



News Release

Contact: Malia Cole
612-547-1459
mcole@vocalessence.org

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2011

VOCALESSENCE ANNOUNCES ITS 2011-2012 SEASON

A musical travel adventure with Philip Brunelle and VocalEssence

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (March 4, 2011) —VocalEssence proudly announces the 2011-2012 Concert Season — a year of musical exploration and adventure. Under the direction of Artistic Director and Founder Philip Brunelle, the 43rd season includes seven subscription concerts, two special events, and one community concert.

Season tickets go on sale beginning Friday, March 4, 2011. VocalEssence subscribers receive premium seating and save 15% off regular single ticket prices. Subscriptions can be ordered online at www.vocalessence.org or 612-371-5642.

2011-2012 Season highlights include:

- Thrilling new music by Grammy Award-winning composers **William Bolcom** and **Michael Daugherty** — co-commissioned by VocalEssence.
- An all-Minnesota **Homecoming Concert**, following a statewide tour along Highway 23.
- The world premiere of Joyce Award-winning composer Hannibal Lokumbe's ***In the Spirit of Being***.
- A collaboration with **The Rose Ensemble**, bringing traditional and contemporary sounds together for ***Música de México***.
- New music by British composers Tarik O'Regan and Jonathan Dove with **Copper Street Brass Quintet**.
- The **Chorus America Conference Opening Gala Concert**, welcoming a multitude of Minnesota choirs to Orchestra Hall.

VocalEssence performs in the region's leading venues, including Orchestra Hall, Ted Mann Concert Hall, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts and The Fitzgerald Theatre, as well as beautiful churches such as Plymouth Congregational Church (Minneapolis), Central Lutheran Church (Minneapolis), Trinity Lutheran Church (Stillwater), Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church (Apple Valley), Colonial Church of Edina, and St. Olaf Catholic Church (Minneapolis).

For additional press information, please contact Malia Cole, 612-547-1459 or mcole@vocalessence.org. Season images are available at www.vocalessence.org/media/images.

(more)

Season Subscription Performances

The Gift of Fire

Sunday, October 9, 2011 at 4 pm
Orchestra Hall, 1111 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis
Concert Conversation at 3 pm with William Bolcom and Michael Daugherty

Jeffrey Biegel, piano
Magnum Chorum, Christopher Aspaas, music director
The Singers – Minnesota Choral Artists, Matthew Culloton, artistic director
St. Olaf College Manitou Singers, Sigrid Johnson, conductor
VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers, Philip Brunelle, conductor
Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, William Schrickel, music director

The season debuts with thrilling new music for massed chorus and orchestra by two Grammy Award-winning composers. Co-commissioned by VocalEssence and a consortium of national music organizations, William Bolcom's dramatic *Prometheus* portrays the Greek god who stole fire from Zeus and gave it to mortals. The piece will feature the artistry of pianist Jeffrey Biegel. Co-commissioned by VocalEssence and the Pacific Symphony, Michael Daugherty's compelling *Mt. Rushmore* sets the words of four great American presidents to music. The season opening concert also honors the musical contributions of Sigrid Johnson, who celebrates her 20th anniversary as VocalEssence Associate Conductor this year.

Prometheus Co-Commissioning Partners

Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra
Roberto Minczuk, Music Director

Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra
Neal Gittleman, Music Director

Detroit Symphony Orchestra:
Leonard Slatkin, Music Director

Knoxville Symphony Orchestra
Lucas Richman, Music Director

New Mexico Symphony Orchestra
Guillermo Figueroa, Music Director

Springfield Symphony Orchestra
Kevin Rhodes, Music Director

Pacific Symphony Orchestra
Carl St. Clair, Music Director

University of Kentucky at Lexington
John Nardolillo, Music Director

VocalEssence
Philip Brunelle, Music Director

North Star Tour: Homecoming Concert

Sunday, November 6, 2011 at 4 pm
The Fitzgerald Theater, 10 East Exchange Street, Saint Paul
Concert Conversation at 3 pm with select members of the Ensemble Singers

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers
Philip Brunelle, conductor

Funded through a Minnesota State Arts Board Legacy Grant, the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers are touring the North Star state along scenic Highway 23 throughout October and November. The tour comes to a hometown conclusion at The Fitzgerald Theater in St. Paul on November 6. The tour repertoire will focus on Minnesota's musical heritage, including melodies of Minnesotan composers, famous singer-songwriters and the folksongs of our grandparents.

(More)

Season Subscription Performances (Continued)

Welcome Christmas

Saturday, December 3, 2011 at 7:30 pm

Colonial Church of Edina, 6200 Colonial Way, Edina

Sunday, December 4, 2011 at 4 pm

Plymouth Congregational Church, 1919 LaSalle Avenue, Minneapolis

Friday, December 9, 2011 at 7:30 pm

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Road, Apple Valley

Saturday, December 10, 2011 at 7:30 pm

Trinity Lutheran Church, 115 North 4th Street, Stillwater

Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 4 pm

Plymouth Congregational Church, 1919 LaSalle Avenue, Minneapolis

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

Chamber orchestra

Philip Brunelle, conductor

This year's VocalEssence Welcome Christmas concert celebrates the holidays with the warmth of traditional carols and the exhilaration of new songs for the season. The concert features a bouquet of carols from France as well as this year's **Welcome Christmas Carol Contest**-winning carols — slated this year for men's chorus and English horn. The *pièce de résistance* is the classic cantata *So Hallow'd Is the Time* by Stephen Paulus.

WITNESS: In the Spirit of Being

Sunday, February 19, 2012 at 4 pm

Ordway Center for the Performing Arts

345 Washington Street, Saint Paul

Concert Conversation at 3 pm with Hannibal Lokumbe

Composer Hannibal Lokumbe, trumpet

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

Children's Choir

Jazz Quintet (trumpet, piano, bass, and African percussion)

Philip Brunelle, conductor

Funded through a major award from The Joyce Foundation, VocalEssence is commissioning Hannibal Lokumbe (*Dear Mrs. Parks*, WITNESS 2007) to create a new musical work for the 2012 WITNESS concert. Titled *In the Spirit of Being*, the sixty-minute, four-movement piece will represent the stages of the human experience — birth, struggle, forgiveness/resolution, and peace — as seen through the eyes of the composer. During the world premiere, each movement will be introduced by a spiritual leader from the community.

(More)

Season Subscription Performances (Continued)

Música de México

Friday, March 9, 2012 at 8 pm

Saturday, March 10, 2012 at 8 pm

Ted Mann Concert Hall

2128 4th Street South, Minneapolis

Concert Conversation at 7 pm with Jordan Sramek

The Rose Ensemble, Jordan Sramek, artistic director

University of St. Thomas Concert Choir, Angela Broecker, music director

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers

Philip Brunelle, conductor

Mexico stretches more than two thousand miles from southeast to northwest, a vast arena of cultures and languages. The Rose Ensemble, University of St. Thomas Concert Choir and the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers will combine their voices to explore Mexico's music of ancient times, the Renaissance and today. Hear settings of traditional folk music along with music of today's contemporary Mexican composers sung in Spanish as well as Mexico's many indigenous languages.

Brits & Brass

Friday, April 13, 2012 at 8 pm

Central Lutheran Church

333 12th Street South, Minneapolis

Concert Conversation at 7 pm with composer Tarik O'Regan

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

Copper Street Brass Quintet

Philip Brunelle, conductor

Accompanied by the Copper Street Brass Quintet, VocalEssence will guide a musical tour of Britain's leading contemporary composers, giving the American premieres of *The Night's Untruth* by Tarik O'Regan (co-commissioned by VocalEssence) and *The Far Theatricals of Day* by Jonathan Dove.

Chorus America Conference: Opening Gala Concert

Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at 8 pm

Orchestra Hall

1111 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis

As the host of the 2012 Chorus America Conference, VocalEssence will welcome a multitude of Minnesota choirs to join them on stage for a colossal choral concert celebrating Minnesota composers. It promises to be an unforgettable night — the perfect season finale for any choral music lover.

(More)

2011-2012 Season Special Events

Special Event

Star of Wonder

Family Holiday Concert

Saturday, December 10, 2011 at 10 am

Guild Hall, Plymouth Congregational Church, 1919 LaSalle Avenue, Minneapolis

Philip Brunelle and the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers present their annual one-hour family holiday concert. Youngsters are invited to sit on rugs and pillows up close to the singers to hear festive and familiar holiday music. As always, expect a frenetic close with a rousing “12 Days of Christmas” sing-along. Perfect for the young and young at heart!

Community Concert

¡Cantaré! Community Concert

Tuesday, May 22, 2012 at 7 pm

Burnsville Performing Arts Center

12600 Nicollet Avenue, Burnsville

Now in its fourth year, the VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! program brings the talents of composers from Mexico directly to Minnesota classrooms. The ¡Cantaré! Community Concert will feature world premieres of music by Mexican composers sung by local elementary, high school and community choral singers.

Special Event

The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass

Thursday, June 14, 2012 at 8 pm

St. Olaf Catholic Church

215 8th Street South, Minneapolis

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers

Monroe Crossing

Philip Brunelle, conductor

The public is invited to join Chorus America Conference attendees as the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers and Monroe Crossing perform Carol Barnett’s *The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass*. The concert will also feature Dominick Argento’s *Walden Pond*.

(More)

VocalEssence Subscription Information

The VocalEssence 2011-2012 season brochure is now available. **Season tickets go on sale beginning Friday, March 4, 2011.** VocalEssence subscribers may create their own subscription package, choosing all seven concerts or any four, five or six season concerts to create their own custom season ticket subscription. Subscription prices range from \$150- \$259. VocalEssence subscribers enjoy the best seats in every venue, save 15% off regular single ticket prices, and save on box office fees.

For more information about VocalEssence subscriptions, please call the Orchestra Hall Box Office at **612-371-5642** or **800-292-4141** (toll-free) Tuesday through Friday from 10 am-5 pm and Saturday from 12 pm-5 pm; or visit the VocalEssence website at **www.vocalescence.org**.

The Orchestra Hall Box Office is located at the corner of 11th Street and Marquette Avenue in downtown Minneapolis.

About VocalEssence

Called “one of the irreplaceable music ensembles of our time” by Dana Gioia, past chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, VocalEssence was founded in 1969 by Artistic Director Philip Brunelle. Recognized internationally for its innovative exploration of music for voices and instruments, the organization presents an engaging collection of concerts featuring the 130-voice VocalEssence Chorus, the 32-voice Ensemble Singers (well known for their appearances on *A Prairie Home Companion* with Garrison Keillor), guest soloists and instrumentalists. In addition to championing lesser-known works of the past, VocalEssence has an unwavering commitment to today’s composers resulting in more than 130 commissions and world premieres to date. VocalEssence has released thirteen commercial recordings, including four WITNESS CDs of music by African American composers and artists available on the Clarion label. 2010 saw the release of two new CDs on Clarion: *Behold This Heavenly Night*, a Christmas CD; and *Gratitude, Gravy & Garrison*, a live concert Thanksgiving CD with Garrison Keillor.

###