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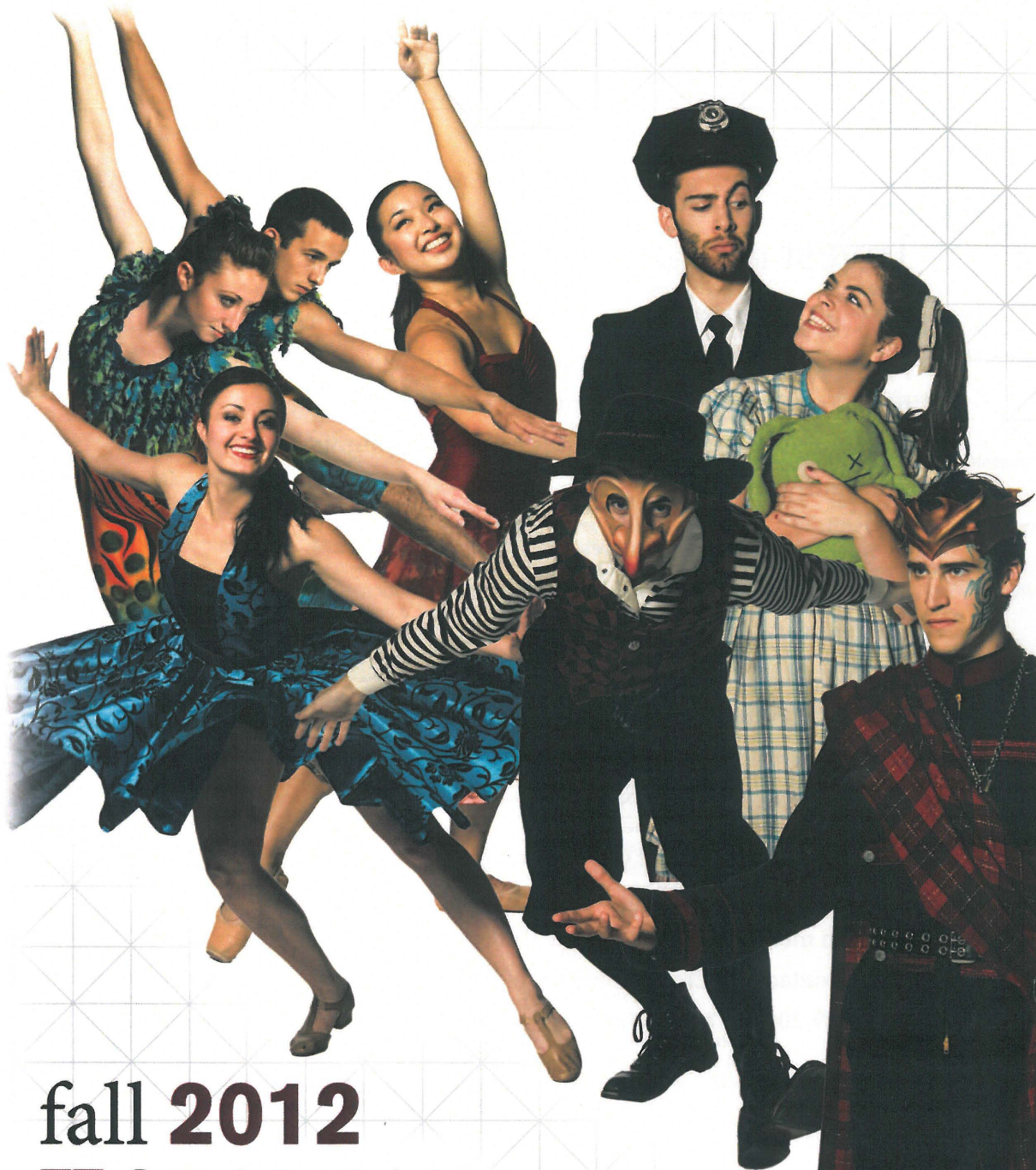
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fall 2012

 CHAPMAN
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS

University Singers in Concert

Stephen Coker, Conductor
November 12, 2012



COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS
CONSERVATORY OF

music

FALL 2012 calendar highlights

september

September 27-29, October 4-6

Company, Book by George Furth, Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Directed by Todd Nielsen, Music Direction by Bill Brown

october

October 19-21

Opera Chapman presents **"2012: An Opera Odyssey – The Journey Continues"**

Peter Atherton, Artistic Director, Carol Neblett, Associate Director, David Alt, Assistant Director

October 26

Chapman University Choir and Women's Choir in Concert

Stephen Coker and Angel Vázquez-Ramos, Conductors

november

November 2-3

American Celebration

Dale A. Merrill, Artistic Director and Producer

William Hall, Music Director and Conductor

November 7-11

If All the Sky Were Paper

By Andrew Carroll, Directed by John Benitz

November 10

Chapman University Wind Symphony

Paul Sherman, Music Director and Conductor

december

December 7-8

49th Annual Holiday Wassail - Banquet and Concert

Presented by the University Choir and University Singers, Stephen Coker, Conductor,

University Women's Choir, Angel Vázquez-Ramos, Conductor, and the Chapman University Chamber Orchestra, Daniel Alfred Wachs, Conductor

November 12

University Singers in Concert

Stephen Coker, Conductor

November 16

Chapman Chamber Orchestra

Daniel Alfred Wachs, Music Director and Conductor

November 28-December 1

Fall Dance Concert

Directed by Jennifer Backhaus

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

Conservatory of Music

presents

The University Singers in Concert

Stephen Coker, conductor

Hye-Young Kim, accompanist



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or email CoPA@chapman.edu

November 12, 2012 ■ 7:30 P.M.

Wallace All Faiths Chapel, Fish Interfaith Center

Program

Sacred and Profane

Vedrassi prima senza luce il sole
 Tu es Petrus

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
 (c. 1525-1594)

Kyla McCarrel, soprano; Natasha Bratkovski, mezzo soprano
Duke Kim, tenor; Elliot Wulff, baritone

O salutaris hostia	Gioachino Rossini
Il carnevale di Venezia	(1792-1868)

Solfeggio

Arvo Pärt
(b. 1935)

O salutaris hostia

Ēriks Ešenvalds
(b. 1977)

Amira Fulton and Chelsea Chaves, sopranos

~Intermission~

Cradle Songs

Cancion de cuna para dormir a un negrito
Xavier Montsalvatge
(1912-2002)

Emily Dyer, soprano

Buy Baby Ribbon

Steven Stucky
(b. 1949)

three cummings choruses

maggie and millie and mollie and may	Vincent Persichetti
uncles	(1915-1987)

little man in a hurry

Eric Whitacre
(b. 1970)

from Cuba

¿Y tu que has hecho? arr. Conrado Monier
(b. 1955)

Eric Parker, tenor

Pa kin kin

Guido López-Gavilán
(b. 1944)

The University Singers

Stephen Coker, *conductor*
Hye-Young Kim, *accompanist*

Eric Parker, *president*
Jacquelyn Clements, *vice-president*

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Katie Bourland	Monica Alfredsen	Kevin Gino	Andrei Bratkovski
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Jacquelyn Clements	Natasha Bratkovski	Duke Kim	Daniel Fister
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Cristiana Franzetti	Shaina Hammer	Marcus Paige	Anthony Lee
Amira Fulton	Annie Kubitschek	Eric Parker	Benedict Ressa
Neda Lahidji	Janet Orsi	Nathan Wilen	Andrew Schmitt
Kyla McCarrel	Rachel Stoughton		Daniel Shipley
	Savannah Wade		Elliott Wulff

Program Notes and Translations

The opening half of this evening’s program features sacred and secular pairs of compositions. These works range from those of two Italian giants of the Renaissance and Romantic eras to two modern day composers of the Baltic states.

Along with Lassus, Victoria, and Byrd, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina was one of the towering figures of 16th century polyphonic composition. The bulk of Palestrina’s output was overwhelmingly sacred (he wrote over 100 masses and 300 motets), but his secular output was considerable as well having composed some 140 madrigals that were quite popular during his lifetime. In the United States, perhaps his best known madrigal is *Vedrassi prima senza luce il sole*, most likely due to its publication in the 1950’s by an American publishing house. Its style is not unlike that of the composer’s motets that feature beautifully balanced, elegant “curves of sound,” generally void of large leaps. However, unlike most of his sacred compositions, this madrigal is strophic in nature, consisting of at least four verses, not all of which will be sung this evening. Strongly immersed in the music of the Catholic church (indeed he was the musical leader of the Counter-Reformation and was and is regarded by some as the savior of Catholic church music), Palestrina served in various capacities at the Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome for over twenty-five years. Perhaps not surprisingly, his six-voice work *Tu es Petrus (Thou Art Peter)* is a

resplendent piece scored for six voices and is one of the composer’s two-movement motets (the second of which will not be performed tonight). It features some antiphonal usage and the composer’s typical imitative style. Toward the end of the motet however, in dramatic fashion, all six voices sing together for the first time on the words *claves regni coelorum* or “keys to the kingdom of heaven.”

Vedrassi prima senza luce il sole: *The sun will be seen without light, and the stars will swirl around in the heavens, less bright and less beautiful, before you'll be served and loved by me, woman, more unfair and ungrateful than any other.*

You will see the hills flying, and honey will become a bitter tonic that sweetens my wounds before you will be served and loved by me, woman, more unfair and ungrateful than any other.

Tue es Petrus: *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I shall build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I shall give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*

After Rossini had composed over forty operas in a span of some twenty years, he retired from writing for the opera stage in 1829, largely due to failing health. Yet, in the final decade of his life, the composer recovered well enough to resume a substantial compositional career in Paris in the 1850’s. His *Il carnevale di Venezia* or *The Carnival of Venice* (1821) represents one of the composer’s early works and bears the distinctive style of his comic operas. *O salutaris hostia* (1857) is a late sacred work that was composed at the time when Rossini had just begun his “second compositional career” (that produced his several volumes of collected small works that the composer titled *Sins of [My] Old Age*). This motet is a setting for four-part unaccompanied mixed choir that alternates quiet contemplations and vocal outbursts when the text speaks of threatening warfare.

O salutaris hostia: *O Redeeming Sacrifice, which opens the gate of heaven: enemies threaten wars; give us strength; send aid.*

Il carnevale di Venezia (The Carnival of Venice): *We are blind, we are born to live on charity. In this happy season [carnival time] one should not deny charity. Nice women, dear women for pity's sake, Don't be stingy. Give these poor blind men a little charity.*

We are all dear poor men that ring the bells, who shake the clappers with do re mi fa sol la. We beg for charity.

Please! Help us lovely women, Be kind with the poor, We poor are not picky, We are ready to accept whatever you offer. Please, help us for charity's sake, the carnival is dying away.

Program Notes and Translations

Much of the catalog of Estonian composer Arvo Pärt is devoted to choral music. His striking *Solfeggio* (1964, rev. 1996) was conceived as a choral étude using a strict, although simple compositional formula. The unusual work’s melodic materials consist of ten repetitions of an ascending C major scale sung in solfege. Each successive scale step is sung by a different section of the choir in varying octaves and in overlapping long lengths. Therefore the work’s harmonic materials consist of the resultant widely spaced tone clusters produced by the choir’s combined voice sections. Another aspect of the work that gives a measure of variety to the piece is a carefully calculated dynamic scheme that rises and falls twice before culminating in a powerful climax.

The works of the young Latvian composer Ēriks Ešņvalds have recently been widely performed throughout Europe and the United States. He has written orchestral, chamber, vocal, and piano works in addition to several dozen choral pieces. Having received his musical training in his native country and in master classes in several European countries such as Germany, France, Norway, and the Czech Republic, he currently holds the position of Fellow Commoner in the Creative Arts at Trinity College, University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom. His lush setting of the *O salutaris hostia* text is for two soprano soloists and multi-voice mixed choir.

O salutaris hostia: *O Redeeming Sacrifice, which opens the gate of heaven: enemies threaten wars; give us strength; send aid.*

The music of the song cycle *Cinco canciones negras* (1946) by Spanish Catalan composer Xavier Montsalvatge springs from the musical traditions of South America, Africa, and Cuba. From that suite, the irresistible lullaby *Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito* is perhaps the composer’s best known work. A gentle habanera rhythm underpins the entire piece, here arranged by the composer for choir, piano, and female soloist.

Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito
(Cradle Song for a Little Black Child)

Ningbe, ningbe, little tiny one, little black child who won’t go to sleep. Coconut head, little coffee bean with pretty freckles and eyes as big as two windows facing the sea. Close your eyes, timid black child; the white bogey-man may eat you up! Now you’re no slave! And if you eat a lot, the master of the house promises to buy you a suit with buttons to make you a groom.

The Pulitzer Prize winning American musician Steven Stucky has taught composition at Cornell University since 1980. He has also been associated with the Los Angeles Philharmonic for over twenty years and is currently its Consulting Composer for New

Music. In 1996 he completed the three-movement choral suite *Cradle Songs* commissioned by the American choirs: Chanticleer, the Dale Warland Singers, and the Los Angeles based La Vie. The text source of that cycle’s closing movement “Buy Baby Ribbon” is from the culture of Tobago—one of the Windward Islands in the Caribbean Sea. Its musical features include quasi-instrumental effects through lulling, often hypnotic repetitions of words or nonsense syllables (e.g. “ribbon, ribbon” and “bim, bam, bom, boom”).

Buy Baby Ribbon (transcription of the Tobago dialect): *Mama’s gone to the mountain; Papa’s gone shooting (hunting). Caught one little robin bird--hung it up in a tree top. The mulatto man took it down to buy his baby a ribbon.*

In 1947 the prolific American composer Vincent Persichetti became Professor of Composition at the Juilliard School where his students included such diverse composers as Phillip Glass, Einojuhani Rautavaara, and Peter Schickel. His prodigious output includes several choral settings of the poetry of e e cummings. His 1964 cycle *four cummings choruses* for two-part choir and piano includes the gritty “uncles” and the breezy “maggie and milly and molly and may” sung by the men and the women of our ensemble respectively. Both works feature “open” or transparent textures and some pungent harmonies and sudden accents in the lively, rhythmic accompaniments.

uncles
*my uncle Daniel fought in the civil war band
(and can play the triangle like the devil)
my uncle Frank has done nothing for many years but fly kites
and when the string breaks (or something)
my uncle Franks breaks into tears.
my uncle Tom knits
and is a kewpie above the ears
(but my uncle Ed that’s dead from the neck up
is lead all over Brattle Street by a castrated pup*

maggie and milly and molly and may
*maggie and milly and molly and may
went down to the beach (to play one day)*

*and maggie discovered a shell that sang
so sweetly she couldn’t remember her troubles, and

milly befriended a stranded star
whose rays five languid fingers were;
and molly was chased by a horrible thing
which raced sideways while blowing bubbles: and*

Program Notes and Translations

*may came home with a smooth round stone
as small as a world and as large as alone.*

*for whatever we lose (like a you or a me)
it's always ourselves we find in the sea.*

The immensely popular American composer Eric Whitacre has set some nine e e cummings poems. “little man in a hurry” is the final movement of his latest choral cycle *The City and the Sea* (that contains five choral settings of cummings’ poetry) and is a rhythmic *tour de force* for the choir and collaborative pianist. Of the accompaniment, the composer writes:

I’m calling the piano part in these pieces the ‘oven-mitt’ technique, because most of the chords are white-key clusters played as if you are wearing mitts on your hands – the four fingers all bunched together and the thumb on its own...

little man in a hurry

*little man
(in a hurry
full of an
important worry)
halt stop forget relax*

wait

*(little child
who have tried
who have failed
who have cried)
lie bravely down*

sleep

*big rain
big snow
big sun
big moon
(enter us)*

The music of two important contemporary Cuban musicians concludes the program. Conrado Monier is a prolific, deft arranger of Hispanic folkloric music. His works are often marked by rhythmic sophistication and simulation of instruments.

¿Y tu que has hecho? (And You, What Have You Done?): *On the trunk of a tree, a young girl, Carved out her name, filled with pleasure. And the tree, deeply touched to the core, Allowed a flower drop down to the girl. “I am the tree, sad and deeply moved. You are the girl who wounded my trunk I have always guarded your beloved name, And you, what have you done with my poor flower?”*

“But mama, the tears are falling. Mama, I want to cry, but I can’t.” “What have you done to me, little girl? I keep it in my heart all of my life.” “I climb the tall pine tree to see if it will console me. Pine tree, how does it feel to see me cry? I had to cry. The jug is on the floor, mama. I can’t deal with it. I’m taking it to my head, mama. I can’t deal with it. The darkness is sad they say. I say it’s not true because your eyes are black, and they are my happiness.

Guido López-Gavilán is currently head of the Program of Orchestral Conducting at the Advanced Art Institute of Havana and is also the president of the internationally recognized annual Havana Festival dedicated to contemporary music. His conducting engagements have taken him to such countries as Hungary, Switzerland, Argentina, Russia, Germany, Spain, and the United States. As a composer of solo, chamber, symphonic and choral works, López-Gavilán’s works have received have been greeted with outstanding reviews and top honors at competitions for new musical works. Based on the rhythms of Cuban music, López-Gavilán writes of *Pa kin kin*:

... the choir converts itself into one big percussive instrument. A brief introduction that is soft, quiet and a bit mysterious, is interrupted by rhythmic cells that begin to grow until they 'explode' into distinct culminations. The words are pretexts to create various rhythmic combinations that through improvisation reach brilliant resonance and sonority. The [nonsense] syllables “pa kin kin” indiscriminately appear during the speaking part, as a recurring leitmotif. Clapping and stomping on the ground surprise the listener and emphasize the rhythm and make it fun. This is a piece that demands great virtuosity of its interpreters.

Le Baylère (The Baylero Song): *“Shepherd across the river bank, are you not happy?” He sings the baylero. “No, I am hardly having a good time.” He sings the baylero. “Shepherd, how can we pass the time well when we are separated by the river?” He sings the baylero. “Listen to me, I will come find you, baylero lo.”*

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