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the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm.

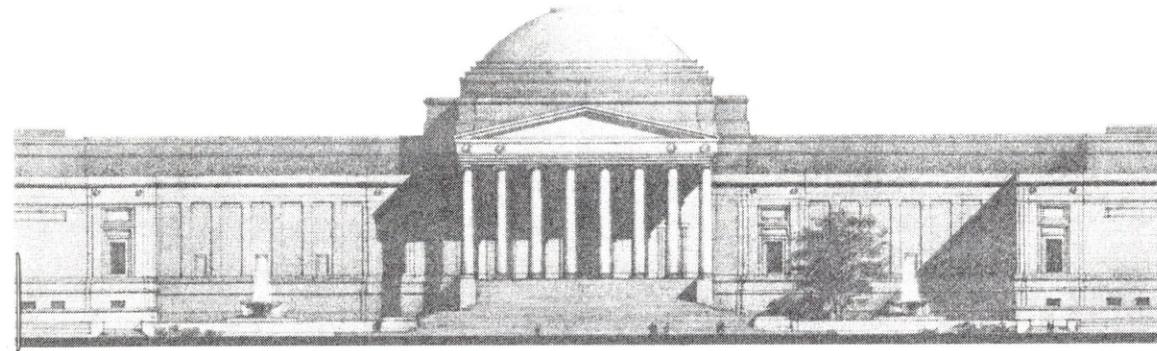
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the
performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones,
pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of
the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

Mailing address
2000B South Club Drive
Landover, MD 20785

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The Sixty-sixth Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,672nd Concert

Davidson Fine Arts Chorale
James Dunaway, *conductor*
Paul Hennessey, *pianist*

April 20, 2008
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672)
Cantate Domino (Sing unto the Lord)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Motet no. 1: *Singet dem Herrn* (Sing unto the Lord)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Kyrie from *Mass in C Major*

Edwin Fissinger (1920–1990)
Lux aeterna (Eternal Light)

Vytautas Miškinis (b. 1954)
Lucis creator optime (Best Creator of Light)

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)
Lux aurumque (Golden Light)

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)
Dirait-on (So They Say)

Frank Martin (1890–1974)
Kyrie and *Sanctus* from *Mass for Double Chorus*

INTERMISSION

John Lennon (1940–1980) and Paul McCartney (b. 1942)
When I'm 64
Arranged for mixed chorus by Ward Swingle

Kurt Weill (1900–1950)
Mack the Knife
Arranged for mixed chorus by Ward Swingle

Freddie Mercury (1946–1991)
Bohemian Rhapsody
Arranged for mixed chorus by James Dunaway

Piero Umiliani (1926–2001)
Manamana
Arranged for mixed chorus by James Dunaway

The Musicians

THE DAVIDSON FINE ARTS CHORALE

In 1981 the Davidson Fine Arts School was founded in Augusta, Georgia. It has consistently been ranked the number-one public school in academic achievement in Georgia and has earned repeated praise for the students' artistic achievements as well. In 2004 the Grammy Foundation named the school the National Grammy Signature School, as home to the top high school music department in the nation. In 2005 the foundation designated the Davidson Fine Arts School a Grammy Gold Signature School.

The Davidson Fine Arts Chorale is composed of advanced vocal students from grades nine through twelve. The group performs regularly at prestigious events in Georgia and across the nation. It has sung at the National Cathedral and at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC, and has been featured in concert series at the Dunwoody United Methodist Church in Atlanta, and at Temple Square in Salt Lake City. It has recently performed at conventions of the American Choral Directors Association and the Georgia Music Educators Association. Last spring the chorale was featured at the Music Educators National Conference, Southern Division, in Charleston, South Carolina.

Renowned for the scope and variety of its repertoire, the ensemble performs major and extended choral works, including operas and works for double chorus. Recent repertoire choices include Johann Sebastian Bach's *Singet dem Herrn* and *Lobet den Herrn*, Johannes Brahms' *Nänie*, Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem*, Howard Hanson's *Song of Democracy*, Joseph Haydn's *Little Organ Solo Mass* and *Mass in Time of War*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Missa Brevis in F Major*, Giovanni Palestrina's *Stabat Mater*, Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, John Rutter's *Gloria*, Arthur Sullivan's *Trial by Jury*, and Eric Whitacre's *When David Heard* and *Leonardo Dreams of His Flying Machine*.

JAMES DUNAWAY

James Dunaway has been the director of the choral program at Davidson Fine Arts School since 1996. His teaching career spans positions in the public schools in Cedar City, Utah; at McMurry University in Abilene, Texas; and at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana. He holds a doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Utah and has guest-conducted and presented clinics in several states. Dunaway is currently completing his final year at Davidson Fine Arts School; he plans to retire in June.

PAUL HENNESSEY

Pianist Paul Hennessey, a graduate of The Catholic University of America, came to Davidson in 1966. He has concertized in Switzerland, Italy, and the United States. In addition to his duties as instructor of piano at Davidson, he is the choir director at Saint Thomas Aquinas School in Augusta, Georgia.

The Program

Heinrich Schütz is generally regarded as the most important German composer to precede Johann Sebastian Bach. During visits to Venice, Schütz heard the music of Giovanni Gabrieli (c. 1554–1612) and Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643). Eventually, his skill as a composer earned him a place with them as a master of early baroque style. Schütz wrote multiple settings of the “Cantate Domino” text throughout his life. The setting used for this evening’s performance was likely written late in the composer’s life, since it is less modal than the earlier settings.

Johann Sebastian Bach is known throughout the world as one of the most diverse, prolific, and gifted composers of all time. During his lifetime, he was known more as a fine organist than as a great composer. Indeed, most of his obituaries neglected to mention his compositions. *Singet dem Herrn*, the first and most brilliant of his six unaccompanied motets, was written for double chorus. These motets are considered unaccompanied only in the sense that they do not have an independent orchestration. However, musical scholars agree that the performance practice of the time would have included continuo, and even possibly several instruments doubling the vocal lines.

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote his *Mass in C Major* in 1807, during the first stage of his composing career. Music historians have sometimes used the term “Haydnesque” in a pejorative manner when referring to Beethoven’s early style. This work does, in fact, follow the general outline that Haydn used in his final six great masses, but many aspects are more reminiscent of Beethoven’s middle compositional period than of Haydn’s final period. Haydn’s best masses are acknowledged as some of the greatest ever written; with the *Mass in C Major*, Beethoven moved the genre even closer to perfection. It communicates the text of the Mass much more directly than the monumental *Missa solemnis*, which Beethoven wrote fifteen years later.

Edwin Fissinger, a prolific choral composer and arranger, chaired the music departments and directed the choirs at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle and North Dakota State University. In addition to publishing a significant body of his own choral works, he sat on the editorial boards of several publications. His *Lux aeterna* is based on plainchant and employs elements of minimalism supported by combinations of quartal and triadic harmonic progressions.

Lithuanian composer Vytautas Miškinis is renowned in Europe as a conductor and an international choral adjudicator as well as a composer. He has received numerous international awards, including an honorary membership in the American Choral Directors Association. His music combines sharp unresolved dissonances with expressive lyricism.

Eric Whitacre arrived on the American choral scene in the mid 1990s with highly expressive and text-driven compositions that explore simple textures and expressive dissonances. After graduating from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Whitacre attended the Juilliard School of Music, where he studied with John Corigliano and David Diamond. A recording of his choral works by the Brigham Young University Singers was nominated for a Grammy in 2003. Whitacre’s use of dissonance in *Lux aurumque* (Golden Light) is typical of his style—dissonances in this composition are diatonic, and they tend to be suspended from a previous simple chord. This technique creates beautiful sonorities that are very singable.

Morten Lauridsen, composer-in-residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1994 to 2001, is professor of composition at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Lauridsen has written several choral cycles, including *Les Chansons des roses*, of which *Dirait-on* is the final song. Lauridsen opted to set *Dirait-on* in the style of a French *chanson populaire*, a cabaret or folk song. The sensuous text is by Rainer Maria Rilke, who, although primarily known as one of the finest German-language poets, wrote a substantial amount of French poetry in tribute to his adopted home, the Swiss canton of Valais. Recordings of Lauridsen’s compositions received Grammy nominations in 1998 and 2006.

Frank Martin was born in Geneva, Switzerland, and taught in Germany and the Netherlands as well as in his homeland. He is best known for two compositions: the *Mass for Double Chorus*, written at the beginning of his career, and the *Polyptyque*, written near the end of his life for solo violin and two orchestras. Yehudi Menuhin compared the violin solo in this piece to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach when he commented, “When I play the *Polyptyque* by Frank Martin, I feel the same responsibility, the same exaltation, as when I play Bach’s *Chaconne*.”

Martin’s *Mass for Double Chorus* was completed in 1926, but was not premiered until 1963. Since then it has become his most frequently performed work. Several aspects of the composition pay homage to past techniques. The tradition of polychoral music stems from the late Renaissance, and the texture of the beginning of the *Kyrie* brings to mind Renaissance counterpoint. Several textures and harmonies evoke medieval techniques. Other characteristics are typical of the early twentieth century. The driving rhythms of the *Sanctus* suggest the music of Stravinsky, and many harmonies prompt memories of Debussy or Fauré. This combination of old and new produces a stirring stylistic synthesis. Near the end of his life, Martin dismissed the *Mass for Double Chorus* as a “sin of my youth.” This was most likely due to the fact that he changed his compositional style after completing the *Mass*. His new style was more atonal and employed elements of the twelve-tone technique of Arnold Schönberg. Today, many music scholars hold a favorable view of the *Mass for Double Chorus*, and maintain that the work foreshadowed the compositional style of later composers, such as Eric Whitacre, by eighty years.

John Lennon and Paul McCartney collaborated in the production of hundreds of songs during the time when the Beatles “rocked” the world. Generally, Lennon was the lyricist and McCartney the composer. Their alliance produced a huge variety of styles, with some even looking back to baroque practices. Their *When I’m 64* is reminiscent of music of the 1920s. Ward Swingle’s arrangement requires the voices to function as the instruments did in the original recording.

Kurt Weill came from a classical German music background, with Engelbert Humperdinck (1854–1921) and Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924) as his mentors. He was also influenced by Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), and in the 1920s he began a gradual emancipation from German classical style and explored the expressive potential of popular styles. His first success in this regard was *The Threepenny Opera*, written in 1928. *Mack the Knife*, the opening number of this opera, shows a mastery of the jazz idiom. This setting of macabre lyrics by Bertholt Brecht, now a jazz classic, deals with gruesomeness in an ironic way, as does the newly-revived musical *Sweeney Todd*.

Freddie Mercury, born Farokh Bulsara, studied at Imperial College in his native Zanzibar in the late 1960s and developed a fascination for a rock group named Smile. The group dissolved in 1970, at which point Freddie left his own band, joined with the remnants of Smile, changed the name of the group to Queen, and changed his last name to Mercury (after the recording label). When the band members decided to release *Bohemian Rhapsody* in 1975, everyone told them it was far too long at nearly six minutes and would never be a hit. However, Freddie gave a copy of the single to the London DJ Kenny Everett, informing him that it was for him personally, and that he was not to air it. Nevertheless, Everett did air it—fourteen times in two days. Soon every major radio station was playing the full version of the song. It was a colossal hit, and established Queen as the top band of the era. Further, the video for the single became the genesis of the video craze. In the United Kingdom, *Bohemian Rhapsody* ranks as the most popular rock tune of all time, eclipsing even the music of the Beatles. There has been much discussion as to the meaning of the text. Perhaps the best clue is in the opening lines:

Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?
Caught in a landslide, No escape from reality,
Open your eyes, Look up to the skies, and see.

The Davidson Fine Arts Chorale interprets this as an invitation for the listener to participate in an interesting and convoluted fantasy, perhaps even a parody of opera. James Dunaway’s arrangement tries to maintain the

integrity of the original version's instrumental parts. The chorale premiered this arrangement in 2005 at the American Choral Directors Association National Convention.

Piero Umiliani, an Italian film composer, is most famous for his 1968 song *Manamana*, which was originally part of the sound track of a Swedish soft-porn documentary, *Svezia, inferno e paradiso* (Sweden, Heaven and Hell). In 1977 this song became world-famous when it was performed on *The Muppet Show*. It was also a signature tune for the *Benny Hill Show*.

Program notes by James Dunaway

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

Zuill Bailey, *cellist*
Simone Dinnerstein, *pianist*

The complete Beethoven sonatas for piano and cello

April 27, 2008
Sunday evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court