



## VOCAL ESSENCE ENSEMBLE SINGERS

### Soprano

Sophie Amelkin  
Jennifer Bevington  
Anna Christofaro  
Anika Kildegaard  
Margaret Sabin  
Mari Scott  
Carolyn M. Steele  
JoAnna Swantek-Johnson

### Alto

Robin J. Helgen  
Marita Link  
Judith McClain Melander  
Anna George Meek  
Anna Mooy  
Sadie Nelson  
Erin Smith Peters  
Kristina Rodel Sorum

### Tenor

Charlie Baird  
Samuel Baker  
Anders Eckman  
Robert Graham  
Nicholas Mattsson  
William Pederson  
Kyle Schwartz  
Jacob Watson

### Bass

Joshua Conroy  
Joseph Ellickson  
Harrison Hintzsche  
Erik Krohg  
Ryan LaBoy  
AJ Lund  
Nathan Petersen-Kindem  
Robert Smith\*\*

\*\* Board liaison

## VOCAL ESSENCE 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*

## American Choral Directors Association

## National Convention

Friday, March 10, 2017

2:45-3:35pm

Hyatt Hotel

Nicollet Grand Room

## VocalEssence Ensemble Singers

Philip Brunelle, *conductor*

G. Phillip Shoultz, III, *associate conductor*

## THE PROGRAM

Laura Caviani: *Manuscript*  
(SATB, a cappella with divisi)

Andy Stermer: *Canto*  
(SATB, a cappella with divisi)

Jonathan Posthuma: *As The Deer*  
(SATB, a cappella with divisi)

Peter Durow: *The Optimist and the Pessimist*  
(SATB, a cappella)

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



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.

## PROGRAM NOTES, TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

### MANUSCRIPT

Laura Caviani  
*SATB, a cappella*

#### Composer's Note

In our current time of world upheaval, it is heartening that the words of Rumi, a poet who was born over eight hundred years ago, can still bring us comfort and inspiration today. This particular poem jumped out at me as sheer ecstasy! My hope is that Rumi would resonate with the Gospel music of today, and that whirling dervishes might respond favorably to the jazz harmonies in this arrangement. Many thanks to VocalEssence for the opportunity to write for this fabulous choir.

#### Text

Do you know what you are?  
You are a manuscript of a divine letter.  
You are a mirror reflecting a noble face.  
This universe is not outside of you.  
Look inside yourself;  
everything that you want,  
you are already that.  
– Shahram Shiva, *Hush Don't Say Anything to God*;  
*Passionate Poems of Rumi*,  
Jain Publishing, 2000. Used by permission

### CANTO

Andy Stermer  
*SATB, a cappella with divisi*

#### Composer's Note

Afro-Uruguayan writer Virginia Brindis de Salas (1908-1958) published but two volumes of poetry. The first, *Pregón de Marimorena/Cry of Mary Morena* contains a chapter of "Songs" including "Canto para un muchacho negro americano del sur/Song for a Black South American Boy." I sensed the spirit of Afro-Uruguayan *candombe* music pulsing between the lines of Brindis de Salas' verse, and used *candombe* rhythms as the basis for my musical setting.

Author Carroll Mills Young writes that Brindis de Salas's writing "poetically evokes the social and cultural reality of Afro-Uruguay... The volumes are intended to promote social change in Uruguay; they exemplify the poet's crusade for solidarity, equality, and dignity." In Uruguay, as in the United States, Brindis de Salas' crusade for racial justice remains conspicuously unfinished. Candombe itself has played a complicated role in this struggle. To Afro-Uruguayans, candombe serves as a proud symbol of cultural heritage, resistance, and resilience. Many worry that as candombe continues to spread beyond Uruguay's borders, joining the pantheon of "world music" enjoyed and practiced by North Americans, its African heritage and significance to the Afro-Uruguayan community will be lost.

As such, I hear in this poem the following call: As we celebrate the diverse cultural perspectives globalization affords, let us not forget to recognize their original identities, and to reckon with the difficult histories that created them. I dedicate this piece to master drummer and educator Alvaro Salas, whose music and spirit will always inspire me.

#### Text

Muchacho con orgullo de bantú  
que cantas:  
Ya ho...  
ge..., ge...,  
ge..., ge...,  
tango!  
Abuelito  
gramillero,  
siempre lo recuerdas tú;  
dile a este muchacho Americano  
qué era el bantú.  
En los galeones negreros  
vino,  
engrillado en sus sentinas  
sin un adiós a la tribu  
ni a la manigua.  
Abuelito  
gramillero,  
díselo, díselo tú  
a este muchacho Americano  
cómo era el bantú.  
Ya ho...,  
ge..., ge...,  
ge..., ge...,  
tangó!  
-Virginia Brindis de Salas

Young boy with pride of the Bantú  
sing:  
Ya ho...  
ge..., ge...,  
ge..., ge...,  
tangó!  
Grandfather  
old wise man,  
may you always remember;  
tell this young American boy  
who the Bantú were.  
In the slave ships  
he came,  
shackled in the hull  
without saying goodbye to the tribe  
nor to the jungle.  
Grandfather  
old wise man,  
tell him, tell him yourself  
tell this young American boy  
what the Bantú were like.  
Ya ho...,  
ge..., ge...,  
ge..., ge...,  
tangó!

– Translation by Andy Stermer

## AS THE DEER

Jonathan Posthuma  
SATB, a cappella

### Composer's Note

*As the Deer* has two editions, one which includes only the first stanza of the psalm and its refrain "Put your hope in God..." and the other which sets the entirety of Psalm 42. The version performed today is the short version. Written for a cappella SATB voices, *As the Deer* makes use of an SATB Semi-Chorus, soloists (Soprano, Alto, and Baritone), and soli sections of Sopranos and Altos. The piece quotes GENEVAN 42, a hymntune composed by Loys "Louis" Bourgeois for Calvin's Genevan Psalter in 1551. Soloists sing stanza 1 of the psalm in French, Dutch, and Hungarian. A fragment of the harmonization by Johan Crüger (1658) is used by the Main Choir, using the English versification provided by the *Psalter Hymnal*, 1987.

### Text

As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When can I go to meet with God?  
My tears have been my food  
both day and night,  
while people say to me all day long,  
"Where is your God?"  
These things I remember  
as I pour out my soul:  
how I used to go with the multitude,  
leading the procession to the house of God,  
with shouts of joy and thanksgiving  
among the festive throng.  
Why are you downcast, O my soul?  
Why so disturbed within me?  
Put your hope in God,  
for I will yet praise him,  
my Savior and my God.  
– Psalm 42: 1-5

## THE OPTIMIST AND THE PESSIMIST

Peter Durow  
SATB, a cappella

### Composer's Note

*The Optimist and the Pessimist* uses text from two different authors. When I first came in contact with Ben King's (1857-1894) poem *The Pessimist*, I loved the humor. I found versions of the poem published with various numbers of verses and varied order to the verses. The poem has also been published under the title - *The Sum of Life*. The genius of Ben King's poem is that each stanza can be read in either a pessimistic or an optimistic point of view. Are we happy that we have work to do, food to eat, clothes to wear etc. etc. or are we gloomy about it? I knew that I didn't want to title the piece *The Pessimist* so I looked for additional texts that would complement the poem and found Oscar Wilde's (1854-1900) quote to be a perfect statement to open and close the composition.

### Text

"The optimist sees the donut, the pessimist sees the hole."  
– Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)

## THE PESSIMIST

Nothing to do but work,  
Nothing to eat but food,  
Nothing to wear but clothes  
To keep one from going nude.  
Nothing to comb but hair,  
Nowhere to sleep but in bed,  
Nothing to weep but tears,  
Nothing to bury but dead.  
Nothing to read but words,  
Nothing to cast but votes,  
Nothing to hear but sounds,  
Nothing to sail but boats.  
Nothing to breathe but air,  
Quick as a flash 'tis gone;  
Nowhere to fall but off,  
Nowhere to stand but on.  
Nothing to sing but songs,  
Ah, well: Alas! Alack!  
Nowhere to go but out,  
Nowhere to come but back.  
Nothing to see but sights,  
Nothing to quench but thirst,  
Nothing to have but what we've got;  
Thus through life we are cursed.  
Nothing to strike but a gait;  
Ev'rything moves that goes;  
Nothing at all but common sense  
Can ever withstand these woes.  
– Ben King (1857-1894)

## ABOUT THE COMPOSERS



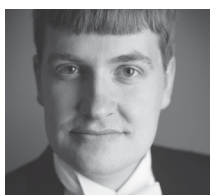
### LAURA CAVIANI

Laura Caviani of Minneapolis, MN, holds a B.M. in theory and composition from Lawrence University, and an M.M. in improvisation from The University of Michigan—Ann Arbor. She has composed, performed and recorded for over 20 years and is currently the Director of the Jazz Area

at Carleton College in Northfield, MN.

[lauracaviani@comcast.net](mailto:lauracaviani@comcast.net)

<http://www.lauracaviani.com>



### PETER J. DUROW

Peter J. Durow of Osseo, MN, is a choral conductor and composer working in the field of music education. He is currently conducting the St. Cloud State University Concert Choir and is honored to be working with Libby Larsen and VocalEssence on this

project. Peter is a graduate of Florida State University (Ph.D.); Butler University (M.M.) and Augsburg College (B.M.). His compositions and arrangements are published and distributed by Colla Voce Music LLC, Heritage Music Press and MusicSpoke. [www.peterjdurow.com](http://www.peterjdurow.com)

[peterdurow@yahoo.com](mailto:peterdurow@yahoo.com)

<http://www.peterjdurow.com/index.html>



### JONATHAN POSTHUMA

Jonathan Posthuma of Newport, MN, holds a BA in secondary music education from Dordt College and a masters of music in composition from the University of Wisconsin—Madison. His music has received a BMI Student Composer Award and 3rd

Prize in the Karol Szymanowski Competition in Poland. He also sings with VocalEssence Chorus and Kantorei, works in the ticket office of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and teaches choir and band at Calvin Christian High School in Fridley, MN.

[j\\_posthuma89@hotmail.com](mailto:j_posthuma89@hotmail.com)

<http://www.jonathanposthuma.com/index.html>



### ANDREW STERMER

Andrew Stermer of Montevideo, MN, holds a bachelor's degree in jazz and studio music from Minnesota State University Moorhead, and a master of music in studio jazz writing from Frost School of Music, University of Miami.

[andrew.stermer@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.stermer@gmail.com)

<http://www.andystermer.com>

## ABOUT VOCALESSENCE 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 six-month one-on-one composer mentorships 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 were excited to premiere the culminating works at the 2015 ACDA-MN State Conference.

## THE COMPOSER-MENTORS



### Carol Barnett

Carol Barnett creates audacious and engaging music, both for traditional instrumentation, and for cross-pollinations such as a Mass accompanied by a bluegrass band or a duet for steel pan and organ. A force in the Minnesota music scene since 1970, her work has been funded by multiple regional and national organizations, and published through major houses. Carol is a charter member of the American Composers Forum and a graduate of the University of Minnesota.

<http://www.carolbarnett.net/>

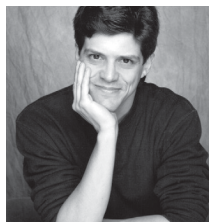


### Libby Larsen

Libby Larsen is one of America's most performed living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 400 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral works and over twelve operas. Grammy Award winning and widely recorded,

including over fifty CDs of her work, she is constantly 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.

<https://libbylarsen.com/>



### 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 in styles ranging from vocal jazz to 16th-century madrigals. His own compositions are shaped by his voracious appetite for music of every era and style. David has won numerous awards from such organizations as ASCAP, the Jerome Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, and the American Composers Forum.

<http://www.jdavidmoore.net/>



### Timothy C. Takach

Reviewed as “gorgeous” (Washington Post) and “stunning” (Lawrence Journal-World), the music of Timothy C. Takach has risen fast in the concert world. Applauded for his melodic lines and intriguing harmonies, Takach is in continuous national demand for commissioned work. He is a co-creator of the theatrical production *All is Calm: the Christmas Truce of 1914*, won the Boston Choral Ensemble’s Commission Competition, and won 3rd place in the American Prize in Composition for Wind Ensemble. Tim is a co-founder of Cantus and Graphite Publishing. <http://www.timothytakach.com/>

## 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.

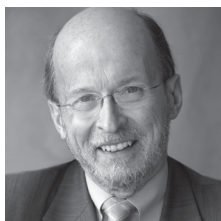
VocalEssence was founded in 1969 as the Plymouth Music Series, an arts outreach program of Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis and incorporated as a separate 501(c)(3) non-profit in 1979. In 2002, the Plymouth Music Series changed its name to VocalEssence, capturing the essence of its mission 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 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. **VocalEssence WITNESS** celebrates the contributions of African Americans and **VocalEssence iCantaré!** brings the talents of composers from Mexico into Minnesota classrooms. VocalEssence 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 Choral Symposium 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 and  
Education Program Director*

Known for his innovative pedagogy and ability to inspire singers of all ages, G. Phillip Shoultz, III, enjoys a multifaceted career as conductor, educator, singer, and speaker.

Phillip is the Associate Conductor of VocalEssence where he shares the podium with founding artistic director, and mentor, Philip Brunelle and serves as the leader for education programs including WITNESS, iCantaré!, ReMix, and the Carnegie Hall Lullaby Project. In addition to his work with VocalEssence, he serves as director of music, worship, and the arts for Good Samaritan United Methodist Church and frequently appears as a guest clinician, adjudicator, workshop leader, and consultant.

The winner of the 2015 American Choral Directors Association Graduate Student Conducting Competition, Phillip appeared as a Conducting Fellow with the Oregon Bach Festival, Chorus America, Choral Music Experience Institute and several other summer programs. He has prepared choirs for performances in Canada, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Mexico, Russia and throughout the United States. He just returned from guest conducting the Manhattan Chorale in New York City. Most recently, Phillip was selected to serve as a 2017 participant in the American Choral Directors Association International Conductors' Exchange program.

Phillip completed his doctoral studies in conducting at the University of Minnesota (D.M.A.) and also earned degrees with High Honors from the University of Georgia (B.A. and B.M.) and Georgia State University (M.M.). During his time in Atlanta, he served as 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 the Assistant Director for the professional chamber choir, Coro Vocati. His work in public schools garnered school- and county-level Teacher of the Year honors on three separate occasions by different organizations.

Phillip enjoys biking, boxing, and all things related to sports and food. A proud member of the VoiceCare Network, Phillip believes every person can experience great joy through singing and passionately encourages exploration of body, mind, and voice through corporate singing experiences. Phillip lives in St. Louis Park, Minnesota with his wife, Michelle, and their three-year old son, Malachi.



## 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 around the world. On their 2014 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. 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*, and last season performed the Midwest premiere of Jake Heggie's choral opera, *The Radio Hour*; they also 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.



AMERICAN  
COMPOSERS  
FORUM

## 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 with an interest in supporting new music. Members come from both 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.

VOCALESSENCE  ReMix

**Encouraging break-out  
musical artists—whether you sing  
in a rock band or play classical  
music—to write for voice.**

**Six-month mentorship with composer  
Libby Larsen, Carol Barnett, J. David Moore,  
or Timothy Takach.**

**Pieces premiered at the ACDA-MN State  
Conference in November 2017.**

**APPLY TODAY**

**Applications due May 1, 2017  
For more information,  
visit [vocalessence.org/remix](http://vocalessence.org/remix)**



TICKETS:  
\$20, \$30, \$40  
vocalessence.org  
612-371-5656

# MIRACLE MASS

**SAT, APR 22, 2017 AT 8 PM**

**The Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis**

Hear world-renowned pianist and composer **Stephen Hough** play solo works by Claude Debussy in between performances of his two masses for choir and organ.

**VocalEssence Chorus &  
Ensemble Singers**  
**Stephen Hough, *pianist***  
**Aaron David Miller, *organ***  
**Philip Brunelle, *conductor***



photo © Hiroyuki Ito