



AMERICAN  
COMPOSERS  
FORUM



## VOCALESSENCE ENSEMBLE SINGERS

### Soprano

Sophie Amelkin  
Jennifer Bevington  
Mandy Inhofer  
Meghan Lowe  
Margaret Sabin  
Ann Schrooten  
Carolyn M. Steele  
JoAnna Swantek

### Alto

Robin Joy Helgen  
Sadie Josephine Klar  
Marita J. Link  
Anna George Meek  
Judith McClain Melander  
Anna Mooy  
Erin Peters  
Sandra Schoenecker

### Tenor

Kevin L. Bailey  
Samuel J. Baker  
Chase Daniel Burkhart  
Anders Eckman  
Robert J. Graham  
Nicholas Mattsson  
William Pederson  
Jacob Watson

### Bass

Josh Conroy  
Joseph Ellickson  
Ryan LaBoy  
AJ Lund  
Eric G. Meyer  
Nathan Petersen-Kindem  
Michael P. Schmidt  
Robert C. Smith

Please take a moment to check that cell phones, paging devices and wristwatch alarms are turned off before the reading session begins. Recording devices and cameras are prohibited. Thank you.

## VOCALESSENCE ReMix

### ENCOURAGING BREAK-OUT MUSICAL ARTISTS TO WRITE FOR VOICE

Carol Barnett, *composer-mentor*  
Libby Larsen, *composer-mentor*  
J. David Moore, *composer-mentor*  
Timothy C. Takach, *composer-mentor*

Friday, November 20, 2015 at 4:25 pm  
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church  
900 Stillwater Road  
Mahtomedi, MN

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers  
Philip Brunelle, *conductor*  
G. Phillip Shultz, III, *conductor*

### THE PROGRAM

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers  
Philip Brunelle, *conductor*

Daniel McConnell Smith: *In the Roundness of Her Eyes*  
(SATB, a cappella)

Liam Moore: *In a Station of the Metro*  
(SATB, a cappella with divisi and SAB soloists)

Michael Maiorana: *Boil It Down!*  
(SATB, a cappella)

Emily Feld: *Let Children Walk with Nature*  
(SATB, a cappella with divisi)

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers  
G. Phillip Shultz, III, *conductor*

Rodrigo Michelet Cadet Díaz: *¿Quién Me Compra una Naranja?*  
(SA, with piano)

Timothy C. Takach: *Kin*  
(TB, with piano)

Jesús Echevarría: *Muchas Gracias*  
(SSA, with piano, clarinet, guitar, bass)

*This program is made possible through the generous support of the Jerome Foundation.*



Celebrating the  
creative spirit of  
emerging artists

50  
YEARS

## PROGRAM NOTES, TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

### IN THE ROUNDNESS OF HER EYES

*Daniel McConnell Smith*

(2015)

*SATB, a cappella*

#### Composer's Note

I started writing the text for "In the Roundness of Her Eyes" a few years ago when I was up in Duluth for school. It was a time when I was a lost person. I didn't know what I was doing with my life and had fits of insomnia for a few months. Over the years, I have prayed to my father who passed away when I was 5. I began writing this text as sort of a personal therapy, getting the thoughts in my head out onto the page. The rest of the text came later on when I started writing the piece. I had a melody already figured out, so it became a game of fitting syllables in a way that served the melody as creating something coherent. I was thinking about how two people in the same space can feel completely different inside. This piece isn't meant to be a pity party, but more of an introspection about taking note of how one feels.

I would like to thank VocalEssence, my wonderful mentor, Timothy C. Takach, and my forever supportive family and friends.

#### Text

Father, I cannot sleep,  
For Time is fleeting,  
Far, still close to me,  
It flees, I cannot sleep,

In the roundness of her eyes,  
Where soft and sweetness lies,  
She sleeps in silky sheets,  
I gather 'round the thoughts I won't let go.

– *Daniel McConnell Smith*

### IN A STATION OF THE METRO

*Liam Moore*

(2015)

*SATB, a cappella with divisi and SAB soloists*

#### Composer's Note

"In a Station of the Metro" utilizes a very spare text of just 14 words in two lines and, in keeping with that, there is not an immense amount of musical material here. In the music, we find some things that are fleeting and some things that stick. We find some things substantive and others a little more frivolous. Things appear and reappear in slightly different places, following the transience found in the poem.

Like the poem, I think of this music in two parts (with a pivot in between). At first the music is lively and animated, and the text is handed off in certain fragmented ways. About halfway through, we begin hearing the text unbroken in solo voices, and the harmonic material gets stuck, saturating our ears with a kind of stillness.

Some of the music attempts to make use of timbres found within voice sections that are not commonly heard, like male falsetto and

low women's voices, to bring about interesting aural atmospheres. This is a piece about color, light and shading. It's about contrast and shallow yet elegant metaphors. It's about uncertainty in life and death, or maybe it's just feeling alone in a sea of people.

#### Text

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;  
Petals on a wet, black bough.

– *Ezra Pound*

### BOIL IT DOWN!

*Michael Maiorana*

(2015)

*SATB, a cappella*

#### Composer's Note

The text is an ars poetica, a poem about the making of poetry (or any art). It describes the process of taking the experiences of everyday life—the mundane, the visceral, the brutal, everything—and distilling them into something beautiful to share with the world.

#### Text

Boil it down: feet, skin, gristle,  
bones, vertebrae, heart muscle, boil  
it down, skim, and boil  
again, dreams, history, add them and boil  
again, boil and skim  
in closed cauldrons, boil your horse, his hooves,  
the runned-over dog you loved, the girl  
by the pencil sharpener  
who looked at you, looked away,  
boil that for hours, render it  
down, take more from the top as more settles to the bottom,  
the heavier, the denser, throw in ache  
and sperm, and a bead  
of sweat that slid from your armpit to your waist  
as you sat stiff-backed before a test, turn up  
the fire, boil and skim, boil  
some more, add fever  
and the virus that blinded an eye, now's the time  
to add guilt and fear, throw  
logs on the fire, coal, gasoline, throw  
two goldfish in the pot (their swim bladders  
used for "clearing"), boil and boil, render  
it down and distill,  
concentrate  
that for which there is *no*  
*other use at all*, boil it down, down,  
then stir it with rose water, that  
which is now one dense, fatty, scented red essence  
which you smear on your lips  
and go forth  
to plant as many kisses upon the world  
as the world can bear!

– *Thomas Lux (b. 1946)*, Render, Render

## LET CHILDREN WALK WITH NATURE

Emily Feld

(2015)

SATB, a cappella with divisi

### Composer's Note

When John Muir was 28, he decided to walk from Indiana to the Gulf of Mexico. It was just a few short years after the Civil War, and he trekked through the Reconstruction-Era South alone, with the sole purpose of witnessing the diverse natural beauty of the country. But he also saw this beauty juxtaposed against budding industrialization, which he saw as increasingly damaging to the earth we inhabit and to our collective minds. Muir thought that humans dominate nature in an attempt to become immortal, rooted in a fear of death and the unknown. He believed we are no different than our environment, which is in a constant cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. The close proximity to which we live between these three states of being is at times unnerving, deeply comforting, and in Muir's words, divine.

### Text

Let children walk with nature, let them see the beautiful blendings  
and  
communions  
of death and life, their ...joyous unity, as taught in woods and  
meadows,  
trees and mountains ...  
and streams of our blessed star ...  
and they will learn that death is stingless ... and as beautiful  
as life ...  
All is divine.  
– John Muir, Thousand Mile Hike to the Gulf (1916)

## ¿QUIÉN ME COMPRA UNA NARANJA?

Rodrigo Michelet Cadet Díaz

(2012)

SA, with piano

### Composer's Note

When I composed this piece, I was thinking about childhood and how often we tend to underestimate the intellectual and emotional capacity of children. We may think that their emotions revolve only around happiness and we forget that children can also feel sadness, love or fear. After reflecting upon this I decided to compose a sad song that would express another emotional side of our humanity: sadness. Then I discovered a beautiful text by José Gorostiza that speaks to us of a child who, tired of being unloved, decides to go to the marketplace in search of someone who would buy his heart and give him love.

From the beginning the music is very dynamic, representing the din of a market where the child goes to hawk the sale of his own heart. In the intermediate section I try to express the profound sadness of the child. In the last section we return to the first scene of the noisy market, leaving open the possibility that someone might buy that orange in the shape of a heart. I dedicate this piece to all the children in the world who live without love.

### Text

¿Quién me compra una naranja  
para mi consolación?  
Una naranja madura  
en forma de corazón.

*Who will buy me an orange  
To comfort me?  
A ripe orange  
In the shape of a heart.*

La sal del mar en los labios,  
¡ay de mí!  
la sal del mar en las venas  
y en los labios recogí.

*The salt of the sea on lips,  
Oh, poor me!  
The salt of the sea in veins  
And that which I took from the lips.*

Nadie me diera los suyos  
para besar.  
La blanda espiga de un beso  
yo no la puedo segar.

*No one would give me theirs  
To kiss.  
The soft sprig of a kiss  
I cannot cut it down.*

Nadie pidiera mi sangre  
para beber.  
Yo mismo no sé si corre  
¿habrá de correr?

*No one seeks to have, to keep  
the love flowing through my veins  
Even I don't know whether it runs  
or if it just flows on its own.*

Como se pierden las barcas,  
¡ay de mí!  
como se pierden las nubes  
y las barcas, me perdí.

*Just as boats get lost  
Oh, poor me!  
Just as clouds and boats  
Get lost, I am lost.*

Y pues nadie me lo pide,  
ya no tengo corazón.  
¿Quién me compra una naranja  
para mi consolación?  
– José Gorostiza

*And, well, nobody asks me,  
So I have no more heart.  
Who will buy me an orange  
To comfort me?  
– Translation by  
Katie Villaseñor*

## KIN

Timothy C. Takach

(2015)

TB, with piano

### Composer's Note

There is something intangible about men getting together to sing. It's empowering, fraternal, and totally unique. If I knew what it was I'd bottle it up and sell it, but since I don't I'll settle for trying to capture it in music. When I asked Michael Dennis Browne if I could set his poem "Kin" for male choir, he asked, "Why that poem?" I told him it's because if a choir of male singers is lucky enough to get together and make music, they need to have repertoire in which they can believe, and they need texts that have depth and truth in them—texts that we may not get the chance to say out loud. To me, this poem embodies what it's like to sing in a room full of men, a room full of brotherhood. Most people will never know what that feels like. But that's okay. Because we know.

### Text

you are all my kin  
in the small hours  
I claim you

set out in your shadow boats  
let us meet  
arriving  
by sail, by paddle, by oar  
on a vastness of water  
however wild it may be  
all of you my kin  
and I claim you

– Michael Dennis Browne

## MUCHAS GRACIAS

Jesús Echevarría (2012)  
SSA, with piano, clarinet, guitar, bass

### Composer's Note

This song emerged from a time when I heard students sing a greeting song in many languages. I thought it was the proper tool to begin a music class.

I greatly enjoyed listening to the children thank me for my work with them. They did it with modesty and spontaneity. This is how the piece came to me. It seems to me that it is always useful to teach good manners, but this is also a way to thank them for the beautiful experiences they provided to me during my stay in Worthington, Minnesota, in September 2010.

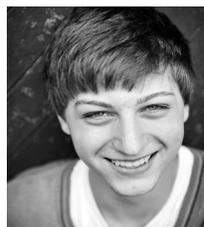
The music is also modest, with some references to a polka and a fox trot.

### Text

Muchas gracias  
Gracias tenga usted  
Muchas gracias  
Tengas tú también.  
Es bonito agradecer  
Si recibes algún bien  
Con esta sencilla frase  
Muchas gracias tenga usted  
¿Y cómo contestaré  
Si las gracias me da usted?  
Dices de nada, dices  
de nada  
Muchas gracias tenga usted.  
– Jesús Echevarría

*Many thanks  
Thanks to you  
Many thanks  
Thanks to you, too.  
It is nice to be grateful  
When you receive something good  
With this simple phrase  
Many thanks to you.  
And how should I respond  
To the thanks you give to me?  
By saying: you're  
welcome, you're welcome  
Many thanks to you.  
– Translation by  
Katie Villaseñor*

## ABOUT THE COMPOSERS



### DANIEL MCCONNELL SMITH

Daniel McConnell Smith is a Minnesota-born composer and songwriter. He pulls from many influences including folk, soul, jazz, and classical music. He studied composition at the University of Minnesota, Duluth and now does the same at McNally Smith College of Music. Dan can be seen playing around the Twin Cities and Duluth with his folk/soul band, The Anatomy Of ..., telling both personal and fictional stories about life, love, and the pains of growing up.



### LIAM MOORE

Liam Moore writes mostly vocal and chamber music, and when the occasion arises he also enjoys writing music for film, dance and other visual and performing arts. His music has been performed in New York, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Washington and Italy. Liam sings, plays stringed instruments, is learning the saxophone and also plays the trombone very badly. He is inspired to write by many things in life, from visual art and poetry to chemistry and physics, as well as a myriad of musical influences across the board. His extra-musical interests are diverse and currently include graphic design, computer programming and this granulated universe we perceive so smoothly. Liam lives in St. Paul, Minnesota and always has a number of projects on his plate.



### MICHAEL MAIORANA

Michael Maiorana is a composer and arranger living in Minneapolis. Born in Detroit, he graduated from Grinnell College in 2012 and is currently working as an after-school band teacher in Saint Paul and as a staff member at the Minnesota Orchestra. His primary composition teachers at Grinnell were John Rommerein and Eric McIntyre, with additional instruction from Roberto Andreoni in Milan, Italy. He recently returned from studying harmony and counterpoint in the tradition of Nadia Boulanger in Paris, with faculty from The Juilliard School and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Michael enjoys writing for choir, small ensembles, and friends.



### EMILY FELD

Emily Feld is a pianist, teacher, and composer from Rosemount, Minnesota. She recently graduated from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where she studied piano performance. She currently maintains a private teaching studio in Rosemount and works as a freelance collaborative pianist.



## JESÚS ECHEVARRÍA

Jesús Echevarría received a degree in composition at the Higher School of Music of the National Institute of Fine Arts and is a graduate student of Musicology at the National School of Music of the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He has studied with Mexican folklorist Héctor

Sánchez Campero, received the Grant for Creators from the State Fund for Culture and Arts of Baja, California, and was the first-place winner of CONACULTA's National Music Promotion composition contest in 2004. Jesús is based in Mexico City, and his works have been performed by prominent Mexican musicians; his works include pieces for choir, orchestra, solo instrument, and Mexican folk instruments. Jesús participated as a resident composer in the 2010-2011 **VocalEssence ¡Cantaré!** community engagement program in Worthington, Minnesota.



## RODRIGO MICHELET CADET DÍAZ

Rodrigo Michelet Cadet Díaz earned his degree in Musical Composition at the Bellas Artes School and has certificates of studies in choir conducting and orchestral conducting. His works include orchestral, small ensemble, choral music and arrangements, many of

which have been performed in the most important halls of Mexico, such as the Palacio de Bellas Artes, and at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. His compositions have also been broadcast on radio.

Since 2007 Rodrigo has conducted the recognized children's choir Schola Cantorum of Mexico; he has performed in international festivals such as American Cantat 2007 (Cuba) and Children of the World in Harmony (United States and Canada). Rodrigo is the arranger of the Method for Musical Instruction of Guanajuato's Bands, which has published four volumes. In 2010, he became director of the children's department at Bellas Artes School of Music, where he founded and conducts the Symphonic Children's Orchestra. An active singer, he is a member of Melos Gloriam, which specializes in Gregorian chant.

Rodrigo was a resident composer for **VocalEssence ¡Cantaré!** in 2011-2012, working with schools in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, and in 2014-2015 composing for schools and community partners in Rochester, Minnesota.

## ABOUT VOCALESSANCE REMIX

**VocalEssence ReMix** encourages break-out musical artists—whether you sing in a rock band or play classical music—to write for voice. In late April 2015, four talented, emerging composers/songwriters were selected from a pool of 43 applicants to have a six-month one-on-one composer mentorship as they each write a choral work. A collaboration between VocalEssence, the American Composers Forum and the American Choral Directors Association of Minnesota, **VocalEssence ReMix** encourages the creation of innovative works in a wide range of styles, and we are excited to premiere the culminating works at the 2015 ACDA-MN State Conference.

## THE COMPOSER-MENTORS



### Carol Barnett

Carol Barnett's music has been called audacious and engaging. Her varied catalog includes works for solo voice, piano, chorus, diverse chamber ensembles, orchestra, and wind ensemble.

She was awarded the 2003 Nancy Van de Vate International Prize for Opera for her chamber opera, *Snow*, and *Meeting at Seneca Falls* was featured at the 2006 Diversity Festival in Red Wing, Minnesota. *The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass*, commissioned in 2006 by VocalEssence and written with Marisha Chamberlain, had its Carnegie Hall debut in February 2013 and has become a favorite across the country. Recent works include *March to Glory: "Draw Me Nearer,"* for the American Guild of Organists 2014 convention; *Near Odessa*, for Bella Voce and Jennifer Tibben; *Coy Pond Suite*, for the Gordon College Big Band; and *Hyfrydol Meditations*, for Westminster Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis. Other commissions include works for the Minnesota Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Harvard Glee Club, Minnesota Music Teachers Association, and Children's Theatre of Minneapolis. She has received grants from the Jerome Foundation, Camargo Foundation, Inter-University Research Committee on Cyprus, and McKnight Foundation.

A longtime presence on the Minnesota music scene, Carol is a charter member of the American Composers Forum and a graduate of the University of Minnesota, where she studied composition with Dominick Argento and Paul Fetler, piano with Bernard Weiser, and flute with Emil J. Niosi. She was composer-in-residence with the Dale Warland Singers from 1992 to 2001, and currently teaches at Augsburg College in Minneapolis.



### Libby Larsen

Libby Larsen is one of America's most performed living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 500 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral works and more than 15 operas. Libby is a Grammy Award-winner and is widely recorded, with more than 50 CDs of her work; she is sought after for commissions and premieres by major artists, ensembles, and orchestras around the world, and has established a permanent place for her works in the concert repertoire.

As a vigorous, articulate advocate for the music and musicians of our time, in 1973 Libby co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, now the American Composers Forum, which has become an invaluable aid for composers during a transitional time for American arts. A former holder of the Papamarkou Chair at John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, Libby also has held residencies with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony.



### J. David Moore

J. David Moore has been in love with a cappella singing and the romance of word and melody ever since high school. Since then, he has written more than 200 arrangements of vocal jazz, spirituals, barbershop quartet, Celtic mouth music, Civil Rights marching songs, early American hymn tunes, 16th-century madrigals, and folk music in Ukrainian, Gaelic, Austrian, Brazilian Portuguese, French, and Latin. His own compositions are shaped by his voracious appetite for music of every era and style. He has written art song, oratorios, music for percussion ensemble, string quartet, wind ensemble, baroque orchestra, and tuned wine glasses. He has written music for worship, dance, and the stage, including the outdoor spectacle *Solstice River*, created by choreographer Marylee Hardenbergh, which has been performed on the Stone Arch Bridge in Minneapolis every summer since 1997. His recent projects explore music for lute quartet, the poetry of Sylvia Plath, raucous British drinking songs, and the singing meditations of the Taizé Community.

David has won numerous grants, awards, and residencies from many organizations such as ASCAP, the Jerome Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, and the American Composers Forum. He has twice been awarded the Forum's Faith Partners residency, during which he collaborated with consortia of congregations in the creation of 12 liturgical works. He has been commissioned by organizations such as The Rose Ensemble, The Alchemy Project, the Arizona Master Chorale, the Choral Arts Ensemble of Rochester, the Minnesota Opera (for which he wrote a 20-minute opera about alien invasion with a group of fourth-graders), MUSE Women's Choir, the Sapphire Chamber Consort, Shawn Womack Dance Projects, the South Bend Chamber Singers, the Venere Lute Quartet, and the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus.

In addition to his own company, Fresh Ayre Music, David's music is published through Boosey & Hawkes, Colla Voce, Earthsongs, Hinshaw, Mark Foster, Music for Percussion, Santa Barbara, Transcontinental Music Publications, and Yelton Rhodes Music. He is Director of Music at Nativity Episcopal Church in Burnsville.



### Timothy C. Takach

Reviewed as "gorgeous" (*Washington Post*) and "stunning" (*Lawrence Journal-World*), the music of Timothy C. Takach is rapidly gaining momentum in the concert world. Applauded for his melodic lines and rich, intriguing harmonies, Tim has received over 80 commissions from numerous

organizations including VocalEssence, the St. Olaf Band, Cantus, Pavia Winds, the University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, The Singers: Minnesota Choral Artists, the Cherry Creek High School Meistersingers, the New Mexico Gay Men's Chorus and the Miami University Men's Glee Club. His compositions have been heard on NPR and have been recorded by various groups in North America.

Tim has won the Boston Choral Ensemble's Commission Competition, Rochester Choral Arts Ensemble's Second Annual Commissioning Contest and was a finalist in the Young New Yorker's Competition for Young Composers. His music is regularly performed by festival and All-State choirs including Texas, Florida,

Minnesota and South Carolina. "What Child Is This" was featured on the 2007 Boston Pops holiday tour, " 'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime" was included in a 2006 worldwide Christmas radio broadcast through the European Broadcasting Union, and two of his pieces are included in the series Teaching Music through Performance in Choir. Tim has received grants from the American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer, the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, and yearly ASCAP Plus awards since 2004.

He is a co-creator of the theatrical production of *All is Calm: the Christmas Truce of 1914*, by Peter Rothstein. The critically adored show has had over 100 performances since its premiere in 2006.

Tim studied music composition at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, where he graduated with honors. He frequently works as a presenter, clinician and lecturer for conventions, schools and students across the country. He is a full-time composer and lives in Minneapolis with his wife and two sons.

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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. 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 (90 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 250 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 Margaret Hillis Achievement Award for Choral Excellence, a once-in-an-organizational-lifetime honor.

VocalEssence reaches into the community with programs that impact thousands of students, singers and composers every year. **VocalEssence WITNESS** celebrates the contributions of African Americans to the arts, **iCantaré!** brings the talents of composers from Mexico to Minnesota classrooms, and **Vintage Voices** fosters the creation of choirs in assisted living communities and senior centers. VocalEssence also partners with the 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,*  
*VocalEssence*

Philip Brunelle, artistic director and founder of VocalEssence, is an internationally-renowned conductor, choral scholar and visionary. He has made

his lifelong mission the promotion of choral art in all its forms, especially rarely heard works of the past and worthwhile new music. Under his leadership, VocalEssence has commissioned more than 200 works to date. Philip has conducted symphonies (New York Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, and Minnesota Orchestra among others) as well as choral festivals and operas on six continents. He is editor of two choral series for Boosey & Hawkes and chairman of the review committee for Walton Music. Philip is also Organist-Choirmaster at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis.

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 in 2002. He is a Vice President of the IFCM Board and served as Executive Director for the 2014 World Symposium on Choral Music in Seoul, South Korea. Philip will serve as Artistic Advisor for the 2017 World Symposium on Choral Music in Barcelona, Spain. Philip is the recipient of the Weston H. Noble Lifetime Achievement Award, given by the North Central American Choral Directors Association; the F. Melius Christiansen Lifetime Achievement Award, American Choral Directors Association-Minnesota Chapter's highest honor; and the Michael Korn Founder's Award for Development of the Professional Choral Art, Chorus America's highest lifetime achievement award.

Philip holds five honorary doctorates and has been recognized for his commitment to choral music by Norway (Commander of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit), the United Kingdom (Honorary Member of the Order of the British Empire), Hungary (Kodály Medal), Sweden (Royal Order of the Polar Star) and Mexico (Ohtli Recognition Award).



**G. Phillip Shoultz, III**  
*Associate Conductor*

As associate conductor of VocalEssence, G. Phillip Shoultz, III serves as artistic leader for the **VocalEssence WITNESS** and **iCantaré!** programs, rehearses with the Chorus & Ensemble Singers, and will

conduct the 2015-2016 **River Songs and Tales with Mark Twain** tour. This year, Phillip will work with the group part-time as he finishes his doctorate degree in conducting at the University of Minnesota where he conducts two choral ensembles.

The winner of the 2015 National American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) Graduate Conducting Competition, Phillip sings professionally, adjudicates vocal festivals, and frequently appears as a guest clinician and workshop leader. He was awarded an F. Melius Christiansen Graduate Study Scholarship by the Minnesota chapter of ACDA, participated in the inaugural Weimar Bach Cantata Academy with Helmuth Rilling, and was selected as one of six Conducting Fellows for the 2015 Oregon Bach Festival. Phillip is also director of music, worship, and the arts at Good Samaritan United Methodist Church.

Phillip earned degrees with high honors from the University of Georgia (B.A. and B.M.) and Georgia State University (M.M.). In Atlanta he was artistic director to an adult community choir (Gwinnett Choral Guild) and a youth organization (Atlanta Institute for Musicianship and Singing); founding director of the Georgia Young Men's Ensemble, a part of the Grammy Award-winning Gwinnett Young Singers; and assistant director for the professional chamber choir Coro Vocati. Phillip's work in public schools garnered school- and county-level Teacher of the Year honors on three occasions by separate organizations.



## VOCALLESSENCE 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 around the world. On their 2014 Asia Pacific Tour, 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. 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. They have been featured on *A Prairie Home Companion* on many occasions and will be heard again on December 26. Last season they performed the Midwest premiere of Jake Heggie's choral opera, *The Radio Hour*, and were the headliner for the Organization of American Kodály Educators National Conference.



The **American Choral Directors Association (ACDA)**, founded in 1959, is a non-profit organization whose active membership is composed of choral musicians from schools, colleges and universities, community, industrial organizations, churches, and professional groups.

With a mission to inspire and support a community of choral musicians, ACDA is one of the largest professional organizations for choral directors in the world, with a membership of over 20,000 conductors representing one million singers.

ACDA has as its highest purpose to encourage the finest choral music and to promote its development in all ways, including performance, composition, publication and research. It is organized in the United States into seven geographical divisions, each with its own activities. Each state has its own officers, making it possible for members to be in close proximity to persons actively involved in choral music and ACDA.

A number of national committees are engaged in exploring materials, techniques and standards. Among these are committees representing children's choirs; junior and senior high school choirs; college and university choirs; choral music in the community and in the church; vocal jazz groups; show choirs; ethnic music; male and female choruses; and activities for students.

ACDA sponsors festivals, clinics and workshops on the state level as well as division and national conventions where ideas are shared and explored, problems discussed, and music is heard. Publications include *The Choral Journal*, which contains articles, reviews of books, records, music and general information about choral music and musicians throughout the world. Members also receive *Melisma*, published by the North Central Division, and Minnesota's own newsletter, *The Star of the North*.

At student chapters in many high schools, colleges, and universities, members are contributing fresh ideas to the thrust of the national organization.



### Our Mission

The **American Composers Forum** enriches lives by nurturing the creative spirit of composers and communities. We provide new opportunities for composers and their music to flourish, and engage communities in the creation, performance and enjoyment of new music.

### History

The American Composers Forum is committed to supporting composers and developing new markets for their music. Through granting, commissioning, and performance programs, the Forum provides composers at all stages of their careers with valuable resources for professional and artistic development. 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 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.

The Forum helps composers engage communities with music as a source of inspiration, self-reflection and delight. This engagement takes the form of groundbreaking composer residencies, designed to engage communities in the creative process and broaden the contexts in which new music is written, performed and heard. It means innovative approaches to teaching music while nurturing the next generation of composers, performers and audiences.

The Forum supports composers' artistic and professional growth through a rich variety of programs and services, including commissions, performances, readings and fellowships.

The Forum's 2,000 members include composers and performers, presenters and organizations that share the Forum's goals, and individuals and institutions interested in supporting new music. Members come from urban and rural areas; they work in virtually every musical genre, including orchestral and chamber music, "world" music, opera and music theater, jazz and improvisational music, electronic and electro-acoustic music, and sound art.

In addition to the tangible benefits of membership (newsletters, invitations to events, and access to grant, fellowship, and residency opportunities), members are part of a national community of artists who share common concerns, aspirations, and goals.



The **Jerome Foundation**, created by artist and philanthropist Jerome Hill (1905-1972), seeks to contribute to a dynamic and evolving culture by supporting the creation, development, and production of new works by emerging artists. The Foundation makes grants to not-for-profit arts organizations and artists in Minnesota and New York City.