

SPENCERVILLE EVENSONG CONCERT SERIES

Sing me to Heaven

Music for Men's voices

May 18, 2013

Program

Sing to My Heart A Song	Vittorio Giannini (1903-1966) arr. Alvin Carpintero
Hymn To God The Father	John Ness Beck (1930-1987)
Agnus Dei (from <i>Misa Criolla</i>)	Ariel Ramirez (1921-2010)
La Tua Semplicita	A. Galbiati, J. Franzel, Kaballá
O Love That Will Never Let Me Go	Albert Peace (1844-1912)
Agnus Dei	Franz Biebl (1906-2001) Adaptation by Alvin Carpintero

INTERMISSION

Sing Me to Heaven	Daniel Gawthrop (b. 1949)
Agnus Dei (from <i>Messe Cum Jubilo</i>)	Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)
Saints Bound For Heaven	Arr. Howard Helvey (b. 1968)
On Jordan's Stormy Banks	Tune from <i>The Southern Harmony</i> Arr. Howard Helvey
Were You There	African American Spiritual Arr. Jamey Ray
Deep River	African American Spiritual arr. Howard Helvey
Morning Trumpet	Tune from <i>The Original Sacred Harp</i> Arr. Michael Richardson

Javier González
Roberto Martinez
Clever Salazar
Aaron Tucker
German Rodriguez
Aaron Wilson
Eduardo González
Alvin Carpintero

Mark Willey, piano & organ
David Schneider, guitar

Program Notes

“In the beginning was the voice. The voice is sounding breath, the audible sign of life.”
– Unknown

The voice, besides being the function of speech, is considered by a majority of scholars as the original musical instrument. In fact, the earliest form of melody is found within Egyptian cultural traditions and also in Judaic psalms and various festival ceremonies. These earliest examples of sung melody later evolved into what we know as Christian plainchant. As chant continued to develop from simple homophonic—which was typical of the Middle Ages—to more polyphonic textures, the range of the voice began to grow requiring higher placed soprano voices. While polyphony required a wider range of registers, women were not allowed to participate as singers within the liturgical services well into the Baroque period. As a result, male ensembles ruled the day in choral singing. While the makeup of any choral ensemble in today’s world is two sections of women (soprano and alto respectively) and two sections of men (bass and tenor), historically each of these voice parts were sung by men.

Though they are unique, there do exist voice classifications such as the male soprano and the contratenore, or male alto. These classifications certainly allow for different textures and colors to be integrated into choral ensembles. One of the most well-known and world-class male ensembles active today is Chanticleer, a twelve-voice group whose repertoire is vast and varied, ranging from Renaissance pieces to more modern and exotic works of the 21st century. They represent a much larger scope, however, of various other male groups and ensembles like New York Polyphony and the MacDowell

Male Chorus that serve to bring all-male choirs to audiences, and whose mission it is to preserve music and traditions that have such a rich and long history.

This afternoon's program will offer glimpses of such genres and stylistic forms as chant, popular spirituals and hymn tunes. One of the most unique compositions highlighting monody and Gregorian chant is the *Messe Cum Jubilo* by French composer Maurice Duruflé, written for men's choir and baritone solo. It is a brilliant combination of early monophonic chant tunes, which gives listeners a portrait of 16th century melody, along with a very post-impressionistic organ accompaniment. The final movement, "Agnus Dei," is one of the most beautiful moments in the work. There are three settings of the Agnus Dei, a traditional liturgical text, included in the program representing varied styles of singing and culture. While Duruflé's example reaches as far back as the Middle Ages and is written from the Romantic perspective, German composer Franz Biebl offers a more lush and glorious polyphonic setting, as transcribed and adapted by composer Alvin Carpintero for today's program. The third setting of the *Agnus Dei* is written by Argentine composer, Ariel Ramirez. It synthesizes popular and liturgical styles and focuses on folk tunes of South America, taking rhythms and melodies of Argentina and incorporating them into the Spanish liturgical text of the Misa Criolla. The Agnus Dei from this setting is typical of the estilo pampeano or pampas, literally meaning "plains," and finds its etymology from the Quechua, the indigenous people of South America from which this particular rhythm or dance style also finds its origins.

By far, one of the most popular styles of folk music for men's chorus is the spiritual. Many popular arrangements of such melodies can be found by well-known African-American composers such as Moses Hogan, Harry Burleigh and Hall Johnson. These men are considered to be some of the principal arrangers and composers noted for bringing to audiences tunes and melodies rooted in America's historical period of slavery. Howard Helvey, however, is a noted composer who has continued this tradition by preserving this great American heritage of human struggle, loss and redemption through song. His settings and arrangements of familiar American folk tunes, beloved hymns and spirituals are widely performed by choirs across the country, and we will perform some of them this afternoon as a celebration of freedom, liberty and the human spirit. Such is the sentiment found in Daniel Gawthrop's *Sing Me To Heaven*. It is the ability to express these ideas of culture and humanity through such a medium as music, which helps elevate and inspire all of us to look back in reflection and look forward in hope. In such moments of delectation, we can find ourselves and be transported elsewhere, perhaps higher and even higher to heaven.

- Notes by Javier Gonzalez

Notable Texts and Poems

Agnus Déi
Qui tólis peccáta mún-di
miserére nóbis
dóna nóbis pácem

Lamb of God
who takes away the sins of the world
grant us mercy,
give us peace.

Hymn to God the Father / John Donne

Wilt Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin, through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

II. Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

III. I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore ;
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore ;
And having done that, Thou hast done ;
I fear no more.

Sing to My Heart A Song / Karl Flaster

Sing, sing to my heart a song
sing to my soul a hymn
of days, days that are fair and strong
of nights that are sweet and dim.

Come then and raise your voice!
Come, let the whole world hear!
For I have made my choice:
You above all are dear.

Days, days that are fair and strong
nights are all sweet and dim.
God made my soul for song
and yearn for its only hymn!

Sing Me To Heaven / Jane Griner

In my heart's sequestered chambers lie truths stripped of poet's gloss.
Words alone are vain and vacant, and my heart is mute.

In response to aching silence memory summons half-heard voices,
And my soul finds primal eloquence and wraps me in song.

If you would comfort me, sing me a lullaby.

If you would win my heart, sing me a love song.

If you would mourn me and bring me to God,

Sing me a requiem, Sing me to heaven.

Touch in me all love and passion, pain and pleasure,

Touch in me grief and comfort; love and passion, Pain and pleasure.

Sing me a lullaby, a love song, a requiem,

Love me, comfort me, bring me to God: Sing me a love song,

Sing me to heaven.

La Tua Semplicita / K. Wojtyła

Stare qui davanti a te
guardare con questi occhi miei
in cui convergono
le stellari vie

Occhi ignari di colui
che silenzioso regna in voi
ma se dalle stelle
luce sconfinata prendera

Penso al giorno che cosi pieno sara
Di stuopore per la tua semplicita
che tiene in pugno il mondo
e in esso durera
ino a qui vivra
e al di la.

To be here in front of you
to watch with these eyes of mine
in which converge
the way of the stars

Eyes unaware of who
in silence reigns in you
and yet is from the stars
Boundless light will blossom

I think of the day that will be so
with amazement of your simplicity
The holds the world in your hand
And in this it will last
To live here and beyond
and beyond.

Chiudero le palpebre
Davanti al tremulo bagliore
Meno io sapro
di piu credero
Fammi aprire gli occhi chiusi
e che tu possa avvolgere
nel tuo vento immenso
l'esilie soffio d'anima
sempre vivra

I will close my eyes
Before the tremulous flash
the less I will know
the more I will believe.
Let's learn to close our eyes
and learn what you can shield
in your endless breeze
The soul's thin breathe
will live on.

Meet the Artists

It is a wonderful joy to bring together this men's ensemble whose members at one time or another attended Washington Adventist University and are also now alumni or soon to be alumni of WAU. As musicians and vocalists, they have all been members of the Columbia Collegiate Chorale and ProMusica under the direction of Dr. James T. Bingham going as far back as 15 years. They have since gone on to pursue graduate degrees and become professionals in music, law, cinematography, and business administration. Many of them have married and formed beautiful families of their own. It is a great honor to be able to share the stage with organist and music director of the Spencerville Adventist church, Mark Willey and also to collaborate with guitarist David Schneider. No matter where their lives have taken them the members of this men's ensemble have always come back to their roots in music from their days at WAU and to this day share a great friendship and love of singing.

A native of Southern California, tenor **Javier González** recently completed his Master's degree in vocal performance and choral conducting at the University of New Mexico. He was recently described in the Albuquerque Journal by music critic and composer Daniel S. Crafts as "a young star on the rise" and is a "...bold arresting tenor... with a shining lyricism." For ten years he served as assistant choir director of the Georgetown Presbyterian Chorale in Washington, D.C., was a voice teacher for seven years at the Spencerville Adventist Academy and has been a guest vocal clinician for the Vocal Arts Society of Washington. He is an alumnus of Washington Adventist University where he earned his Bachelor of Music in performance and a Bachelor of Arts in Theology. As a soloist he has performed nationally/internationally on the stages of Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Dvorak Hall, Teatro Politeama, Ely Cathedral in Cambridge, St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle, the National Cathedral in Washington, St. Francis Cathedral Basilica and Loretto Chapel in Santa Fe, and Popejoy Hall in Albuquerque, appearing with such artists as Plácido Domingo, Branford Marsalis, John Rutter and with orchestras such as The New England Symphonic Ensemble, The Alexandria Symphony, The New Mexico Philharmonic and The Santa Fe Symphony. Mr. González was a finalist in the Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist competition in 2005 and was the first-place winner in the Barry Alexander International Vocal Competition in New York City in 2008. He also won first place in the UNM concerto competition and the New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas regional NATS competition in 2010. On the operatic stage he has performed the roles of Javier in Luisa Fernanda, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Canio in *I Pagliacci*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Roberto in *Le Villi*, Edgar in Puccini's *Edgar* and Jesus in Marcos Galvany's internationally acclaimed operatic tableaux, *Oh My Son*. Mr. González currently serves on the voice faculty at UNM.

Tenor, **Roberto Abel Martinez**, born in New Mexico and raised in Texas, studied under Georgian soprano Medea Ruhadze-Namoradze, and completed his performance degree at Columbia Union College. In his debut performance in 2003 he sang the tenor solo in Vaughan Williams' Serenade to Music at the Kennedy Center under the direction of James T. Bingham. He also appeared as Koko in Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado in 2004; and as Martin in Copland's The Tender Land. Mr. Martinez has travelled nationally and internationally with the Columbia Union College Collegiate Chorale and New England Symphonic Ensemble, where he has recently toured through England, South Africa, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. Roberto was featured in April 2006 as a regional composer at the Aaron Copland festival in Washington, D.C. He also holds a MM in composition from the Catholic University of America. Roberto is a choral director at the Spencerville Adventist Academy where he teaches music to students from the 3rd to 12th grades.

Originally from Chattanooga, Tennessee, tenor **Aaron Tucker** is a junior studying music education at Washington Adventist University. He studies voice in the studio of Medea Namoradze. His past musical performances include solo Oratorio and sacred music beginning in Collegedale Academy in Collegedale, Tennessee, leading up to today soloing with the New England Youth Ensemble under the direction of Preston Hawes. His lighter, lyrical tenor voice has him sing as 1st tenor in the many choirs directed by Dr. James Bingham. Aaron has enjoyed performing in the United States, South Africa, Botswana, England, Brazil, Argentina, Czech Republic, Romania, and Bulgaria. "Whatever you love to do the most, put your whole heart in it."

Tenor, **Clever Salazar** immigrated to the United States from Ecuador at the age of 15 and began his voice training in Manhattan with Rossi Rudett. During this time, Clever performed as a soloist and as a member of the Royal Ambassadors quartet in various venues throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela. Later, he moved to the Washington DC area and earned a Theology degree at Washington Adventist University. While pursuing his degree, he was a member of Pro Musica, performing in the United States, including Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, and the National Gallery of Arts and various halls overseas in Spain, France, Switzerland and Italy. He actively performs as a soloist and is a member of GPC Choir in Washington DC. He recently completed a master's degree in Business Administration at Catholic University of America. He and his wife, Yvonne have an 11 year old son, Caleb.

Aaron Wilson, a native of Washington, DC, graduated from Washington Adventist University (WAU) in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and American Studies. During his time at WAU, Mr. Wilson was a member of the Columbia Colligate Chorale and ProMusica, under the direction of Dr. James Bingham. While a

member of both organizations, Mr. Wilson performed nationally and internationally, including under the baton of world-renowned composer John Rutter on the stage of Carnegie Hall in New York and Mr. Wilson has performed in several concert and opera productions playing the roles of Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas*. Mr. Wilson has studied under Jozef Surowiec, Deborah Thurlow, Vincent Stringer and Medea Namoradze.

Bass, **Alvin Carpintero** is a native of Mexico and obtained his Bachelor of Music degree in Music Performance from Washington Adventist University (formerly, Columbia Union College). During his time there he studied voice under Vincent Stringer and Madea Namoradze. His performance roles include Pooh-Bah, from *The Mikado*, and Figaro, from *The Marriage of Figaro*, both productions as part of the performance workshop of Washington Adventist University. Alvin has been a soloist in Mexico City with the New England Youth Ensemble and in April of 2009, he was one of eight soloists performing Claudio Monteverdi's *Gloria* at Carnegie Hall in New York City with renowned English composer and conductor Dr. John Rutter at the Podium. Alvin is currently the choir director at Georgetown Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC, and sings lead bass in the Sanctuary Choir of Spencerville Seventh-Day Adventist Church. He remains active as a soloist and chorister in the DC-Metro area and finds time to compose, arrange and transcribe music.

A native of Argentina, baritone **German Rodriguez** is a long-time member of Spencerville Church. German has enjoyed making music through the years with all the members of the ensemble, whether in collegiate organizations, church choirs, a professional trio, or impromptu men's quartets and jam sessions. German is an alumnus of Washington Adventist University and the University of Baltimore School of Law. He resides in Baltimore, Maryland with his wife, Amanda, and his son, Benjamin.

Baritone, **Eduardo González** graduated from Columbia Union College in 2005 with a bachelors degree in Documentary Production and a minor in Music. He is currently an editor and cinematographer for his company, Vidrios Imaging & Sound based in Washington, D.C. Though he is often traveling for film projects, he enjoys singing when the opportunity arises. In addition to film, he sings baritone with the Georgetown Presbyterian choir. Some of his favorite memories from his choir days under Dr. James Bingham include playing Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 2005, at the premiere of *The Vision of the Apocalypse* by Dr. Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse at Carnegie Hall, and traveling to England and South Africa in 2005 with the Columbia Collegiate Chorale and New England Youth Ensemble. One wish has yet to be fulfilled, "singing with the fellas for an Evensong concert. I feel privileged to sing with this group today, my greatest friends."