

RADIANCE

directed by Markdavin Obenza

info@radiance.org | radiance.org | tag us on social media @radiancechoir

COLLABORATION

The Living Choral Landscape

An interactive virtual concert featuring local groups and living composers

Saturday, June 27, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. on Facebook Live

PROGRAM

Pre-show cocktails and chat (6:45pm)	Radiance Board of Directors
Welcome	Markdavin Obenza
The Prayer of St. Francis <i>Kamala Sankaram (b. 1978)</i>	Sound City Singers directed by Johanna Laney
Down to the River to Pray <i>Lauren Kastanas (b. 1992)</i>	Graveyard Girls directed by Lauren Kastanas
Spes <i>Mia Makaroff (b. 1970)</i>	Mägi Ensemble directed by Heather MacLaughlin Garbes
Love Tender Breathing Fragrant <i>Stacey Philipps (b. 1967)</i>	Radiance
We Thank Thee <i>Kari Cruver Medina (b.1960)</i>	All groups
The Tree <i>Greg Bartholomew (b. 1957)</i>	All groups

RADIANCE

SOPRANO

Julia Baker
Lindsey Long
Ruth Schauble

ALTO

Teresa Clark
Lauren Kastanas
Heidi Willis Blythe

TENOR

Michael Bennett
Tim Blok
Jacob Buys

BASS

T.J. Callahan
Kevin Wyatt-Stone
Robin Wyatt-Stone

The final concert of Radiance's inaugural season celebrates our rich local choral scene in the Pacific Northwest, the work of living composers, and the beauty of the natural world. For this concert, we wanted to foster a supportive, community-building environment where multiple local groups share the stage and elevate music being written today. Of course, when we planned this concert we never anticipated that a global pandemic would shutter all in-person performances for the foreseeable future. This virtual, interactive concert is our way of turning a crisis into an opportunity, trying something new, and bringing our community together the best way we can. We don't know how long it will be until any of us can perform for an in-person audience again. Until then, we have to get innovative with our online platforms and create new ways of making and sharing music.

Social media is an incredibly powerful tool to reach people far beyond our local communities. However, it poses a problem for the arts economy — online content is widely available *for free*. We want to live in a world where artists are compensated directly for their work, digital as well as live. Since we cannot gather to experience art in person, together, we need to take a hard look at the value of our work and consider what a sustainable digital arts economy looks like. I believe we need to challenge the assumption that art is free, shift the public mindset, and get consumers accustomed to paying for artists' digital content. It will take a collective effort, but I think it can be done. We have world-class artists and arts organizations here in the Pacific Northwest and it is time to realign the incentives so we can all keep creating meaningful works of art.

– Markdavin Obenza

Sound City Singers

Johanna Laney, Artistic Director

Connecting people by presenting classical repertoire in new and engaging ways. www.soundcitysingers.net

Singers: Michael Bennett, T.J. Callahan, Lin Chen, Cary Lee, Kayleigh Reimer, Benjamin Rogers, Priscilla Salisbury, Benjamin Swain, Jennylynn Vidas, Heidi Willis Blythe.

The Prayer of St. Francis

Kamala Sankaram

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as
to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Graveyard Girls

Graveyard Girls is a casual group that gets together informally every few months to snack, sing, and share each others' company. We began as an impromptu small group that performed during "sharing time" on the first Byrd Ensemble International Renaissance Course in 2017. Since then, we have been meeting periodically to sing all kinds of music, ranging from shapenote and other American traditions to Eastern European folk songs to modern pop. The group is led by Lauren Kastanas, a local arranger, singer, and music director with a background in contemporary a cappella.

Singers: Julia Baker, Teresa Clark, Lauren Kastanas, Jessica Martin, Margaret Obenza, Linda Sabee Mitakides, Ruth Schauble, Sarra Sharif Doyle

Down to the River to Pray

arr. Lauren Kastanas

Down to the River to Pray is a traditional American folk song, arranged in six parts. The arrangement infuses the nearly identical text in each verse with musical variety, alternating resolved and unresolved cadences and handing off the melody to a new voice stanza by stanza

Text

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good old way
And who shall wear the starry crown
Good Lord, show me the way

And who shall wear the robe and crown
Good Lord, show me the way

O brothers...

O sisters, let's go down
Let's go down, come on down
O sisters, let's go down
Down in the river to pray

O fathers...

O mothers...

O sinners...

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good old way

Mägi Ensemble

Heather MacLaughlin Garbes, Founder and Artistic Director
Julie Parsons, Associate Director
Ailisa Newhall, Board President
Peter Garbes, Managing Director

Named for Ester Mägi, “First Lady of Estonian music,” the Mägi Ensemble is a women’s chamber choir that performs and records music from the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvian and Lithuania. Led by Heather MacLaughlin Garbes, the Mägi Ensemble has a strong interest in the power of music to unite people and preserve cultural heritage. The Mägi Ensemble is an Affiliated Artist and a Resident Ensemble of Thomsen Chapel at St. Mark’s Cathedral. www.magiensemble.com

Singers: Monica Armstrong, Madeline Bersamina, Stephanie Bull, Marjorie Bunday, Danya Clevenger, Erica Convery, Meaghan Guterman, Natalie Ingrisano, Shelby Leyland, Maria Männistö, Jessica Martin, Ailisa Newhall, Julie Parsons, Chelsea Walker, Trina Wright, Eliza Woodyard, Kathea Yarnell.

Spes (Hope)

Latin and Sami traditional text

Mia Makaroff (b. 1970, Finland)

Who is like the wise?
Who knows the explanation of things?
I belong to the wind,
But I live,
Maybe that is the meaning of life.
I live here and now...

I won’t be alive tomorrow.
That is the way – and so what.
As no one has power
Over the wind to contain it.
So no one has power
Over the time of their death.
A person’s wisdom brightens their face
And changes its hard appearance.

Radiance

Markdavin Obenza, Founder and Artistic Director

Formerly Vox16, Radiance is a Seattle-based professional vocal ensemble specializing in the performance of American choral music. The group primarily focuses on performing contemporary works by living composers, including local Pacific Northwest composers. Radiance also performs music from the shapenote and Shaker traditions to celebrate and connect the roots of American choral music to contemporary works.

Love Tender Breathing Fragrant

Words by Solomon J.D. Fendell. “Love Lasts Like a Lily.” Poetry Magazine May 1918: 77.

Stacey Philipps

Fendell’s simple, alliterative poem inspired a musical setting exploring the beauty and expressivity of harmony, dissonance, and meaning in each word. Tonal centers shift throughout and focus on phrases to the point of abstraction, meditating on the general theme of love, its myopic nature, its intensity, its fragility, its capriciousness, and its evanescence.

About the composer: Stacey Philipps writes music of close, lush harmonies and contrapuntal textures, exploring the human experience and timbres of voices and instruments in minute, exposed detail and vibrant, sweeping gestures. A lifelong choral singer, Philipps is an early- and new-music devotee, and currently sings with the Oregon Repertory Singers. Her vocal interests extend to a love of composing choral music and art song, as well as collaborating with solo instrumentalists and chamber music ensembles. She is also a concert

producer and arts advocate committed to building community by facilitating the evanescent thrill of live performances. Philipps holds degrees in music composition from Portland State University and in philosophy from St. John's College, Santa Fe. She is a member of the American Composers Forum, the National Association of Composers, Cascadia Composers, and ASCAP and is the proprietor of Sirensong Publishing online at www.staceyphilipps.com.

Text

Love lasts like a lily,
Tender on Time's trail;

Breathing burning beauty,
Fragrant, fine, and frail.

We Thank Thee

Kari Cruver Medina

Words by Ralph Waldo Emerson

About the composer: Kari Cruver Medina is a Seattle-based composer whose work spans a broad palate of stylistic traditions. Her music has been featured across the United States and abroad, with choral and orchestral works premiered recently in both Europe and Asia. www.karimedinamusic.com

Text

For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass so fresh, so sweet;
For song of bird and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

For fragrant air and cooling breeze;
For beauty of the blooming trees,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

For blue of stream and blue of sky;
For pleasant shade of branches high;

For this new morning with its light,
For rest and shelter of the night,
For health and food, for love and friends,
For everything Thy goodness sends,
We thank Thee.

The Tree

Greg Bartholomew

A setting of the poem by 19th Century American poet Jones Very (1813 – 1880)

About the composer: The music of award-winning American composer Greg Bartholomew is frequently performed across the United States and in Canada, Europe and Australia. NPR classical music reviewer Tom Manoff called Bartholomew "a fine composer not afraid of accessibility." Bartholomew studied trombone at John Muir Elementary School and piano at Cornish College of the Arts before earning degrees from the College of William & Mary in Virginia and the University of Washington. He sang with Seattle Pro Musica for more than fifteen years and studied violin with Teo Benson. www.gregbartholomew.com

Text

I love thee when thy swelling buds appear,
And one by one their tender leaves unfold,
As if they knew that warmer suns were near,
Nor longer sought to hide from winter's cold;

And when the autumn winds have stript thee bare,
And round thee lies the smooth, untrodden snow,
When naught is thine that made thee once so fair,
I love to watch thy shadowy form below,

And when with darker growth thy leaves are seen
To veil from view the early robin's nest,
I love to lie beneath thy waving screen,
With limbs by summer's heat and toil oppress'd;

And through thy leafless arms to look above
On stars that brighter beam when most we need their love.



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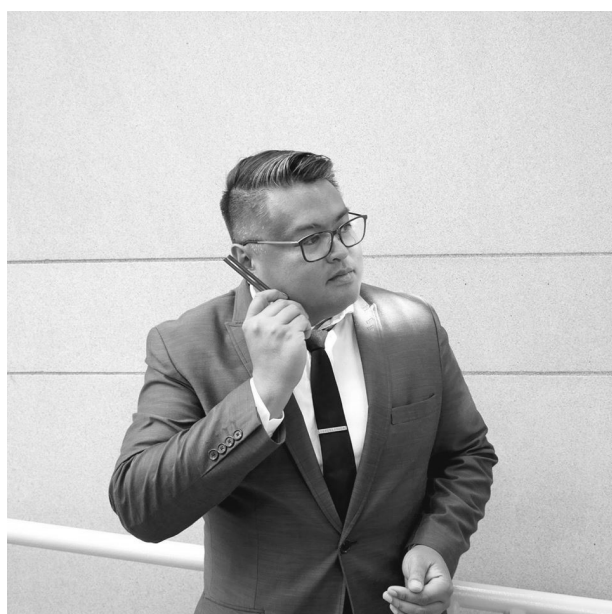
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MARKDAVIN OBENZA

Radiance's Artistic Director Markdavin Obenza has dedicated his career to music. In addition to Radiance, Markdavin is Director and founder of the Byrd Ensemble, a Seattle-based professional ensemble focused primarily on performance and recordings of Renaissance polyphony, and Producer for Scribe Records, an independent record label. He is an active freelance singer who has performed with the Byrd Ensemble, Tudor Choir, Early Music Vancouver, and members of the Tallis Scholars. He is the Director of Choral Music at Trinity Parish Church in Seattle, WA.