;
“We wake! Darthula!”
Spring has come!

“The breezes whisper,
Upon the green hills, sweet maiden, flowers wave!
In the grove, sprouting leaves flutter!

Yield, Sun,
To the maiden of Colla, she sleeps!
Never will she rise again in her beauty!
Never will you see her lovely wandering.

Charles H. H. Parry (1848-1918)

The English composer, educator, and scholar Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918) taught and influenced several generations of British musicians, and helped lay the foundation for the success of Sir Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Benjamin Britten.

During the late nineteenth century, efforts were underway to foster the development of
Abendständchen
Hör', es klagt die Flöte wieder, und die kühlen Brunnen rauschen, golden weh’n die Töne nieder, stille, laß uns lauschen!

Holdes Bitten, mild Verlangen, wie es süß zum Herzen spricht! Durch die Nacht, die mich umfangen, blickt zu mir der Töne Licht. Clemens Brentano (1778 – 1842)

Vineta
Aus des Meeres tiefem, tiefem Grunde
klingen Abendglocken, dumpf und matt, uns zu geben wunderbare Kunde
vom schönen, alten Wunderstadt.

In der Fluten Schoß hinabgesunken,
blieben unten ihre Trümmer steh’n. Ihre Zinnen lassen goldene Funk
widerscheinend auf dem Spiegel seh’n.

Und der Schiffer, der den Zauberschimmer
—
einmal sah im hellen Abendrot,
Und der Schiffer, der den Zauberschimmer
—
sehr oft rings umher die Klippe droht.

Aus des Herzens tiefem, tiefem Grunde
klingt es mir wie Glocken dumpf und matt. Ach, sie geben wunderbare Kunde
vom Liebe, die geliebt es hat.

Sonnegårdh of the Metropolitan Opera, Benjamin Britten’s War Requiem, and world premieres of works by Sidney Boquiren, Leo Kraft, Meg Collins Stoop and others. His choirs have performed in many of New York’s prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Weill Recital Hall, St. Patrick’s Cathedral and Trinity Church Wall Street. Under his direction the Queens College Vocal Ensemble recently released its first CD, featuring premiere recordings of partsongs by Scottish composer Hamish MacCunn, and the Queens College Choir recorded Bright Sheng’s Two Folk songs from Qinghai, soon to be released on the Naxos label.

Dr. John’s guest conducting appearances include Avery Fisher Hall’s annual Messiah Sing-In, a concert of American choral music with the Virginia Chorale (Virginia’s only professional choral ensemble), chorus master for the Queens Symphony, regional honor choirs throughout New York State, and a recording with jazz trumpeter Michael Mossman. He has given presentations at both divisional and national conventions of the ACDA, and is in demand as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the United States. Dr. John will return to Tokyo in 2013 to conduct Beethoven’s Missa Solemnis.

As a teacher and scholar, Dr. John has served as Guest Lecturer in conducting at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany, and presented seminars on American choral music in Basel and Stockholm. His dissertation on Brahms’s Nänie, Op. 82 won the Julius Herford Prize from the ACDA and will be published soon in revised form as a book by The Edwin Mellen Press. His articles have appeared in Choral Journal, American Choral Review, and Chorus America’s Research Memorandum Series. In July 2011, he was appointed Editor of American Choral Review, and also serves 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. Prior to his current position at the Aaron Copland School of Music, he served as Director of Choral Activities at Tufts University in Boston, Director of Choral Activities at Nassau Community College in Garden City, NY, and as Dartmouth College’s first Conducting Fellow. He received his Master of Arts in Conducting from the Aaron Copland School of Music.
**Program Notes and Texts**

**Mourning and Evening**

The theme of tonight’s program, Mourning and Evening, grew out of my desire to perform Victoria’s marvelous Requiem Mass (1605) for six voices. Written for the funeral of the Dowager Empress Maria of Spain (one of Victoria’s most dedicated and generous patrons), it was the composer’s last published work and is imbued with deep personal meaning. The Requiem’s length, scope, tightly knit musical structure (based on plainsong), and extraordinary emotional power display the kind of mastery one often sees in the late works of a great composer: an exquisite expression of “mourning” written during the “evening” of Victoria’s career. Verdi’s Requiem comes to mind as a similar culminating musical statement, though from a very different time and era.

The other pieces you will hear weave a contemplative theme, reflecting on love, life and loss. Dominick DiOrio’s Absence is the winning entry in Cerddorion’s first Emerging Composers Competition, and we are thrilled to present the world premiere tonight. Like DiOrio, Brahms was something of an “emerging composer” when he completed his Drei Gesänge (“Three Songs”), Op. 42. Despite their relatively high opus number they were completed during the “morning” of Brahms’s illustrious life (when the composer was in his late twenties) and are among his first published a cappella works for six voices—a rich texture similar to Victoria’s, which Brahms returned to often. We conclude our program with two selections from Hubert Parry’s Songs of Farewell. Parry was a younger contemporary and great admirer of Brahms. Songs of Farewell, finished only three years before his death, are once again “evening” works, reflecting a lifetime of experience and mastery of the a cappella medium.

— James John

**Tomás Luis de Victoria:**

**Officium Defunctorum, sex vocibus.**

*In obitu et obsequiis, Sacrae Imperatricès*

Note by Samantha Basler

Tomás Luis de Victoria (b. Avila, 1548; d. Madrid, 20 August 1611) is considered by many scholars to be the greatest Spanish Renaissance composer. Active in Spain and Italy, he is especially well known for his church music, of which the motets from his first publication in 1572, and the Offices for the Dead and for Holy Week, are particularly famous. 2011 saw many concerts, commemorating the 400th anniversary of Victoria’s death, which featured these works.

Victoria began his career in 1558 as a chorister at Avila Cathedral in Spain, and later maintained a number of posts in Rome, succeeding Palestrina as Maestro di Cappella at the Roman Seminary in 1571. He ended his career in Madrid, working for the Dowager Empress Maria, sister of Philip II, daughter of Charles V, and widow of Maximilian II. Victoria was the Dowager Empress’s chaplain from ca. 1587 until her death in February 1603; he then served as organist in the chapel until his death in 1611.

Victoria’s musical output is significantly smaller than that of other sixteenth-century composers, but the kind of mastery one often sees in the late works of a great composer: an exquisite expression of “mourning” written during the “evening” of Victoria’s career. Verdi’s Requiem comes to mind as a similar culminating musical statement, though from a very different time and era.

**Absence**

Dominick DiOrio’s Absence is the winning entry in Cerddorion’s inaugural Emerging Composers Competition, chosen from a field of twenty-two entries from throughout the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. Dr. DiOrio is Assistant Professor at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he conducts the Contemporary Vocal Ensemble and supervises the masters program in choral conducting. In addition to his teaching and conducting activities, he is an active composer whose works have garnered awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers; the American Choral Directors Association; the Yale Glee Club; and the Young New Yorker’s Chorus, among others. He earned the D.M.A. in conducting from Yale University in 2012, and holds an undergraduate degree in composition from Ithaca College. DiOrio writes of his work:

The poetry of Amy Lowell is striking: vivid, present, words chosen with such care, as she paints an aural picture of her imagining. This setting of “Absence” is no different, as it explores the awakening of one’s passions by the arrival of a before-absent lover. I paint this internal sensation with glissandi in the voices, richly-harmonized chords on “Heart’s blood for your drinking”, and the high chromatic ululations of a solo soprano.

**Absence**

My cup is empty to-night,
Cold and dry are its sides,
Chilled by the wind from the open window.
Empty and void, it sparkles white in the moonlight.
The room is filled with the strange scent
Of wisteria blossoms.
They sway in the moon’s radiance
And tap against the wall.

But the cup of my heart is still,
And cold, and empty.
When you come, it brims
Red and trembling with blood,
Hearts blood for your drinking;
To fill your mouth with love
And the bitter-sweet taste of a soul.

Amy Lowell (1874 – 1925)

**Drei Gesänge, Op. 42**

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) was one of the nineteenth century’s most skilled and beloved composers of church music. His gift for choral writing grew out of his passion for early music (particularly for German composers such as Schütz and Bach), his love of counterpoint, and also from practical experience as a choral conductor. Early in his career Brahms had ample opportunity to write for his own choirs, and though the precise inspiration behind his Drei Gesänge (Three Songs), Op. 42 is not known, they were composed at a time (1859-1861; published in 1868) “when he wrote choral pieces for anyone who would sing them,” as Brahms scholar Virginia Hancock describes.

All three pieces are for six voices (SAATBB), a texture that appears frequently in Brahms’s later a cappella writing. “Abendständchen” (“Evening Serenade”) describes the melancholy sound of a
**Communion**

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine, cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Requiescant in pace. Amen.

---

**Motet**

Versa est in lacrimis mea, et organum meum in vocem flentium.

Parce mihi Domine, et organum meum in vocem flentium.

**Liberata me**

Liberata me, Domine: et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Dum veneris iudica sacerdotem per ignem.

Tremens factus sum ego, et timor meus in timorem afficiet me.

Dies illa, dies iræ, calamitatem et miseriae, dies magna et amara valde.

My harp is tuned for lamentation, and my flute to the voice of those who weep.

Spare me, O Lord, for my days are as nothing.

---

**Libera me**

Liberam me, Domine, de morte aeterna, in die illa tremendae.

Quando cœli movendi sunt et terra.

Deliver me, O Lord, from death eternal on that fearful day.

When the heavens and the earth shall be moved, when thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

That day, day of wrath, calamity, and misery, day of great and exceeding bitterness.

When thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord: and let light perpetual shine upon them.

Deliver me, O Lord, from death eternal on that fearful day.

When the heavens and the earth shall be moved, when thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.
My soul is weary of my life, opens homophonically with all four parts singing the word “taedet” (“weary”) on a minor sonority, then resolves to the major chord with the first soprano moving a half step downward, perhaps like the sigh of a tired soul. The high soprano part continues on the half step pattern to finish out the first portion text, utilizing musica ficta and word painting for “loquer in amaritudine animae meae” (“I will speak in the bitterness of my soul), while the other parts complement it homophonically. The rest of the Requiem that follows does exploit the full six parts, but it is no less moving or expressive. Suspensions occur frequently throughout the work, often in the second soprano plainchant melody, but also elsewhere in the parts at particularly graphic texts. The Offertorium, Domine Jesu Christe, features chromaticism right from the opening “libera animas omnium” (“Deliver the souls of all...”), and a succession of suspensions that become more intense for “faulceum defunctorum de poenis inferni” (“...the faithful departed from the pains of hell...”). Victoria’s use of suspensions is very effective at cadences, where they can fulfill expectations of resolution, or lead to a deceptive cadence that instills more longing and desire. Victoria’s Office of the Dead is befitting as a musical offering to a faithful departed soul”), while the other parts complement it homophonically. The rest of the Requiem that follows word painting for “taedet animam meam vitae meae, loquer in amaritudine animae meae."

Lesson

Taedet animam meam vitae meae, dimittam adversum me eolum quidem meum, libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni.

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.

Gradual

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis.

In memoria aeterna erit iustus: ab audittione mala non timebit.

Offertory

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni, et de profundo lacu. Libera eam de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tarrantus, ne cadant in obscurum. Sed signifer sanctus Michæl representet eas in lucem sanctam, quam olim Abraham promissit et semini eius.

Sanctus & Benedictus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.


Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem sempiternam.

Requiem aeternam...

Psalm 65:1-2

Te delectat hymnus, Deus, in Sion, et te reddetur votum in Jerusalem. Exaudi orationem meam; ad te omnis caro veniet

There will be songs of praise to you in Zion, and prayers in Jerusalem. O hear my prayers; all flesh returns to you.

Eternal rest...

Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them.

The just man shall be remembered everlastingly, he will not fear an evil hearing.

Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell, and from the deep lake.

Deliver them from the mouth of the lion, may the abyss not swallow them up, may they not fall into darkness.

But may the holy standard-bearer Michael lead them to that holy light which of old Thou didst promise Abraham and his seed.

Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant them rest.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant them everlasting rest.

Job 10:1-7

et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Exaudi orationem meam; ad te omnis caro veniet

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem sempiternam.