



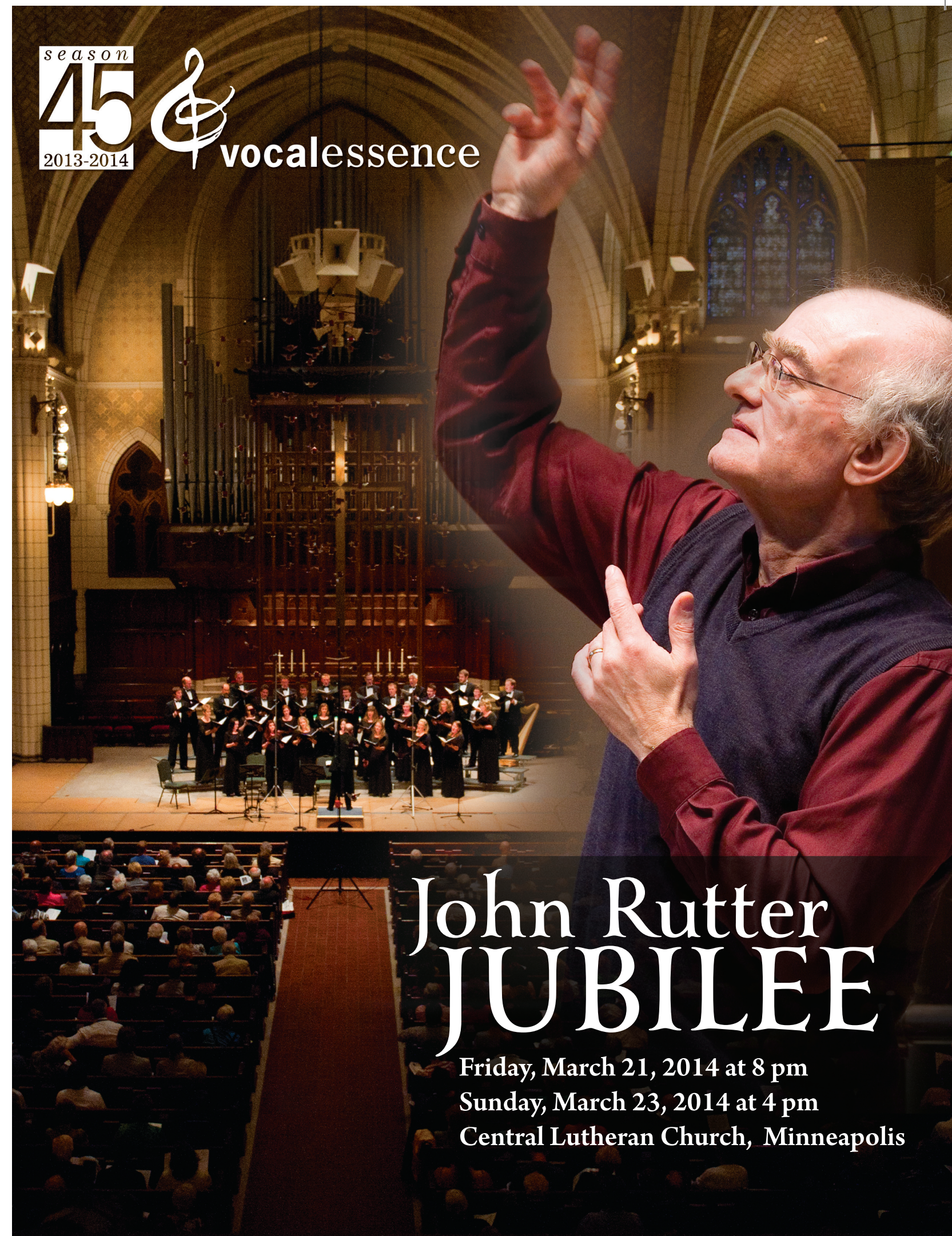
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season
45
2013-2014



vocalescence

John Rutter JUBILEE

Friday, March 21, 2014 at 8 pm

Sunday, March 23, 2014 at 4 pm

Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis



2013-2014

45th Anniversary Season

John Rutter JUBILEE

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333 South 12th Street
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*Concert Conversation with John Birge
and Philip Brunelle at 7 pm.*

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*Concert Conversation with John Birge
and Philip Brunelle at 3 pm.*

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers
Philip Brunelle, *conductor*

2013-2014
Season Sponsors



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- Latecomers will be seated at appropriate pauses in the concert according to the conductor's wishes. Please plan plenty of time for locating the concert venue and parking. Or better yet, allow an extra hour and join us for **Concert Conversations** with the composers and artists, held one hour before most concerts.
- Programs and artists are subject to change without notice.



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The Program

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

A Dedication and an Amen (2010)

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers Audience Sing

All Creatures of Our God and King (1974)
Tesfa Wondemagegnhu, *co-conductor*

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers

Five Childhood Lyrics (1973)

Birthday Madrigals (1995)

Carol of the Magi (2009)

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

Audience Sing

Down By the Riverside (1975)

— Intermission —

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

Requiem (1985)
Mari M. Scott, *soprano*

Welcome to the John Rutter Jubilee!



John Rutter holds a special place not only in my heart, but also in the hearts of the choral community. His work has been a part of our repertoire for dozens of years, especially as

part of our annual **Welcome Christmas** celebrations. After hearing one of John's pieces, it is easy to understand why he is an indispensable composer not only in England, but also around the world.

Simply put, the music of John Rutter truly moves people. Whether you are a first-time listener or a longtime fan, we hope that this Jubilee will raise your spirits.

I know that I am looking forward to presenting his work to you with the help of the VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers. And, while we wish he could be here with us today though this is not possible, we wish him the best for a speedy recovery.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Philip Brunelle".

Orchestra Roster

Rachel Brandwein, *harp*
Christopher Brown, *bass*
Sarah Carmack, *oboe*
Sally Dorer, *cello*
Michele Frisch, *flute*
David Hagedorn, *percussion*
Mark Sedio, *organ/piano*
Christopher Volpe, *orchestra contractor*

Text and Translations

A Dedication and an Amen

John Rutter (2010)

Text by John Rutter

May my hands be strong yet gentle;
May my head be held up high.
May my feet be firm upon the ground,
With my face toward the sky.
May my shoulders bear each burden,
And my back be never bowed.
May my heart be kind, and wise enough
To be humble more than proud.
With so many roads to follow,
So many dreams, and schemes to plan,
If I may not change the whole wide world,
May I do the best I can.
Amen.

All Creatures of Our God and King

St. Francis of Assisi

Paraphrased by W.H. Draper, alt.

arr. John Rutter (1974)

1. Audience and Chorus

*All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing
Alleluia! Alleluia!
O burning sun with golden beam,
O silver moon with softer gleam:*

Refrain:

*Sing your praises! Sing your praises!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

2. Audience and Chorus

*O rushing wind that is so strong,
And clouds that sail in heav'n along,
Sing your praises! Alleluia!
O rising morn, in praise rejoice,
O stars of evening, find a voice: Refrain*

3. Chorus

*O flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for your God to hear,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
O fire, so dazzling and so bright,
That gives to us both warmth and light: Refrain*

4. Chorus

*Dear mother earth, who day by day
Unfolds rich blessings on our way,
Sing your praises! Alleluia!
The flower's and fruits that in Thee grow,
Let them God's glory also show: Refrain*

5. Audience and Chorus

And all ye souls of tender heart,

*Forgiving others, take your part,
Sing your praises! Alleluia!
To you we lift our pain and care,
Receive the burdens that we bear: Refrain*

6. Chorus

*And thou, O kind and gentle death,
Prepare to hush our final breath,
Sing your praises! Alleluia!
Christ goes before us to renew
The way that leads us home to you. Refrain*

7. Audience and Chorus

*Let all creation sing God's praise,
In humbleness through all our days,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God the Maker, Praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One: Refrain*

Five Childhood Lyrics

John Rutter (1973)

Monday's Child

Traditional

Monday's child is fair of face,
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loving and giving,
Saturday's child works hard for his living,
And the child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is bonny and blithe, and good and gay.

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat

Edward Lear

The owl and the pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The owl looked up to the stars above
And sang to a small guitar,
'O lovely pussy! O pussy, my love,
What a beautiful pussy you are!'

Pussy said to the owl, 'You elegant fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!'
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?
They sailed away for a year and a day,
To the land where the Bong-tree grows,
And there in a wood a piggywig stood,
With a ring at the end of his nose.
'Dear pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?' Said the piggy, 'I will.'

So they took it away and were married next day
By the turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince, and slices of quince
Which they ate with a runcible spoon,
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon.

Windy Nights

Robert Lewis Stevenson

Whenever the moon and the stars are set,
Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud
And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

Traditional

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on.
Four corners to my bed,
Four angels round my head;
One to watch, and one to pray.
And two to bear my soul away.

Sing a Song of Sixpence

Traditional

Sing a song of sixpence, a pocket full of rye;
Four and twenty blackbirds, baked in a pie.
When the pie was opened the birds began to sing;
Was not that a dainty dish to set before the king?

The king was in his counting house, counting out his money;
The queen was in the parlour, eating bread and honey.
The maid was in the garden hanging out the clothes,
There came a little blackbird and snapp'd off her nose.

Birthday Madrigals

John Rutter (1995)

It was a lover and his lass

William Shakespeare

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonny no,

That o'er the green corn fields did pass
In Spring time, The only pretty ring time:
When birds do sing, *hey ding-a-ding, ding:*
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonny no,
These pretty country folks would lie,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonny no,
In Spring time, the only pretty ring time.
When birds do sing, *hey ding-a-ding, ding:*
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And therefore take the present time,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonny no,
For love is crownèd with the prime,
In Spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, *hey ding-a-ding, ding:*
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

Draw on, sweet night

John Wilbye

Draw on, sweet night, best friend unto those cares
That do arise from painful melancholy.
My life so ill from want of comfort fares,
That unto thee I consecrate it wholly.

My griefs when they be told
To shades and darkness, find some ease from paining,
And while thou all in silence dost enfold,
I then shall have best time for my complaining.

Come live with me

Marlowe and (attributed to) Raleigh

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, and hills and fields,
Woods or steepy mountains yields.
If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.

And we will sit upon the rocks
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.
Time drives the flocks from field to fold,
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complains of cares to come.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,

A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle:
The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yields:
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;
Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

The shepherd's swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.
If youth could last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy love.

My true-love hath my heart

Sir Philip Sidney

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange, one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a better bargain driven.

His heart in me keeps me and him in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own;
I cherish his, because in me it bides.

His heart his wound received from my sight,
My heart was wounded with his wounded heart;
For as from me, on him his hurt did light,
So still me thought in me his hurt did smart.

Both, equal hurt, in this change sought our bliss:
My true love hath my heart and I have his.

When daisies pied

William Shakespeare and George Peele

When daisies pied and violets blue,
And ladysmocks all silverwhite,
And cuckoobuds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he:
Cuckoo, O word of fear,
Cuckoo, Unpleasing to a married ear!

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are ploughman's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he:
Cuckoo, O word of fear,
Cuckoo, Unpleasing to a married ear!

When as the rye reach to the chin,
And chopcherry, chopcherry ripe within,
And strawberries swimming in the cream,
And schoolboys playing in the stream;
Then oh, then oh, my true love said,
Until that time should come again
She could not live a maid.
Cuckoo, O word of fear,
Cuckoo, Unpleasing to a married ear!

Carol of the Magi

John Rutter (2009)

We rode all night through fields of darkness,
Our guiding light the Eastern star;
We came to Bethlehem, we all were weary:
We'd traveled far that night, we'd traveled far.

We heard that here we'd find Messiah,
Foretold by seers from days of old;
We looked for palaces: and found a stable:
Could it be here, so bare and cold?

We entered in and there we saw him;
It seemed we'd known him from long before:
A child like any child, yet somehow different:
The face of every child in him we saw.

We'd brought him gifts, and now we offered them;
We knelt down low in silent prayer.
With eyes that seemed to know both joy and sadness
The child looked down as we knelt there.

So long ago, yet I remember
That child who lay at Mary's knee;
How strange that every child seems so much like him:
His is the face I seem to see.

Down by the Riverside

*American Traditional
arr. John Rutter (1975)*

I'm goin' lay down my heavy load
Down by the riverside,
And I ain't gonna study war no more.

I'm goin' to lay down my sword and shield,
Down by the riverside,
And I ain't gonna study war no more.

I'm goin' to put on my trav'lin' shoes
Down by the riverside,
And I ain't gonna study war no more.

I'm goin' to put on my long white robe
Down by the riverside,
And I ain't gonna study war no more.

I'm goin' to put on my starry crown
Down by the riverside,
And I ain't gonna study war no more.

Requiem

John Rutter (1985)

Requiem Aeternam

Grant them rest eternal, Lord our God, we pray to thee:
and light perpetual shine on them forever.
Thou, Lord, art worshipped in Sion; thy praises shall ever be
sung in all Jerusalem.
O hear us; O Lord, hear thy faithful servants' prayer; to thee
shall all mortal flesh return.
Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Out of the Deep

Psalms 130

Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord:
Lord, hear my voice.
O let thine ears consider well: the voice of my complaint.
If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss:
O Lord, who may abide it?
For there is mercy with thee: therefore shalt thou be feared.
I look for the Lord; my soul doth wait for him:
in his word is my trust.
My soul fleeeth unto the Lord; before the morning watch, I say,
before the morning watch
O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy:
and with him is plenteous redemption.
And he shall redeem Israel: from all his sins.

Pie Jesu

Blessed Jesus, Lord I pray in thy mercy grant them rest.
Lord our God, we pray thee, grant them everlasting rest.

Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of power and majesty.
Heaven and Earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed are they who come in the name of the Lord our God.
Hosanna in the highest.

Agnus Dei

Book of Common Prayer 1662

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world: in thy
mercy, grant them rest.
Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is
full of misery. He cometh up, and is cut down like a
flower, he fleeth as it were a shadow.
In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek
for succour?
I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that
believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:
and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

The Lord is my shepherd

Psalms 23

The Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing.
He shall feed me in a green pasture and lead me forth beside
the waters of comfort.
He shall convert my soul and bring me forth in the paths of
righteousness, for his Name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I
will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff
comfort me.
Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble
me: thou has anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall
be full.
But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Lux aeterna

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me,
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their
labors: even so saith the Spirit.
Light eternal shine upon them, Lord, we pray: with saints
and angels ever dwelling, for thy mercy's sake, may they
rest in peace.
Grant them rest eternal, Lord our God, we pray to thee:
and light perpetual shine on them forever.

Program Notes

Dear Minnesota friends,

I am delighted that VocalEssence is giving these concerts of my music, but truly regretful that I cannot be with you all in person. I am fit and well, but last summer I had a nasty medical encounter with two acronyms – DVT and PE (deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolisms) – and on the stern advice of my doctor, I am grounded like a naughty teenager, not allowed to risk long-haul flying until April.

My old friend Philip Brunelle, a long-time supporter and champion of my music, is at the podium, and I send every good wish for what I know will be a terrific performance. I hope you have brought flowers ready to hand out to him and his wonderful VocalEssence team – have a great concert!

Sincerely,



— John Rutter



Birthday Madrigals

The first question, of course, is ‘whose birthday?’, and if I may drop an illustrious name in this first sentence, it was George Shearing’s birthday – his 75th, which was celebrated in England where he loved to spend each summer at his cottage in the Cotswold Hills. George was blind, but always delighted in telling visitors that he ‘bought it for the view’. I am proud to have numbered George and Ellie Shearing among my friends – I should really refer to them as Sir George and Eleanor, Lady Shearing, because George received a knighthood towards the end of his life – and I wrote the Birthday Madrigals for a concert in George’s honor in 1995. They have a flavor of jazz, perhaps, but also of the Elizabethan era, the England of William Shakespeare, which George loved, and the texts all date from that period.

Carol of the Magi

You have to imagine that you are one of the wise men, thinking back as an old man, many years after the event, on your visit to Bethlehem. The important part for solo cello is maybe like the thoughts and reflections passing through the mind of the old man, and the words, which I wrote myself, were inspired by the belief common in Latin countries that in the face of every child we see the face of Christ.

Requiem

I have always hoped that my music speaks for itself and does not really need a commentary – especially with my Requiem, because life, death and bereavement are universal. Everyone has their own personal experiences of them which affect how they want to listen to a Requiem, and it would be wrong to dictate what anyone should be thinking and feeling as they listen.

From the composer’s standpoint, what makes a Requiem different is that you generally only write one of them, so it should probably stand as an honest expression of your view of the mighty themes of life and death, at least at the time you write it. Thinking back to 1985, when I wrote my Requiem, I remember that I did not want to write a big dramatic setting like Berlioz or Verdi; I preferred something on a more intimate scale like Fauré or Duruflé. I wanted to treat the text with the same freedom as Fauré, selecting only those parts of the Latin Mass for the Dead which seemed to fit what I wanted to express, and, like Benjamin Britten in his War Requiem, I wanted to add other texts where I felt them to be appropriate. I remember that I wanted the music to be accessible, so that no one should feel shut out as they listened. I did not want to downplay the darkness of death – in fact the Agnus Dei movement is some of the darkest music I have written – but I wanted there to be light at the end of the tunnel.

Would I write the same Requiem now? Of course not, because we move on and you can’t swim in the same river twice. But I am happy that the Requiem I wrote back then has, I believe, brought consolation and peace to many listeners. I hope that it will speak to you, its audience, as well.

Featured Composer

John Rutter

John Rutter was born in London in 1945 and received his first musical education as a chorister at Highgate School. He went on to study music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he wrote his first published compositions and conducted his first recording while still a student. His compositional career has embraced large- and small-scale choral works, orchestral and instrumental pieces, a piano concerto, two children's operas, music for television, and specialist writing for such groups as the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble and the King's Singers.

His larger choral works, Gloria (1974), Requiem (1985), Magnificat (1990), Psalmfest (1993) and Mass of the Children (2003) have been performed many times in Britain, North America, and a growing number of other countries. He co-edited four volumes in the Carols for Choirs series with Sir David Willcocks, and, more recently, has edited the first two volumes in the new Oxford Choral Classics series, Opera Choruses (1995) and European Sacred Music (1996). From 1975 to 1979 he was Director of Music at Clare College, whose choir he directed in a number of broadcasts and recordings.

After giving up the Clare post to allow more time for composition, he formed the Cambridge Singers as a professional chamber choir primarily dedicated to recording, and he now divides his time between composition and conducting. He has guest-conducted or lectured at many concert halls, universities, churches, music festivals, and conferences in Europe, Africa, North and Central America, and Australia and other neighboring islands in the South Pacific. His music has been heard on many VocalEssence concerts over the years, especially his many settings of carols for Christmas.

In 1996 the Archbishop of Canterbury conferred a Lambeth Doctorate of Music upon him in recognition of his contribution to church music. He was honored in the 2007 Queen's New Year Honours List, being awarded a CBE for services to music.

Featured Soloist



Mari M. Scott

Mari M. Scott is pleased to be singing with the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers for her seventh season. This is Mari's second time being featured as a soprano soloist with VocalEssence. Her first solo was for Stephen Paulus' *So Hallow'd is the Time*. She has been a soloist in other major works including St. John's Passion, Brahms' Requiem, and Orff's Carmina Burana. Mari holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Valparaiso University and completed her Orff-Schulwerk training at the University of St. Thomas. "Ms. Scott" proudly teaches elementary music at Beacon Academy Charter School in Maple Grove. During the summer, Mari enjoys teaching Music Together, an early childhood family music class.



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About VocalEssence

The Mission of VocalEssence

VocalEssence champions choral music of all genres, celebrating the vocal experience through innovative concerts, commissions, and community engagement programs.

VocalEssence is renowned for its innovative exploration of music for voices and instruments under the enthusiastic direction of Artistic Director and Founder Philip Brunelle. Each season, VocalEssence presents an eclectic series of concerts featuring the 100-voice VocalEssence Chorus, the 32-voice professional Ensemble Singers, and an array of guest soloists and instrumentalists.

VocalEssence was founded in 1969 as the Plymouth Music Series, an arts outreach program of Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis and incorporated as a separate 501(c)(3) non-profit in 1979. In 2002, the Plymouth Music Series changed its name to VocalEssence, capturing the essence of its mission to explore music for the human voice, from the spoken word to choral singing.

In addition to championing lesser-known works of the past, VocalEssence has an unwavering commitment to today's composers, which has resulted in more than 160 world premieres to date. The organization has received the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music six times and has been honored with more Chorus America awards than any other ensemble nationwide, including the once-in-an-organizational-lifetime Margaret Hillis Achievement Award for Choral Excellence.

Beyond its work in performances and recordings of choral music, VocalEssence reaches into the community with programs that impact thousands of students, singers and composers every year. **WITNESS** celebrates the contributions of African Americans to our shared American heritage through concerts, recordings and comprehensive school programs. **¡Cantaré!** brings the talents of composers from Mexico directly into Minnesota classrooms. VocalEssence partners with American Composers Forum to offer the annual **Welcome Christmas Carol Contest**.

Philip Brunelle

Artistic Director and Founder



Philip Brunelle, artistic director and founder of VocalEssence, is an internationally renowned conductor, choral scholar and

performer. Believing that listeners and musicians alike must experience music of many genres and styles, he has worked enthusiastically — and tirelessly — to expand audiences for rarely heard works of the past and worthwhile new music. In addition, to date VocalEssence has commissioned more than 160 works. Philip has conducted symphonies (New York Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, and Minnesota Orchestra among others) as well as choral festivals and operas on six continents.

Over the past decade Philip has been deeply involved with the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM). He served as president of the Sixth World Symposium on Choral Music held in Minneapolis (2002), was on the Artistic Committee for the Eighth Symposium, held in Denmark (2008), and the Ninth Symposium, held in Argentina (2011). He is a Vice President of the IFCM Board and is now serving as Executive Director for the 2014 World Symposium on Choral Music to be held in Seoul, South Korea.

Philip holds five honorary doctorates, was invested as an Honorary Member of the Order from the British Empire (MBE) in 2005 for his services to music, and Commander of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit in 2007. The governments of Sweden, Hungary, and Mexico have also honored him.



Sigrid Johnson

Associate Conductor

As the associate conductor of VocalEssence, Sigrid Johnson is

affectionately known as “Ears” — for her unique skill in helping develop the choral blend and balance that give the VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers their signature sound. She provides expert input in the selection of repertoire and assists throughout the audition process. Her ability to achieve excellence in choral blend and intonation is a priceless asset to VocalEssence.

Sigrid is a member of the voice and choral faculty of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, and the conductor of the Manitou Singers, St. Olaf's 100-voice first-year women's chorus. She maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor and clinician at choral festivals, workshops and all-state music festivals across the country. She is known internationally for her work with musicians at all levels, having conducted workshops in Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden and Finland. In August 2008, Sigrid was one of the featured lecturers for the Eighth World Symposium on Choral Music in Copenhagen; in 2011, she was featured in the Ninth World Symposium in Argentina.

Sigrid is active in the American Choral Director's Association, the Music Educator's National Conference, the International Federation for Choral Music, and Chorus America.

Tesfa Wondemagegnehu

Assistant Artistic Director



Tesfa Wondemagegnehu, Assistant Artistic Director of VocalEssence, previously served as Director of Choral Activities at Freedom High

School in Orlando, Florida. During his tenure at FHS, Tesfa was named Orange County Public School Teacher of the Year (2013) and received the Macy's National Gift of Teaching Award (2013). He led his choirs in performances at state conventions of the American Choral Directors Association (2010 & 2012) and the

Florida Music Educators' Association (2011). Tesfa has presented workshops and conducted honor choirs in Florida, Tennessee, Ohio, and Costa Rica. As a tenor soloist, he has performed both in the United States and internationally in Germany, Austria, and Hungary, and Costa Rica under the batons of such conducting luminaries as André Thomas, Anton Armstrong, Krzysztof Penderecki, and Rodney Eichenberger. Tesfa is active in the American Choral Directors Association, the Music Educator's National Conference, and the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Tesfa holds a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting and Vocal Performance from the Florida State University and a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Memphis.

Charles Kemper

Accompanist



Charles Kemper, pianist, has taught at St. Olaf College, Northwestern College and Bethel University, and is currently organist for Calvary Baptist Church in Roseville, MN. A

native of Houston, Texas, Charles made his debut with the Houston Symphony at the age of 17, playing Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto. He has earned several degrees in piano performance, including a doctor of musical arts degree from Yale University. He has appeared as a soloist with the New Haven Symphony, University of Houston Orchestra, Yale Philharmonia, and the Jacksonville Symphony. Charles has been the VocalEssence staff accompanist since 1993.

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers

Minnesota is home to one of the truly international gems in choral music – the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers. This 32-voice professional chorus is a beloved national treasure that has been enjoyed by millions in Minnesota, around the country, and indeed, around the world.

The Ensemble Singers serve as the core of the larger VocalEssence Chorus, and returning members of the Ensemble Singers audition every year. The Ensemble Singers are renowned, internationally, nationally and locally. Recently, they were featured at the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the American Choral Directors Association of Minnesota and at the National Conference of the American Choral Directors Association in Dallas, Texas, where they received standing ovations for their performances of music by Mexican composers.

VocalEssence Chorus

The VocalEssence Chorus is an exceptional group of talented, committed singers from many walks of life: doctors, lawyers, nurses, educators, homemakers, business people, and others. Most have college level or higher training in classical music and voice. Chorus auditions are held every spring, and returning members of the Chorus re-audition every two years.



VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

SOPRANO

Amanda Allen
AnnaLisa Anderson
Barbara Anderson
Stacey Athorn
Diane Balfany
Jennifer Bevington*
Hannah B. Bolt
Dana Brinton
Maria Therese Deutsch
Judy Drobeck
Vickie Dunn
Elizabeth Egger
Angela Grundstad*
Kristina M. Guiffre
Alicia M. Hanson
Katie Henrichsen
Amanda Inhofer*
Ashley Jacobson
Sharanya Johnson
Meghan Kane
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Jo Michelle Beld
Rebecca Bellman
Kristin Borski
Sarah Fincham
Anne K. Gleeman
Kate Gordhamer
Yvonne Grover
Autumn Gurgel
Dee Hein
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**indicates member of the Ensemble Singers*

Dr. Nick Nash

Bringing Kings to the Nation, Broadcasting VocalEssence to the World



If you're a fan of the King's College Christmas broadcasts, thank Dr. Nick Nash. While working as a producer at Minnesota Public Radio (MPR), he was the first person to broadcast their Christmas concert in the United States. And, to this very day, he still holds a party with friends at his

home in White Bear Lake. And, everyone stands and sings in time with the congregation at King's College.

After introducing King's College to the United States, he helped broadcast VocalEssence to the world. In the 1970s as an MPR producer, he mapped out the state of Minnesota music. He then discovered that an internationally renowned choral program was in his backyard. As he further investigated the Plymouth Music Series, he saw that Philip Brunelle was mapping out uncharted territory in the state of choral music.

"He brings people into choral ideas that at the time someone probably winced at. When no one did Paul Bunyan, Philip made it a staple of choral history in Minnesota," Nick said. "He simply has a talent for finding things we didn't know we liked."

During his time as an MPR producer, he produced choral and classical offerings from places around the world. He became well versed in the choral offerings of England, Sweden and

other European countries. And, while the U.S. choral community is historically younger than its choral predecessors – even an English acquaintance of Nick's joked that King's, beyond its long choral history, perfected the art of lawn care 50 years before our country existed – groups like VocalEssence have taken the lead in innovating the art.

"...VocalEssence is not only the best of our community, but also one of the best choral groups heard around the world..."

—Nick Nash

"I like the sense of knowing that VocalEssence is not only the best of our community, but also one of the best choral groups heard around the world," Nick said. "And, I've heard plenty."

As a VocalEssence supporter and Anglophile, Nick has heard plenty of John Rutter and considers himself a fan. "Like any master, he makes something so elegant and complex look easy," Nick said. "And, when you hear a Rutter piece, you're convinced that you can sing it, too." And through VocalEssence, Nick has had the opportunity to hear the Chorus & Ensemble Singers perform John Rutter at more than 20 concerts.

But, it's not just John Rutter that keeps him coming back year after year. "I continue to support and attend VocalEssence concerts because I can't wait to be surprised by what Philip comes up with," Nick said. "And, there hasn't been a year where I haven't been surprised."



**Plymouth Church in Minneapolis—
Worship with us: 9:50, especially for families;
10:30 Sanctuary service**



PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
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2013-2014 WITNESS Highlights

Melanie DeMore and the Gullah Art of Stick Pounding

In spaces around the Twin Cities, the same rhythm resounded: Clap—clap-clap—clap-clap—clap—clap—clap—clap. It can be easy for one to pound out, but easily becomes difficult to coordinate many.

“Don’t go too fast,” WITNESS guest artist Melanie DeMore would say, “Or else it sounds like Bizet’s *Carmen*, and that is not what this rhythm is supposed to be.”

Over the course of her three visits, Melanie shared this Gullah rhythm and tradition of stick pounding used by 18th and 19th century enslaved Africans on the islands off the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina.

The experience of “sticking” in a large group is overwhelming as the vibrations of the rhythm reverberate throughout the space, and as Melanie says, “When everyone is engaged in this rhythm, our heartbeats synchronize.” Just like WITNESS, stick pounding creates community and connections. And, her connection with WITNESS added new recruits in her “stick pounding army of peace.”

Normally, WITNESS artists only have time to engage the 3,582 students who attended the WITNESS Young People’s Concerts, 170 singers who performed on stage, and 1,876 people who attended the VocalEssence concert WITNESS: Stomp & Sing. But, through additional small workshops, Melanie engaged another 3,000 through the rhythm and power of the Gullah tradition.

That is over 8,500 people touched by the work of WITNESS in 2014. But, we can do more.

Since its inception, WITNESS continues to be one of the nation’s premier initiatives celebrating the contributions of African Americans to our shared American cultural heritage. And, the only way that VocalEssence can continue to bring great artists like Melanie DeMore and strong educational outreach like WITNESS into our communities is through your support and your voice.

Raise your voice and advocate for the choral arts and outreach efforts like WITNESS on Arts Advocacy Day on March 27, 2014. Talk with your legislator and share your own personal stories of how the arts contribute to your life. Sign up at <http://www.mncitizensforthearts.org/events/advocacyday/>.



Melanie DeMore Workshop sponsored by the Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities, Hoversten Chapel, Augsburg College, Minneapolis



Melanie DeMore with Dance students, Macalester College, St. Paul



Melanie DeMore at Bolder Options, Minneapolis



Sticks from Hennepin County Home School, Minnetonka



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Choral Pathways Workshop, Sabathani Community Center

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Featuring: Vocal Activist Melanie DeMore

In collaboration with Avenues for Homeless Youth

ONE VOICE MINNESOTA'S LGBTQ+ MIXED CHORUS

Friday April 25, 2014 • 7:30 pm
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 Sunday April 27, 2014 • 3:00 pm

The Lab Theater
 700 North First Street
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 Tickets: www.TheLabTheater.org

www.OneVoiceMN.org

The Endowment Honor Roll

VocalEssence salutes the individuals and corporate and private foundations whose generosity and leadership sparked the creation of the Endowment Fund. This permanent fund was established in 1987 and is now valued at \$3 million. Its interest income provides ongoing support to VocalEssence. We welcome new contributions to the Endowment Fund and extend our deepest appreciation to the following for their generous gifts.

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continued on next page

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continued from previous page

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