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University Singers on Tour

Chapman University Singers

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University Singers On Tour

Stephen Coker, Conductor

January 8 - 19, 2013



spring 2013

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Conservatory of Music

presents

The University Singers

ON TOUR

Stephen Coker, conductor

Hye-Young Kim, accompanist

California-Nevada Tour

Bay Area, Clovis, Bakersfield, and Las Vegas

January 8-19, 2013

Program

(to be selected from the following repertoire)

I.

Sacred and Profane

Vedrassi prima senza luce il sole Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
Tu es Petrus (c. 1525-1594)

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

Solfeggio Arvo Pärt
(b. 1935)

O salutaris hostia Ēriks Ešenvalds
(b. 1977)

II.

Works by American Composers

Cradle Songs Steven Stucky
I. Rouxinol do pico preto (b. 1949)
III. Buy Baby Ribbon

maggie and millie and mollie and may Vincent Persichetti
uncles (1915-1987)
little man in a hurry Eric Whitacre
(b. 1970)

Program

III.

Folk and Folk Influenced Music

Hawaiian Lullaby arr. Malcolm Sargent

My God Is a Rock arr. Robert Shaw, Alice Parker

How Sweet the Sound arr. Stephen Coker

Allons écouter l'aubade arr. Joseph Canteloube

Le Baylère arr. Goff Richards

Cancion de cuna para dormir a un negrito arr. Xavier Montsalvatge

¿Y tu que has hecho? arr. Conrado Monier

Pa kin kin Guido López-Gavilán
(b. 1944)

Program Notes and Translations

The initial portion of our tripartite tour 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. Works by American composers follow that grouping, and a section of folk and folk influenced music concludes our repertoire listings.

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 boney 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

Program Notes and Translations

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.

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.

Program Notes and Translations

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

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 outer movements of that suite, “Rouxinol do pico preto” and “Buy Baby Ribbon” spring from the source of lullabies from the cultures of Brazil and Tobago, respectively (Tobago is one of the Windward Islands in the Caribbean Sea). Each movement features quasi-instrumental effects through lulling, often hypnotic repetitions of words or nonsense syllables: the word “rouxinol” (nightingale) in the former and the “ribbon, ribbon” and “bim, bam, bom, boom” of the latter.

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 Frank breaks into tears.
my uncle Tom knits
and is a kempie above the ears
(but my uncle Ed that’s dead from the neck up
is lead all over Brattle Street by a castrated pup)*

Program Notes and Translations

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*

*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*

Program Notes and Translations

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

The English musician Sir Malcolm Sargent (1895-1967) arranged several Christmas carols for the Oxford University Press publishing house. His charming *Hawaiian Lullaby* features three distinct texts: an English text of Christmas and lullaby references; several Hawaiian terms of endearment (“*with beautiful eyes... protected by heaven...divine child...beloved one...little baby*”); and a text of nonsense syllables that simulates the strumming of ukuleles.

The collaboration of Robert Shaw and Alice Parker produced numerous choral arrangements of American hymns and African American spirituals. From the latter group, their *My God Is a Rock* for soloist and choir features a text whose verses progress through the sung “Chapter Numbers” *one* through *ten*, pairing each number with a rhyme that refers to a Biblical event (i.e., the aspect of “creation” is addressed by “...Chapter One when the Lord God’s work was just begin.”).

The French composer Joseph Canteloube (1879-1957) was also a musicologist and became best known for his intense interest in collecting folksongs from the Auvergne and other central and southern regions of his homeland. His colorfully orchestrated *Chants d’Auvergne* is considered his masterpiece and took more than thirty years to complete. “Le Baylère” (or “Baïlèro”), one of the better known tunes of this *Songs of the Auvergne* collection, has been arranged for multi-voice mixed choir by British musician Goff Richards. Canteloube himself fashioned a choral arrangement of the Christmas song (or Noël) *Allons écouter l’aubade* that he collected from the Guyenne and Languedoc regions of France.

Allons écouter l’aubade: *Let’s hear the morning song that is about to be sounded on the golden trumpets telling that a Crown-Prince is born. One plays: tarara, tararero; and here is how the other responds: boum, tarara! The little babe has newly arrived!*

Upon entering the stable, we remove our hats and say, “Amiable infant, we come to sing, Noel.” We play tarara...and the other plays the response, tarara, The little babe has newly arrived!

Program Notes and Translations

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?*” “*Listen to me, I will come find you, baylero lo.*”

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 habañera 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 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. 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

Program Notes and Translations

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.

About the Artists

STEPHEN COKER, *conductor*

Stephen Coker assumed the post of Director of Choral Activities at Chapman University in the fall of 2009. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Coker served on the choral faculties of Portland State University (OR) from 2006-2009, the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) from 2000-2006, and Oklahoma City University (OCU) from 1975-2000. At both CCM and OCU, Coker was awarded the "Outstanding Teacher Award" (2002 and 1991, respectively), and he was given the "Director of Distinction Award" by the Oklahoma Choral Directors Association in 1995. In frequent demand as a clinician and guest conductor across the nation, Dr. Coker has worked in roughly half of the fifty states.

Internationally, he has conducted choirs, workshops and festivals in Portugal, South Korea, Israel, Sweden, and Taiwan. Coker received his Bachelor and Master of Music Degrees from OCU and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Music from the University of Southern California, having studied with Rodney Eichenberger, James Vail, and David Wilson. An avid enthusiast of choral-orchestral performance, Coker has conducted much of that major repertoire including works of Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Brahms, Dvorak, Vaughan Williams, Duruflé, Poulenc, Orff, and Bernstein, and has prepared choruses for James Levine, James Conlon, and Erich Kunzel. As a professional chorister, he has sung for conductors Helmuth Rilling, Krzysztof Penderecki, Dennis Russell Davies, and the late Robert Shaw. Other special interests of Dr. Coker include world music, opera and musical theater, and church music. Throughout most of his academic career, he has held choir director positions at Presbyterian, United Methodist, and Episcopal parishes.

HYE-YOUNG KIM, *accompanist*

Hye-Young Kim is active as a collaborative pianist in a wide variety of repertoire and ensembles. Dr. Kim began her career in Collaborative Arts studying with Dr. Alan Smith and Kevin Fitz-Gerald at the University of Southern California. While completing her graduate studies in Keyboard Collaborative Arts at the University of Southern California, Dr. Kim has been the recipient of the distinguished Gwendolyn Koldofsky Memorial Scholarship as well as Thornton Merit Fellowship and Music Dean's Scholarship for years.

Dr. Kim has worked as a collaborative pianist, instrumental and vocal coach for the USC Chamber Choir, USC Opera, UCLA Opera, AIMS, Songfest and Pacific Symphony. She has had the privilege to perform in rehearsal and master class situations with renowned artists such as Plácido Domingo, Barbara Bonney, Lynn Harrell, Eroica Trio, William Bolcom, Thomas Adès, Carl St. Clair and Milena Kitic, in addition to working extensively with local singers and instrumentalists. Currently Dr. Kim is an adjunct faculty member of the Chapman University Conservatory of Music. Dr. Kim has given performances in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Cuba, Italy and Austria, as well as the United States.

About Chapman University

The **COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS** is the cultural and aesthetic center of Chapman University, bringing together the Conservatory of Music and the Departments of Art, Dance and Theatre. Emphasis is placed on scholarship, creativity, free expression and intellectual curiosity through both curricular offerings and a broad spectrum of cultural events. College of Performing Arts students have the opportunity to be part of special events such as Chapman’s American Celebration, a Broadway-style musical revue that serves as the university’s largest annual fundraiser. Under the leadership of Dr. William Hall, Dean of the College of Performing Arts, Chapman University has plans for a new performing arts complex on the Orange campus that will serve the needs of our students and the entire community.

The **CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC** is one of the nation’s premier music programs and is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music. The music complex of Ber-tea and Oliphant Halls total more than 44,000 square feet of state-of-the-art facilities that serves 225 majors and 400 university students daily. The Conservatory has a rich tradition in the arts, with many of its graduates performing with major orchestras and opera houses throughout the United States and abroad. The Conservatory of Music is internationally rec-ognized and offers students a conservatory experience within the environment of a liberal arts university. Faculty members are nationally and internationally recognized performers, conductors, composers, and educators. Degree programs offered include the Bachelor of Arts in Music; Bachelor of Music in Composition, Performance, Conducting, and Music Education (pre-certification).

The **CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY SINGERS** is a highly-select group of thirty-two vocal artists. They have been acclaimed in performances throughout the United States and abroad, including recent performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Holly-wood Bowl. A Los Angeles Times review said that they performed “resplendently” and “sang clearly and powerfully” in this concert, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. Similar acclaim followed when maestro Zubin Mehta conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Chapman University Singers in performances of Bee-thoven’s Ninth Symphony at the new Walt Disney Concert Hall in January 2004. In the fall of 2008, the choir sang for Blizzcon’s “Video Games Live” in Anaheim for an audience of 16,000 people.

University Singers Tour Roster

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Hye-Young Kim, accompanist

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Praise Around the World

<u>Pope John Paul II, Rome, Italy:</u>	<u>Zagreb, Yugoslavia:</u>	<u>San Francisco Chronicle:</u>	<u>Prague, Czech Republic:</u>	<u>Vienna, Austria:</u>	<u>Odense, Denmark:</u>
<i>“Chapman University was simply magnificent and I wish that they could remain in Rome to sing for all Vatican functions.”</i>	<i>“This was a unique evening of vocal music, one of the rare experiences of truly emotionally stimulating music, in the original meaning of the expression.”</i>	<i>“They sing with singular simultaneity and lovely tone, cut off with absolute precision, and their fortes are as powerful as if one had merely applied an</i>	<i>“Chapman University demonstrated an astonishingly high standard with perfection in dynamic musical quality.”</i>	<i>“They achieved the highest level of perfection and gratifying beauty of sound.”</i>	<i>“The director and choir were met with spontaneous applause ... the first time in the history of the Thomas Kingos Kirche that an ovation has ever been accorded in the sanctuary.”</i>

Tour Schedule

JANUARY 8	JANUARY 9	JANUARY 10
<u>Workshops</u> <i>Saratoga HS</i> (Jim Yowell) <i>San Francisco School of the Arts</i> (Todd Wedge) <i>Albany HS</i> (Mary Stocker)	<u>Workshops</u> <i>Palo Alto HS</i> (Michael Najjar)	<u>Workshop</u> <i>Miramonte HS</i> (Megan Perdue)
JANUARY 11	JANUARY 12	JANUARY 13
<u>Workshop</u> <i>Monte Vista HS</i> (Bruce Koliha) <u>Concert - 7 p.m.</u> <i>Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church</i> (Julie Ford) 49 Knox Drive Lafayette, CA 94549	<u>Workshops</u> <i>Mt. Eden HS</i> (Ken Rawden) <i>Castro Valley HS</i> (Laryssa Sadoway) <i>Dougherty Valley HS</i> , (Diana Walker) <u>Concert - 7:00p.m.</u> Martin Luther King Middle School Auditorium 26890 Holly Hill Avenue Hayward, CA 94545	<u>Concert - 4:00p.m.</u> First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto 625 Hamilton Avenue Palo Alto, CA 94301
JANUARY 14	JANUARY 15	JANUARY 16
<u>Workshops</u> <i>Clovis Unified School District:</i> <i>Buchanan HS</i> (Roger Bergman) <i>Clovis HS</i> (Mark Lanford) <i>Clovis East HS</i> (Dan Bishop) <i>Clovis North HS</i> (Heather Bishop) <i>Clovis West HS</i> (Tonya Florer) <u>Concert - 7 p.m.</u> <i>Clovis Unified Performing Arts Center</i> 2770 E. International Ave. Fresno, CA	<u>Workshops</u> <i>Bakersfield, CA:</i> <i>Centennial HS</i> (Patrick Burzlaff) <i>Frontier HS</i> (Forrest Madewell) <i>Bakersfield HS</i> (Christopher Borges)	<u>Concert - 6:30 p.m.</u> <i>Green Valley United Methodist Church</i> 2200 Robindale Rd. Henderson, NV 89074 With <i>Green Valley HS</i> (Kim Ritzer) and <i>Foothill HS</i> (Heather Grantham)
JANUARY 17	JANUARY 18	JANUARY 19
<u>Workshop</u> <i>Las Vegas, NV:</i> <i>Coronado HS</i> (Eric Fleischer)	<u>Workshop and Concert - 7:00 p.m.</u> <i>Las Vegas Academy of the Arts</i> (Megan Franke, Rosanna Cota) 315 S. 7th Street Las Vegas, NV 89101	<u>Workshops</u> <i>Las Vegas, NV:</i> <i>Basic HS</i> (Ryan Duff) <i>Desert Oasis HS</i> (Michael Polutnik) <i>Centennial HS</i> (David Wankier)

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