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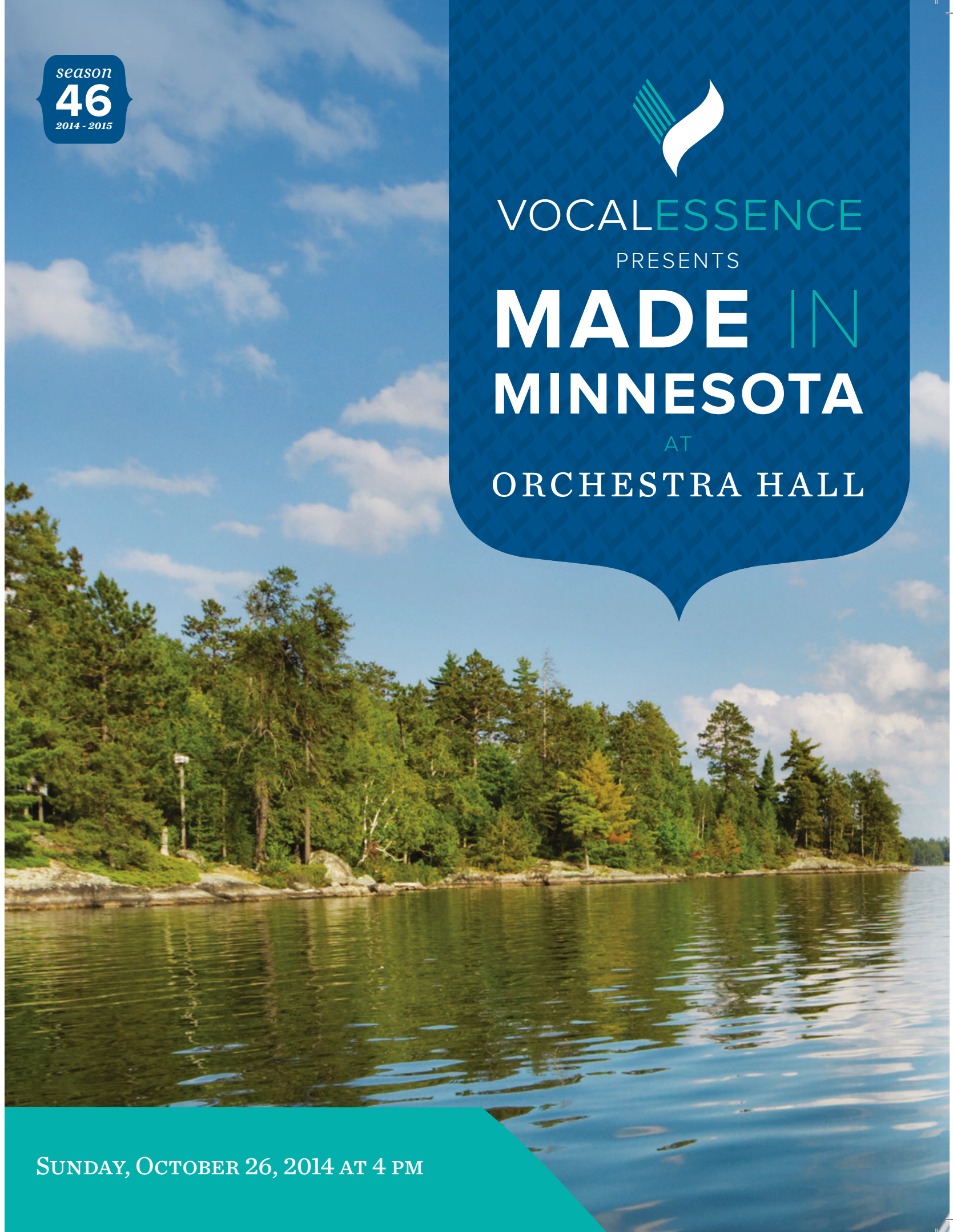
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season
46
2014 - 2015



VOCALESSENCE
PRESENTS
**MADE IN
MINNESOTA**
AT
ORCHESTRA HALL



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2014 AT 4 PM



2014-2015
46TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

2014-2015
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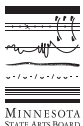
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MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO

MADE IN MINNESOTA

Sunday, October 26, 2014 at 4 pm
Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis
1111 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN

Pre-Concert Conversation with Classical Minnesota Public Radio Host John Birge and Minnesota composers Libby Larsen, Jocelyn Hagen and Dessa at 3 pm.

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers
Dessa
Andy Thompson, arranger & co-composer
Chamber orchestra
Philip Brunelle, conductor
Dale Warland, conductor
Tesfa Wondemagegnehu, conductor

SPECIAL THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THIS CONCERT

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VOCALESSENCE

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VocalEssence is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



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**In remembrance*

PLEASE NOTE

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- Accessible seating is available at all of our concert venues. However, some of our facilities do not have elevator access to the balcony level. Please make your needs known when you order tickets.
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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.



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THE PROGRAM

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers

Philip Brunelle, *conductor*

Love Songs

Charles Kemper, *piano*

Libby Larsen

(1997)

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

Philip Brunelle, *conductor*

Lot & Mrs. Lot (from *A History of Evil: Bible Families*)

Randall Davidson, *narrator*

R.T. Rybak, *Lot*

Robin Joy Helgen, *Lot's wife*

Chorus of Sodomites

Randall Davidson

(1991)

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers

Dale Warland, *conductor*

Seasons

Dominick Argento

(2012)

-INTERMISSION-

Audience Sing

Hail! Minnesota

Truman E. Rickard

(1904)

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

Tesfa Wondemagegnehu, *conductor*

Controlled Burn

Dessa and Jocelyn Hagen

(2014)

The Good Fight

Dessa, *soloist*

Dessa and Andy Thompson

(2014)

Skeleton Key

Dessa, *soloist*

Dessa, arr. Andy Thompson

(2013-14)

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers

Philip Brunelle, *conductor*

North Shore

Seth Keeton, *bass-baritone*

Sandra Schoenecker, *mezzo-soprano*

Stephen Paulus

(1977)

WELCOME TO THE 46TH SEASON OF VOCALESSANCE!



Since our first year (when we welcomed Aaron Copland *in person* and George Frideric Handel *in memoriam*), we have been devoted to presenting wonderful choral music of the past and present that deserves to be heard in our community and beyond.

Opening this season with an all-Minnesota concert fits our mission exactly! I am delighted that Minnesota friends will be heard, some for the first time (like Dessa Darling and Jocelyn Hagen) and others making a return visit (like Dominick Argento, Stephen Paulus, Libby Larsen and Randall Davidson). I am also pleased that my colleague Dale Warland will make his VocalEssence debut. And, continuing last year's tradition, you—the audience—will have a chance to sing something at every concert!

Thank you for your continued support in many ways, which has made it possible for us to reach our 46th year with a balanced budget every year—and just four more years until we celebrate our 50th season!

—Philip Brunelle, *Artistic Director and Founder*

SPECIAL THANKS

John Birge, Minnesota Public Radio
Randall Davidson
Yvonne Grover
Katie Henrichsen, Resonate
Nicholas Mroczek
John Nuechterlein, American Composers Forum
Clara Osowski
Coral Sampson
Karl Speak
Jonathan Tschiggfrie
David Whitney

ORCHESTRA

Flute: Michele Frisch, Jane Garvin
Clarinet: Karrin Meffert-Nelson, Jennifer Gerth
Bassoon: Laurie Merz
French horn: Neal Bolter, Charles Hodgson
Trumpet: Martin Hodel, Christopher Volpe
Trombone: Larry Zimmerman
Violin: Natalia Moiseeva
Cello: Sally Dorer
Bass: Christopher Brown
Timpani: Kory Andry
Percussion: Paul Hill, Steve Kimball
Harp: Rachel Brandwein
Contractor: Christopher Volpe

SELECTED TEXTS

Love Songs

Libby Larsen

Looking at Each Other - Muriel Rukeyser (1913-1980)

Yes, we were looking at each other
Yes, we knew each other very well
Yes, we had made love with each other many times
Yes, we had heard music together
Yes, we had gone to the sea together
Yes, we had cooked and eaten together
Yes, we had laughed often day and night
Yes, we fought violence and knew violence
Yes, we hated the inner and outer oppression
Yes, that day we were looking at each other
Yes, we saw the sunlight pouring down
Yes, the corner of the table was between us
Yes, bread and flowers were on the table
Yes, our eyes saw each other's eyes
Yes, our mouths saw each other's mouth
Yes, our breasts saw each other's breasts
Yes, our bodies entire saw each other
Yes, it was beginning in each
Yes, it threw waves across our lives
Yes, the pulses were becoming very strong
Yes, the beating became very delicate
Yes, the calling the arousal
Yes, the arriving the coming
Yes, there it was for both entire
Yes, we were looking at each other

Clinging - Jeanne Shepard (1917-2009)

The first one sailed away
in a mist long ago
disappeared when I was young
unable to say goodbye.
The other stayed in view
half way out to sea,
lost without a rudder
sank at last.

The one I feel pushing
away from shore today,
already remote, enveloped
in private fog, I try to reach
not even aware that I cling
till I feel raw pain in my hand.

Dirty No Gooder Blues - Bessie Smith (1898-1937)

Did you ever fall in love with a man that was no good
Did you ever fall in love with a man that was no good
No matter what you did for him he never understood
The meanest things he could say would thrill you
through and through

The meanest things he could say would thrill you
through and through
And there was nothing too dirty for that man to do

He'd treat you nice and kind 'til he'd win your heart in hand
He'd treat you nice and kind 'til he'd win your heart in hand
Then he'd get so cruel that man you just could not stand

Lord, I really don't think no man love can last
Lord, I don't think no man love can last
They love you to death then treat you like a thing of the past

There's nineteen men living in my neighborhood
There's nineteen men living in my neighborhood
Eighteen of them are fools and the one ain't no doggone good

Lord, lord, lord, lord, lord, oh lord, lord, lord
That dirty no-good man treats me just like I'm a dog

Dear Love - Willa Cather (1873-1948)

Dear love, what of all things that be
Is ever worth one thought from you or me
Save only Love
Save only Love?

So blind is life, so long at last to sleep.
And none but Love to bid us laugh or weep.
And none but Love.
And none but Love.

At April - Angelina Weld Grimké (1880-1958)

Toss your gay heads,
Brown girl trees;
Toss your gay lovely heads;
Shake your downy russet curls
All about your brown faces;
Stretch your brown slim bodies;
Stretch your brown slim arms;
Stretch your brown slim toes.
Who knows better than we,
With the dark bodies,
What it means
When April comes a-laughing and a-weeping
Once again
At our heart?

Seasons

Dominick Argento
Text by Pat Solstad

I. Autumn

Cool, misty mornings now bathe parched lawns,
yet there's a teasing as temperatures occasionally climb.
Persistent Summer is struggling to upstage the next performer.

But it is Autumn's turn.
Enrobed in blazing reds and golds,

she cries out, announcing herself with drunken joy,
knowing it is her time to be adored.

Short-lived, the raucous voice slowly transforms into a moan.
As she stands alone, stripped of her once-stunning beauty,
Winter arrives. With comforting arms, he gathers her up
and covers her with his soothing blanket of silver-white.

Humming an ancient lullaby, he rocks her to sleep
and she drifts into dreams of her glory days.
Certain they will come again in time she smiles, sighs, and
slowly slips away.

II. Winter

Master Artist Winter draws his hand across the landscape and
snowflakes appear. He guides them as they cover bare trees,
picnic tables, and abandoned farm machinery,
creating elegant monochromatic sculptures.

Without warning, his mood
changes from serene to stormy.
He shakes his fist, stomps his feet,
and howls with intense fury.

His rage increases as he rips limbs
from trembling trees and flings garbage cans around,
sending them banging and clanging into empty streets.
All creatures cower.

Children peer impatiently from windows,
rabbits flee to cool warrens, and birds
sink deeper into the sanctuary
of their soft nests.

Winter, now lacking an audience, blusters a bit more,
a reminder that he is still in charge.
Then, anger spent, he becomes the Master Artist once again.
With a stroke of his paintbrush, skies clear to a placid
blue, his preparation for
the delightful intrusion of the regal red cardinal.

III. Spring

With sweet baby breath, Spring blows away Winter's crumbling canvas.
He calls to the soft rains to bathe him.
The gentle breezes dry him and
the sun smiles as it warms his naked newness.

He commands hyacinth and crocus to appear
and nudges sleepy buttercups.
He welcomes the arrival of the handsome coyote pups,
as their joyful parade passes by.

Delighted children burst into the open,
like wild colts too long confined,
and run screaming through yards, dodging flailing sheets
on newly hung clotheslines.

Then Spring, feeling quite smug,
slips into his royal robe,

struts about, surveying his kingdom,
and grins.

IV. Summer

Out of the mists of Spring,
the Goddess of Summer arrives,
arms outstretched, eager
to perform her annual miracle.

Joyful acolytes shed their leafy bedclothes.
Ferns unfurl, coral bells awaken, roses lift their faces
to the golden sun, and lilacs
fill the air with intoxicating perfume.

Fireflies flicker in night skies, in concert
with moonlight and shooting stars.
Bathed in this celestial light,
fragrant angel's trumpets reflect a ghostly glow.

Soon, the Goddess of Summer sees
That all is proceeding as planned.
Though reluctant to leave, she nods
and sadly bestows her loving benediction.

Hail! Minnesota

Truman E. Rickard

Minnesota, hail to thee!
Hail to thee our state so dear!
Thy light shall ever be
A beacon bright and clear.
Thy sons and daughters true
Will proclaim thee near and far.
They shall guard thy fame
And adore thy name;
Thou shalt be their Northern Star.

Like the stream that bends to sea,
Like the pine that seeks the blue,
Minnesota, still for thee,
Thy sons are strong and true.
From thy woods and waters fair,
From thy prairies waving far,
At thy call they throng,
With their shout and song,
Hailing thee their Northern Star.

Controlled Burn

Dessa and Jocelyn Hagen, text by Dessa

We're born with a fuse timed to ignite
It burns through our youth then sets us alight for a while
And when we're older we'll laugh and say that we were only kids
but no one gets closer to the burn of love and loss than this

When the fires pass over all you'll recall
is the ash on your shoulders some lines on your palm.

The world's made in motion we're carried along;
The current can't hold for long

If you can stand your younger selves behind you
then turn and walk the line,
How many strangers might surprise you,
Too changed by time to recognize

When the fires pass over all you'll recall
is the ash on your shoulders some lines on your palms
Memory relents like rain melts the limestone
The years that you spent in flame seem so strange now

The Good Fight

Dessa and Andy Thompson

Here in my paper crown
With a glass of flat champagne
I'd spar another round
But I'm the only one who's still awake
I'm headed towards the shallows
Oh, say when, say when

Looks like I won again
Another medal on the shelf
I guess my record stands
But I can't quit til I play myself.
I'm swinging on my shadow
Oh, say when, say when
Tell me

I can't say what would be enough
I'm not so sure this is the good fight anymore
To unlace is tough with both hands in gloves
Is this the good fight anymore

I don't let go
I won't give in
I don't bow
I don't bend
I won't say no
I won't say when
I fold for no one
And I always win

Looks like I win I win again.
Oh, say when, say when

Skeleton Key

Dessa, arr. Andy Thompson

I haven't met a locked door yet that I couldn't beat
On a chain around my neck I keep my skeleton key

By now it's just a simple trick, not much to see
You hear the tumblers catch and click, then turn the key
But I've found work and welcome everywhere I've been
'Cause everyone's got someplace they want to be let in

CHORUS

Don't waste your worry on me
I always find what I need
Come and go as I please
I've got my skeleton key

Along the way the old men call me by mother's name
She looked just the same they say
The children wave or hide behind their mothers' skirts afraid
Strangers here still seem strange
They hear the accent know I'm from nowhere near
But I speak the language and I know the customs here
I come from over the horizon, pass through every dozen years
Go home, tell of my arrival. The skeleton key's here

CHORUS

I've got my skeleton key
I've got my, got my, got my
My skeleton
My skeleton key, yeah

Don't you go waste all your worry on me
I'll make my way with my skeleton key

North Shore

Stephen Paulus

Text by Michael Dennis Browne

North

In sleep I heard
a bird call out a name
I thought I knew

I shed
my skin
of speech
and went
wordless

into a silence
into a beginning

Here where my heart
has steered a hundred times
I go
North North

I went
North North

Pines, you deepen now
I push through tunnels
into a longer light

into a silence
into a beginning

to drink, to kindle
a quietness

and listening listening

to be shore, and shaped
to be tree, trembling
to be rock, water and flower
to be flower, to flame and fade

I go
North North

Journal (J. Elliot Cabot)

The woods are silent, and as if deserted; one may walk for hours without hearing an animal sound, and when one does, it is of a wild and lonely character; the cry of a loon or the Canada jay, the startling rattle of the arctic woodpecker or the sweet, solemn note of the white-throated sparrow.

Song of the Driftwood

We who were
of the air;
we whose cries
you know;
we who flew.

Who could not bear
to leave this shore,
who chose to be here,
in these shapes,
and in this other life.

To be near,
to hear
the new living cry out
as once we cried;
and the water's voices.

In the strongest storms
sometimes we stir;
no more than that.
We will not leave
this shore.

We who were
of the air;
we whose cries
you know;
we who flew.

Journal (Frederick Marryat)

We landed at dusk, much fatigued; but the aurora borealis flashed in the heavens, spreading out like a vast plume of ostrich feathers across the sky, every minute changing its beautiful and fanciful forms. Tired as we were, we watched it for hours.

Trees

Even in July
already
you are trembling

As the lights
wander above you

as the sky
waves its white fires
as stars send back
their thin light
as one planet shines
strongest on the water

You shakers
you shivery ones
your leaves blown back on their stems
I see your undersides
your silvery bellies
straining on each twig

Do not leave this shore
I would not have you go

But I want now
to lift up into this light
to set out over this water
to ride out on the whiteness
of the path of planet-shine
to climb into the fires
shaking and streaming over me

I tremble to go
as you
but you – you stay
you
rooted as I am not

O summer night O stars
I want to come up among you
I want to gather great clusters of you
to drift and swim and climb
silvery silvery
my hands
slippery with stars!

Voyageurs

Bending
over the lake
I see a man in the water
looking up at me

He is clear, not corrupted

How many more
are there with you there?
How many,
O my face?

By our fire sometimes
when the wind

when gusts turn
even the thickest pines

when all night I lie
and listen to the wind

I hear them

À la claire fontaine
M'en allant promener
J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle
Que je m'y suis baigné

*At the clear fountain
While I was taking a walk
I found the water so beautiful
That I bathed myself*

Il y a longtemps
que je t'aime
Jamais je ne t'oublierai

*It was a long time ago
that I loved you
I will never forget you*

By our fire sometimes
When the sparks

When flames ride
up into the dark

When hours I stare
and dream into the flames

I see them

À la claire fontaine
M'en allant promener
J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle
Que je m'y suis baigné

*At the clear fountain
While I was taking a walk
I found the water so beautiful
That I bathed myself*

Rounding the point
scarlet their caps, their paddles!

Il y a longtemps
que je t'aime
Jamais je ne t'oublierai

*It was a long time ago
that I loved you
I will never forget you*

flash! flash!
my musical men!

When the wind
when the owl
races my heart awake

on such nights
by such water

here is a fire
to share

come come
from shadow
from trees
any of you, out of the water
to sing
to pass the pipe
then under our boats
to sleep

by such fire
by such pure water

come

Jamais je ne t'oublierai

I will never forget you

Rise

For the Monarch butterfly
too cold, early in September.

We rescue her
from the water,
take her to shore.

But when we let her go
she heads straight out again
then drops, then drops
down.

“She will not rise again.”

But I think
on some last day
these waters will give up
what they have kept
I think this shore
Will see its creatures climbing

wolf, you
bear
climbing
sailor, you
voyageur
climbing into the light

And Monarch
you red Summer King
you
shaking all chill
from your wings

I do not think
these rocks will rise
I do not want
these trees to leave

But I see the driftwood
flutter in no wind
and all along the shore
take to the air

And now
you North
you waters
you shore

fever-less now
now we are not here
now gone
from this older earth
which asked
these newer songs of us

now you are
as you were
before creature
of any kind

North
you waters
you shore

without us
who like children
played in these places

now without us
turned
to your first silence

to your first silence

to your first silence

EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT

¡CANTARÉ! IS EXPANDING TO ROCHESTER

VocalEssence has won an Arts Learning grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board to expand our ¡Cantaré! program to Rochester, Minnesota. This means that this spring several schools and community choirs in Rochester will have three-week residencies with Mexican composers Rodrigo Cadet and Novelli Jurado, and will host a Community Concert with VocalEssence. Rodrigo will be working with elementary-age students at schools including Franklin Elementary School, Montessori at Franklin, and Riverside Elementary School. Novelli will be working with high school-age students and community choirs, including select choirs at Mayo High School.

As for the Twin Cities program, ¡Cantaré! composers Julio Morales and Jean Angelus Pichardo have just completed their first week of residency beginning their yearlong relationship with each group. As part of their composer residencies, Julio and Jean will write new choral pieces for the school and community choirs while fostering greater awareness and appreciation for Mexican music and culture.

Julio will partner with the VocalEssence Chorus, Blaine High School, Park High School in Cottage Grove, and Southwest High School in Minneapolis. Jean will be at Adams Spanish Immersion in St. Paul, Minnehaha Academy Lower School in Minneapolis, Partnership Academy in Richfield and Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in St. Paul. We will receive their music in January 2015, and look forward to their return in March and May 2015, when we will hear the fruits of their labors at the ¡Cantaré! Community Concerts on May 21, 2015 at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts.

Until then, all school partners will continue their exploration of Mexican culture by attending Day of the Dead exhibitions at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Minnesota History Center. VocalEssence offers a huge round of thanks to the ¡Cantaré! Cultural Advisory Committee for their support in making these guided tours possible.

Add video star to ¡Cantare! credits

Last spring VocalEssence partnered with the Independent Filmmaker Project (IFP) of Minnesota to create a ¡Cantare! video. Deacon Warner, Youth Program Coordinator at IFP, worked with Samaria Burch, a student at Jennings Community Learning Center; they filmed the residencies of Mexican composers Pamela Mayorga and José Galván and a dress rehearsal in May, then edited the film to two versions, one about five minutes long, and a shorter one-minute video.

Through interviewing the students, teachers, and composers involved with the program as well as VocalEssence staff and community members, Samaria learned about the 2013-2014 experience as well as the impact the program has had on Minnesota since ¡Cantare! started in the fall of 2007.



Samaria Burch worked on the ¡Cantaré! video.



Kimberly Meisten, director of community engagement, with new ¡Cantaré! composers Julio Morales and Jean Angelus Pichardo.



Composer José Galván at Eagan High School.

ASIA PACIFIC TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



On their most recent international tour, the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers traveled to Seoul, South Korea, representing the United States at the 10th World Symposium on Choral Music as part of the VocalEssence Asia Pacific Tour, August 9 - 20.

In Seoul they also performed for an audience of 7,500 at the Nyung-sung Presbyterian Church service. One of the highlights of the tour was their performance of Brahms' *Requiem* with four other choirs, three from Korea and one from Sweden, with full orchestra.

The theme for the Symposium was Choral Music: Healing People, Saving Lives, and the Ensemble Singers commemorated this by performing "A Farewell to Arms," written for VocalEssence in 2001 by Sir Richard Rodney Bennett.

After the Symposium, the Ensemble Singers continued their tour, performing in Shanghai and Nanjing, China, before returning to Minnesota.

In Shanghai, 'It was like we were rock stars'

The amazing reception the group received in Korea "continued unabated in China," according to VocalEssence Artistic Director Philip Brunelle. "The concerts in Shanghai were packed, and they kept asking for more and more encores."

Ryan French, a baritone in the Ensemble Singers and the director of marketing and public relations at the Walker Art Center, shared his experience of a Shanghai concert. The audience was clapping along at the end, Ryan said, soaking in music that most of them were hearing for the first time in their lives. At the end of the concert, VocalEssence performed a piece in Mandarin that the crowd knew, "Jasmine" by Jim Wei, and it drove the audience to their feet.

After the performance, the Ensemble Singers were mobbed by their new fans. "It was like we were rock stars. We were walking to the bus and there was a mob of maybe 50 to 100 people waiting for us. We couldn't get to the bus; they just wanted to talk, take pictures, ask questions, get autographs," Ryan said. "It was really an exciting and surreal experience."

Banquet was 'a very moving experience'

An afternoon concert in Nanjing was followed by an evening banquet. "The Nanjing Choral Association hosted a beautiful banquet for us with many of the Nanjing choral community – conductors, singers, managers," said Philip.

"We sat with them, had a Chinese feast, and performed some songs for them. There were toasts and gifts, of course," he said. "The feeling of camaraderie among us all was overwhelming. It was a very moving experience."

PROGRAM NOTES

Love Songs, Libby Larsen

Love Songs is a five-part work for chamber voices and piano based on love poems by contemporary American women poets: Muriel Rukeyser, Jeanne Shepard, Bessie Smith, Willa Cather and Angelina Weld Grimké. I chose this poetry for two reasons. First, it is great poetry. Second, it is American English as it is spoken today exploring the melody, rhythm, articulations and resulting form of American English.

Unlike *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, which were about lyrical romanticized love written in Victorian English, *Love Songs* are an exploration of contemporary love written by expert literary word crafters. What this means is that the lyric writing is much more percussive and witty, and should be performed with special attention to the articulation, dynamics, and the consonants of the text.

Libby Larsen

A History of Evil: Bible Families, Randall Davidson

Garrison Keillor has replaced James Brown as the busiest man in show business. His work ethic (among other things) is a graduate program in the serious business of comedy. We would occasionally work together at his home in NYC. The living room was a writing room. He lives and breathes his work, and his work is, at its root, melancholy humor.

A History of Evil: Bible Families, premiered by VocalEssence here in Orchestra Hall in 1991, is a not completely serious oratorio. One of the great insights Garrison brings to these Bible stories is domestic context: Mrs. Noah, Mrs. Lot, the newlyweds Adam & Eve, the Dad in the Prodigal Son. Once again, it was my job to bring the funny—never easy to compete with one of the masters!—but these experiences have inspired my own little research into the elements of comedy in music. Someday, I'll write a book.

Randall Davidson

Seasons, Dominick Argento

Asked by Michael McGaghie to write a short piece as a surprise gift for his mentors, Jameson Marvin and Ann Howard Jones (heads of choral activities at Harvard and Boston University respectively), I turned to Pat Solstad, with whose poetry I had recently become familiar. She provided me with a poem entitled "Autumn" and rather than speak of the profound impression her text made on me—I hope my music will do that—I prefer to quote Dr. Marvin's letter to me upon hearing the work first performed in Boston: "Dear Dominick, Autumn is an exquisite poem, full of such beautiful imagery, captured with words that radiate meaning—this meaning, radiance, and imagery, exquisitely and touchingly comes alive in sound ..." Praise by a noted choral conductor that expresses my own feelings exactly. This first collaboration with Ms. Solstad was so fruitful and rewarding I did not wish to leave "Autumn" as a stand-alone piece. The logical consequence was to have her write three more poems: "Winter," "Spring," and "Summer" and to title the group *Seasons*.

Since Autumn had been personified as a flamboyant actress or performer fading in beauty, the remaining seasons were treated similarly: Winter appears in the guise of a painter of landscapes; Spring is presented as a confident, delightful baby; Summer emerges metaphorically as a goddess.

It would be an understatement to say of these poems that nothing could have pleased me more, nor have I ever had an easier time of finding music to suit the words. One would have to be a composer to fully appreciate not only the beauty of words and meanings in these poems but also to recognize them as a gift for music. As a fellow composer wrote to me upon examining *Seasons* when the complete work was published: "I must say that finding texts that have depth and beauty and that lend themselves to musical setting is a rare and wonderful thing." Having spent a lifetime searching precisely for that combination, I could not agree more.

By mutual agreement of composer and poet, this work is dedicated to Dale Warland.

Dominick Argento, 2012

North Shore, *Stephen Paulus*

The intention of *North Shore* is to re-create some of the sounds, images, and feelings one experiences while being in this Northern Minnesota region around Lake Superior. The images range from the stillness of the lake to its stormy counterpart. Within the work, like themes are often placed against differing backgrounds as a reflection of the natural harmony found in the North Shore. In many cases, sounds or groups of sounds are made to overlap or dovetail to create a sense of unity.

Stephen Paulus, 1977

The poems of *North Shore* are dedicated to Dr. Grace Lee Nute, who has written so eloquently about the region. I so much enjoyed her fine and vivid work that I wanted to thank her in this way.

Many other writers have written and are still writing about the lake and its shore; as one among many, I decided to give some context to my own work by quoting from the journals of travelers of earlier times. The poems themselves I have tried to make clear and ecstatic, and in this way faithful to the moods I most frequently feel when I go North to the lake. The theme of rising and resurrection suggested itself so often earlier that when I came to the last part I had little choice but to let it take over. It may be too ripe for some tastes, but it is true to my own states of mind (and heart).

Michael Dennis Browne, 1977

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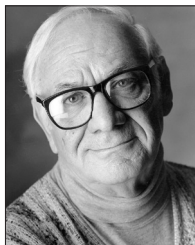
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BIOGRAPHIES



Dominick Argento, considered to be America's pre-eminent composer of lyric opera, earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Peabody Conservatory and a Ph.D. from the Eastman School of Music. Fulbright and Guggenheim Fellowships allowed him to study in Italy and to complete his first opera, *Colonel Jonathan the Saint*. In 1958, he joined the faculty at the University of Minnesota, where he taught until 1997 and now holds the rank of professor emeritus. Dominick has received the Pulitzer Prize for Music, a Grammy Award, and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1979.

Michael Dennis Browne is professor emeritus of English at the University of Minnesota, where he taught for 39 years. His publications include *Give Her the River*, a picture book with paintings by Wendell Minor; *Things I Can't Tell You*, poetry, and *What the Poem Wants*, essays on poetry. His awards include fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as the Bush, Jerome, and McKnight foundations. Michael has won the Minnesota Book Award for poetry and has written many texts for music, working principally with composer Stephen Paulus.



Dessa is a rapper, songwriter, essayist, and member of the Minneapolis Doomtree collective. Her most recent album, *Parts of Speech*, debuted at #76 on the Billboard charts. Dessa has

performed at nightclubs, theaters, and festivals across North America including Lallapalooza, the Montreal Jazz Fest, and South by Southwest. With a B.A. and M.A. in philosophy, Dessa has lectured at colleges and universities, including a keynote presentation for the Nobel Peace Prize Forum. Dessa partnered with composer Jocelyn Hagen to co-write her first classical composition, "Controlled Burn."



Humor and passion are the hallmarks of **Randall Davidson's** catalogue, from choral works and opera to ballets and a guitar concerto. Collaborations with Garrison Keillor have produced two successful large-scale works, and a long association with Philip Brunelle and VocalEssence has resulted in dozens of works for chorus and orchestra. Randall is a compelling educator who translates his passion for music through lectures, seminars, workshops, and discussions, and has received a Gold Lion from the Cannes Film Festival.



Jocelyn Hagen is Artist-in-Residence at the North Dakota State University School of Music and holds degrees in theory, composition, and vocal music education from St. Olaf College, and a master's degree from the University of Minnesota. Jocelyn has received grants and awards from ASCAP, the American Composers Forum, the McKnight Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, VocalEssence, the Yale Glee Club and many other groups. Her commissions include the American Choral Directors Association, Cantus, the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, and the St. Olaf Band.



Alto **Robin Joy Helgen** is enjoying her fifth year with the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers. She has also sung with the Minnesota Opera and the Oregon Bach Festival Chorus with Helmuth Rilling. Robin holds a B.A. in music education from Bethel University and has studied toward a master's degree in Vocal Performance at the New England Conservatory. Robin teaches at a voice studio in her home and at St. Olaf College.



Bass-baritone **Seth Keeton** has performed on the stages of the Minnesota Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, and Theater Bremen in Germany and as bass soloist in Mozart's Requiem, Verdi's Requiem, Bach's Magnificat and Beethoven's 9th Symphony. He has received awards from the Sullivan Foundation and the Eleanor McCollum Competition. Seth is on the voice faculty at Gustavus Adolphus College and has a doctorate of musical arts in vocal performance from the University of Minnesota.



Libby Larsen is one of America's most performed living composers, with a catalogue of over 500 works spanning virtually every genre, from intimate vocal music to orchestral works and more than 15 operas. The Grammy award-winner is sought after for commissions and premieres by major artists around the world. In 1973 Libby co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, now the American Composers Forum. Libby has held residencies with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony.



Stephen Paulus has composed more than 450 works for orchestra, opera, chorus, chamber ensembles, solo voice, concert band, and keyboard. He has received commissions from the New York Philharmonic and Minnesota Orchestra, and his choral works have been performed and recorded by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, the New York Concert Singers, Dale Warland Singers, Los Angeles Master Chorale, VocalEssence and others. Stephen co-founded the American Composers Forum in 1973 and has received Guggenheim and National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships.



R.T. Rybak, former mayor of Minneapolis, is executive director for Generation Next, a partnership of organizations and leaders dedicated to educational excellence and narrowing the

achievement and opportunity gap. R.T. was the mayor of Minneapolis from 2002 through 2013, and founded the Minneapolis Promise, an innovative cluster of coordinated efforts to get students college- and career-ready and put them on the path to success.

Mezzo-soprano **Sandra Schoenecker**, a native of the Twin Cities, has performed with many local organizations including Mill City Opera, Minnesota Opera, Skylark Opera, Theatre de la Jeune Lune and the Gilbert and Sullivan Very Light Opera Company. Sandra is beginning her fifth season as a member of the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers and is a private vocal instructor.

Andy Thompson is a composer, arranger, producer, and multi-instrumentalist with a degree in classical composition from the University of Michigan School of Music. He has made music with Dan Wilson, Taylor Swift, Missy Higgins, Colbie Caillat, Heiruspecs, Atmosphere and others as a producer, engineer, and session musician. His music has shown up in television and film, including the student Academy Award-winning documentary *Ladies of the Land*, Saturday Night Live, and a Super Bowl ad.



Dale Warland, in his quarter-century with the Dale Warland Singers, shaped an a cappella ensemble lauded for its exquisite sound and stylistic range; he commissioned

and premiered some 270 works from composers around the globe. Dale's honors include awards from ASCAP, the McKnight Foundation, Chorus America, a Grammy nomination as well as induction into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. Currently artistic director of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra Chorale and the Minnesota Beethoven Festival Chorale, he is active as a guest conductor, composer, and teacher.



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ABOUT VOCALESSENCE

The Mission of VocalEssence

As a leading Minnesota arts organization, VocalEssence uses the power of choral music to enhance our community by producing innovative vocal music events that stir people's souls.

Minneapolis-based VocalEssence has decades of history as one of the world's premier choral music organizations. But despite its global influence, VocalEssence has kept its focus local—consistently pioneering ways to strengthen Minnesota's community through thrilling musical experiences.

We engage people of all ages and cultures through innovative, enticing choral music programming, such as performing ensembles, school curricula, elder learning initiatives and advocacy projects.

Called "one of the irreplaceable music ensembles of our time" by Dana Gioia, past chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, our two performing groups—the Ensemble Singers (32 professionals) and the VocalEssence Chorus (100 volunteers)—are made up entirely of local residents.

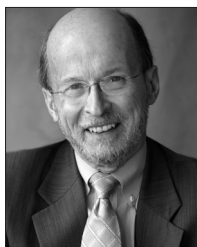
VocalEssence is renowned for its innovative exploration of music for voices and instruments under the enthusiastic direction of Artistic Director and Founder Philip Brunelle. Each season, VocalEssence presents an eclectic series of concerts featuring the VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers and an 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.

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.

VocalEssence reaches into the community with programs that impact thousands of students, singers and composers every year. **WITNESS** celebrates the contributions of African Americans and **iCantaré!** brings the talents of composers from Mexico into Minnesota classrooms. VocalEssence partners with American Composers Forum to offer the annual **Welcome Christmas Carol Contest**.

At VocalEssence, we believe when we sing together, we succeed together. We invite you to be a part of it.



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 served as Executive Director for the 2014 World Symposium on Choral Music 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 at 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
Guest conductor

Conductor of the APM Radio Choir & Manager of the Choral Works Initiative for American Public Media, Tesfa Wondemagegnehu previously served as Assistant Artistic Director of VocalEssence. As a high school teacher, he was named Orange County Public School's Teacher of

the Year (2013) and received the Macy's National Magic of Teaching Award (2013). Tesfa is widely in demand as a guest conductor and lecturer. He has presented workshops and conducted honor choirs in Florida, Tennessee, Ohio, Minnesota, Iowa 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.



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. On their recent Asia Pacific Tour in August, the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers traveled to Seoul, South Korea, to perform at the 10th World Symposium on Choral Music, then continued on to Shanghai and Nanjing, China, for more concerts.

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 ENSEMBLE SINGERS

SOPRANO

Jennifer Bevington
Angela Grundstad
Amanda Inhofer
Margaret Sabin
Ann L. Schrooten
Mari Scott
Carolyn M. Steele
JoAnna Swantek

ALTO

Robin Joy Helgen
Marita J. Link
Judith McClain Melander
Anna George Meek
Anna Mooy
Clara Osowski
Erin Peters
Sandra Schoenecker

TENOR

Kevin L. Bailey
Chase Daniel Burkhart
Anders Eckman
Robert J. Graham
Curtis Kettler
James M. Marshall
John H. Notermann
William Pederson

BASS

Eric Bartlett
Nicholas Budden
Steven Burger
Joseph Ellickson
Ryan French
Seth Keeton
Robert C. Smith
Josiah Telschow

VOCALESSENCE CHORUS

SOPRANO

Amanda Allen
AnnaLisa Anderson
Barbara Anderson
Stacey Athorn
Hannah B. Bolt
Maria Therese Deutsch
Janelle Disrud
Judy Drobeck
Kristina M. Guiffre
Katie Henrichsen
Meghan Kane
Anika Kildegaard
Jan Kilton
Kartra Kohl
Heidi Larson
Joy MacArthur
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Jessica McMahan
Laura Olson
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Nadine Sanders
Vickie Sanders Dunn
Ann M. Sather
Cheryl E. Roberts
Saunders
LeAnn Stein
Naomi Taylor
Alicia M. Thompson
Jennifer Vickerman
Jennifer E. Wallis
Sharon Williams

ALTO

Akosua Obuo Addo
Alanna Bach Kucera
Jo Michelle Beld
Rebecca Bellman
Junette Dale
Sarah Fincham
Anne K. Gleeman
Yvonne Grover
Autumn Gurgel
Dee Hein
Katherine Scholl Holisky
Kristin Howlett
Sally Jaffray
Kirkja Anna Janson
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Marty Raymond
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Coral Sampson
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TENOR

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Scott Berger
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Nicholas Mattsson
Nicholas Mroczek
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DONOR SPOTLIGHT: JOHN NUECHTERLEIN REFLECTING ON THE TIES THAT BIND THE AMERICAN COMPOSERS FORUM AND VOCALESSENCE



If John Nuechterlein's organization, the American Composers Forum (ACF), resembles in any way, shape or form the one founded by Philip Brunelle at VocalEssence, that's probably not completely accidental. The symmetry between the two men—and the non-profits—is striking if not remarkable. And, of course, musically correct. One might even say that the Composers Forum is to nurturing new and diverse music composition as VocalEssence is to creating new and varied choral music.

The men and their missions, which both have gladly accepted, align in the firmament of Minnesota music-making like the Gemini constellation in the night sky. Both burn brightly as leading national music organizations. Just one brief look at ACF's history and artistic mandate show how much the forum mirrors the heart of the VocalEssence m.o., and vice versa.

The mission of the American Composers Forum outlined on its website (www.composersforum.org) could almost be the mission statement of VocalEssence: "By linking communities with composers and performers, the Forum fosters a demand for new music, enriches communities, and helps develop the next generation of composers, musicians, and music patrons. Founded in 1973 as the Minnesota

"The Composers Forum considers VocalEssence to be a longtime partner, a leading national champion of new music, and friend."

—John Nuechterlein

Composers Forum, the organization has grown from an innovative regional initiative into one of the nation's premier composer service organizations. Forum programming reaches composers and communities in all 50 states."

Sound familiar?

Nuechterlein left a corporate career in 1998 to take the position of ACF General Manager, and became its president and CEO in 2003. He isn't joking, either, when he says his association with Brunelle and VocalEssence has been ongoing "really since day one of the Forum!" Minnesota composers Libby Larsen and Stephen Paulus, who were the impetus and inspiration in creating the Forum, enlisted Brunelle to serve on its board. Out of that have come many richly rewarding collaborations between the two musical powerhouses, including the annual Welcome Christmas Carol Contest.

Today the forum is approaching the 40-year mark, while VocalEssence is rolling out a rebranding effort in its celebratory 46th season this year with the new tagline, "Together We Sing." Nuechterlein says that "the Composers Forum considers VocalEssence to be a longtime partner, a leading national champion of new music, and friend." Why? "Because their innovative programming, strategic

partnerships like those with ACF and others, and the lasting connections it makes to different communities, have made Minnesota the Choral Capital of the country," he says. Brunelle could say the same of the Composers Forum and the groundbreaking work it has done with and for composers nationwide.

Nuechterlein notes that over the many years he's had so many terrific experiences at VocalEssence concerts—and working with its staff—two underlying themes emerge time and again with every performance: innovation and education.

"Philip, Executive Director Mary Ann Aufderheide, and the rest of their hard-working staff guarantee that its programming will always be very innovative. And they've made a point to educate about each piece, showing us new ways to think about choral music, or why a subject lends itself to music-making. That's very gratifying to me personally and professionally and to the many supporters of VocalEssence. I think Philip has a wonderful way of and gift for connecting the dots for people. In turn, that energizes audiences, and they become almost evangelical in their support."

A staunch supporter of the organization with both time and money, Nuechterlein has been a life-long lover of music, ever since he first took piano lessons from his mother as a young boy. He believes that VocalEssence deserves as much community support as the community can muster. "This is a cultural legacy that no other communities can boast of anywhere in the country," adds the veteran leader of the American Composers Forum. "Singing really does bind us together in ways that nothing else can. Plus, I just simply love what they do, year after year!"

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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Richard and Rosemary Thorsen
Gedney and Emily Anne Tuttle*
Jack and Anita Witt
Anne and Philip Worrell
Timothy Zuel

In celebration of the birth of Eve Kathryn to Josiah and Heidi Telschow
Robert and Sigrid Johnson

In remembrance of Gedney Tuttle
David and Ann Buran*

In honor of the marriage of Peter Vitale and Dr. Stephen Nelson
David and Ann Buran*

In honor of the VocalEssence 45th Season
Carolyn Brunelle

In remembrance of John Welshons
Rick and Katie Fournier

In remembrance of Karen Wendt
David Wendt