



ANNIVERSARY SEASON

{2018-2019}

### VOCALESSENCE

1900 Nicollet Avenue Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403 612-547-1451

vocalessence.org

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











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### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- · Concerts will be recorded for possible broadcast-please help us keep the performance space quiet. Take a moment now to check that all cell phones, paging devices, wristwatch alarms, and the like are turned off before the concert begins. Thank you.
- Out of respect for the performers and the music creators, please refrain from using cameras or other recording devices during the performance.
- · VocalEssence documents its concerts and events through audio and video. As a ticket holder to this event, you consent to use your likeness, without compensation, in any or all media. Please contact info@vocalessence.org with questions.
- Student and group discounts are available for most VocalEssence concerts. Half-price tickets are available to students (ages 6-18 and college) with a student ID. Groups of 10 or more save 15% on tickets.
- Children of all ages are welcome at all of our Family Series events. Visit www.vocalessence. org/welcomefamily for more information and a list of events. Tickets for children ages 0-17 are free.
- 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.
- You may return VocalEssence single concert tickets for resale up to 48 hours prior to a performance. No refunds or exchanges can be given; however, you will be sent a receipt for your tax-deductible contribution. (VocalEssence subscribers may call 612-371-5642 torequest free ticket exchanges and lost ticket replacement.)
- 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.

### CONTENTS

50th Anniversary Concert Program
Texts and Program Notes
VocalEssence Strategic Plan 2018-2020
Biographies
VocalEssence Historical Timeline
VocalEssence Around the World
Recordings
We Salute You, VocalEssence Family

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### **WELCOME**



Welcome to the opening concert of this 50<sup>th</sup> season of VocalEssence—a wonderful, significant moment and a delightful achievement! During all these years we have maintained the ideal of performing music at the highest level, keeping creativity and innovation as our watchwords.

As I reviewed 49 years of concerts, it was a challenge to decide the repertoire for a retrospective concert—there have been so many marvelous moments, such gorgeous music, amazing guest artists, and thrilling premieres—and I didn't want the concert to last 5 hours! But now we are here and I trust that the music I have selected will delight you; for those who have followed VocalEssence for many years, I hope you will enjoy special memories to savor once again.

Of course, none of this is possible without singers—the backbone of VocalEssence—for singing is what we are all about and what brings us together. I am grateful for the hundreds of voices that have participated in the Chorus & Ensemble Singers and to the faithful listeners who have provided us with the encouragement and support to carry on. We have given you our best and will continue to do so for many years to come!

Finally, I wish to thank my incredible staff and board members. You have believed in what VocalEssence can be and offered your best year after year. Kudos to each one of you for the special role you have played, with special thanks to my wife Carolyn for sticking with me all these years—past, present, and future!

-Philip Brunelle, Artistic Director and Founder

### JOIN US FOR OUR FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

### The Wizard of Oz Movie Sing-Along

Friday, August 31, 2018

### **50th Anniversary Concert**

Sunday, October 7, 2018

### Music for a Grand Cathedral

Sunday, October 28, 2018

### Identity

Thursday, November 8, 2018

### **Welcome Christmas**

December 1, 7, 8, & 9, 2018

### Star of Wonder – Reimagined! at Mia

Saturday, December 8, 2018

### **Together We Sing Festival**

Saturday, January 19, 2019

### Frozen Movie Sing-Along at ASI

Saturday, February 2, 2019

### VocalEssence WITNESS: Yet They Persist

Sunday, February 24, 2019

### VocalEssence & The Avant Garde: Soul Sing

Thursday, February 7, 2019

### Candide

March 21-24, 2019

### Tales & Tunes

Saturday, March 30, 2019

### The Times They Are A-Changin'

Saturday, April 27, 2019

### VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! Community Concert 2019

Tuesday, May 21, 2019



### 2018-2019

### 50<sup>™</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON



### SPECIAL THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THIS CONCERT

Jack and Linda Hoeschler Fund of The Saint Paul Foundation

Katherine B. Andersen Fund of The Saint Paul Foundation

### **SPECIAL THANKS**

Ann Meier Baker, National Endowment for the Arts

Timothy Sharp, American Choral Directors Association

Jacob Noordermeer

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Task Force Members

Catherine Dehoney, Chorus America

Congresswoman Betty McCollum

Lilliana Branitzki

Margareta Beyer

### **50TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT**

Sunday, October 7, 2018 at 4 PM Ordway Concert Hall 345 Washington Street Saint Paul, MN 55102

VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers
Chamber Orchestra
Dessa
Bradley Greenwald
Janis Hardy
Maria Jette
Clara Osowski
James Ramlet
Don Shelby
Vern Sutton
Pop Wagner
Mary Jo Gothmann, pianist

### **2018-2019 SEASON SPONSORS**

Philip Brunelle, conductor

Sigrid Johnson, conductor

G. Phillip Shoultz, III, conductor











PiperJaffray.











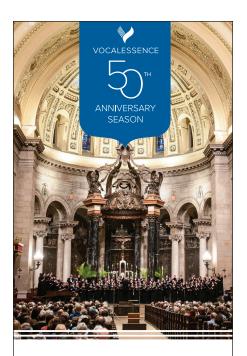






This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund, and a grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation Minnesota.







### MUSIC FOR A GRAND CATHEDRAL

The St. Olaf Choir joins for a mystical masterpiece

SUN, OCT 28, 2018, 2-4 PM Cathedral of Saint Paul



vocalessence.org 612-371-5656

### THE PROGRAM

### **VocalEssence Ensemble Singers**

In the Beginning Aaron Copland Clara Osowski, *soloist* (1947)

### **VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers**

Praise the Lord with Harp and Tongue from *Solomon* George Frideric Handel (1748)

Paul Bunyan in the Lumberjack Camp from Paul Bunyan

Pop Wagner, balladeer; Don Shelby, Paul Bunyan;

Anders Eckman, Western Union Boy

Michael Fairbairn, Nicholas Mattsson,

Erik Krohg, Joe Ellickson, quartet of Swedes;

Vern Sutton, Jim Ramlet, food duet

The Battle of Jericho \* # Moses Hogan (1995)

Eternal Ruler of the Ceaseless Round Libby Larsen from Coming Forth Into Day \*# (1986)

Knockout: A Rag # William Bolcom

Mary Jo Gothmann, piano (2008)

De Flyendes Kör (Flight) from *Kristina från Duvemåla* # Benny Andersson

(1995)

Birthday Ode to "Big Daddy Bach" \* # Peter Schickele
Bradley Greenwald, baritone (1990)

JoAnna Johnson, soprano; Robin Helgen, alto; William Pederson, tenor; David Gindra, bass;

### **INTERMISSION**

### **VocalEssence Ensemble Singers**

The Day is Done \* # Stephen Paulus Sigrid Johnson, conductor (2006)

En Paz \* # Jesús López (2010)

When Music Sounds \* # John Rutter (2018)

### **VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers**

**Billy Taylor** Heritage from Peaceful Warrior (1984)

Dominick Argento The Last Invocation

Maria Jette, soloist (2008)

Kurt Weill Tchaikovsky from Lady in the Dark

Vern Sutton, soloist (1940)

Behold El Capitan from El Capitan John Phillip Sousa (1896)

Bradley Greenwald, soloist

Rodion Shchedrin Angel Gospoden' from The Sealed Angel # (1988)

Jennifer Kennard, flute

The Promise of Living from *The Tender Land* Aaron Copland Mari Scott, soprano; Rob Graham, tenor (1954)

\* VocalEssence Commission # VocalEssence World or US Premiere





### **INAUGURAL FAMILY SERIES**

Featuring child-centered programming with live music, crafts, and opportunities to sing and move.

Tickets for children ages 0-17 are FREE!



vocalessence.org/ welcomefamily

### **TEXTS**

### IN THE BEGINNING

Aaron Copland

### PROGRAM NOTE:

*In the Beginning* was on the very first VocalEssence choral concert. It was conducted by Aaron Copland, and tonight's emcee, Janis Hardy, was the soloist.

-Philip Brunelle

Text from Genesis Chapter 1:1 - 2:7

### PRAISE THE LORD WITH HARP AND TONGUE FROM SOLOMON

George Frideric Handel

### PROGRAM NOTE:

I selected this piece because from season number one we performed a Handel oratorio on many of the early seasons—  $Solomon \ \, being \ \, one \ \, of \ \, them—and \ \, it \ \, has \ \, the \ \, most \ \, glorious \ \, choruses.$   $-Philip \ \, Brunelle$ 

Praise the Lord with harp and tongue! Praise Him all ye old and young, He's in mercy ever strong.

Praise the Lord through ev'ry state, Praise Him early, praise Him late, God alone is good and great.

Let the loud Hosannahs rise, Widely spreading through the skies, God alone is just and wise.

### PAUL BUNYAN IN THE LUMBERJACK CAMP FROM PAUL BUNYAN

Benjamin Britten

### PROGRAM NOTE:

We first performed the story of this Minnesota legend in its Midwest premiere on May 3, 1987 at The Ordway. We then recorded it, and it won the English Gramophone Prize for "Best Opera of the Year" in 1988. Subsequently we were invited to perform it at the Aldeburgh Festival, Britten's own festival.

-Philip Brunelle

### THE BATTLE OF JERICHO

Moses Hogan

### PROGRAM NOTE:

This piece was composed as a gift to me and VocalEssence. We first performed it at Orchestra Hall on October 21, 1995.  $-Philip\ Brunelle$ 

Joshua fit the battle of Jericho
And the walls come tumblin' down.
Talk about your kings of Gideon, talk about your men of Saul,
But none like good old Joshua at the battle of Jericho.

Right up to the walls of Jericho He marched with spear in hand. "Go blow that ramhorn," Joshua cried, "Cause the battle am in my hand."

Then the Lamb ram sheep horn begins to blow And the trumpet begins to sound. Joshua commanded the children to shout And the walls come tumblin' down.

### ETERNAL RULER OF THE CEASELESS ROUND FROM COMING FORTH INTO DAY

Libby Larsen

### PROGRAM NOTE:

This is a memorable piece as it involved Libby Larsen and me traveling to Cairo, Egypt to meet First Lady Jehan Sadat, asking her to write poetry for Libby's oratorio, and later inviting her to come to Minnesota and be the narrator for the Ordway performance on April 14, 1986.

-Philip Brunelle

Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round Of circling planets singing on their way; Guide of the nations from the night profound Into the glory of the perfect day; Rule in our hearts, that we may ever be Guided, and strengthened, and upheld by Thee.

We are of Thee, the people of Thy love, Thy children, O Thou well-beloved One; Descend, O Holy Radiance, as a dove Into our hearts, that we may be as one; As one with Thee, to whom we ever tend, As one with Thee, our brother and our friend.

We would be one in hatred of all wrong,
One in our love of all things sweet and fair,
One with the joy that breaketh into song,
One with the grief that trembles into prayer,
One with the power that makes Thy children free
To follow truth, and thus to follow Thee.

-John Chadwick

### **KNOCKOUT: A RAG**

William Bolcom

### PROGRAM NOTE:

This piece was composed as a gift for me to play on the VocalEssence  $40^{\rm th}$  anniversary—which Bill called a 'knockout.' —Philip Brunelle

### DE FLYENDES KÖR (FLIGHT) FROM *KRISTINA FRÅN DUVEMÅLA*

Benny Andersson

### PROGRAM NOTE:

It was an historic occasion when Benny Andersson and Björn

Ulvaeus (the 2 B's of ABBA) gave us rights to the US premiere of the musical. They also brought the four principal singers here and a Swedish Television crew to make a one-hour documentary from the performances at Orchestra Hall and in Lindström, Minnesota. Why Lindström? The story, based on the novels of Vilhelm Moberg, is about a Swedish family's emigration from Småland, Sweden to Chisago County, Minnesota in the mid-19th century.

-Philip Brunelle

From a thousand mouths, a single voice Where is our refuge, where is our home? Rumors of death and ill deeds, Rumors of blood and flames.

-Words by Bjorn Ulvaeus, translated by Stefan Sylvander

### **BIRTHDAY ODE TO "BIG DADDY BACH"**

Peter Schickele

### PROGRAM NOTE:

We commissioned this birthday ode from my friend Peter Schickele on behalf of P.D.Q. Bach, and it was premiered on January 31, 1985 at the O'Shaughnessy Auditorium in Saint Paul.

-Philip Brunelle

Hoch soll er leben dreimal hoch! High may he flourish, three times high!

If Daddy were alive today, this here is what we all would say:

Though thirty-five years have come and gone since Daddy died, his name lives on:

When times are tough and things get bad, it's nice to have a famous dad.

His virtues were so plain to see, but still and all, no saint was he. Though he was good, I must confess to feelings of resentfulness.

He taught us music, note by note, so we could copy what he wrote. His praise for me was always faint, now my stuff's played, and his stuff ain't!

Happy birthday, Dad!

### THE DAY IS DONE

Stephen Paulus

### PROGRAM NOTE:

This piece was commissioned by Kay McCarthy as a surprise for her husband Mike on his  $65^{\rm th}$  birthday. It was premiered by the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers at a surprise birthday party at the Minneapolis Club on May 23, 2006. Since that premiere, it has been performed dozens of times all over the world, including the most recent VocalEssence Ensemble Singers tour to Mexico.

-Philip Brunelle

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes over me
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,

That is not akin to pain,

And resembles sorrow only

As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,

Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Then read from some treasured volume

The poem of thy choice,

And lend to the rhyme of the poet

The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall be banished like restless feelings
That silently steal away.
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

### **EN PAZ**

Jesús López Moreno

### PROGRAM NOTE:

This piece was written for the VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers as part of the VocalEssence iCantaré! Program in 2009-2010. It was premiered at the Basilica of Saint Mary in Minneapolis on May 25, 2010. The VocalEssence Ensemble Singers have performed this piece numerous times since that date, including their most recent tour to Mexico this August.

-Philip Brunelle

Artifex vitae, artifex sui
Muy cerca de mi ocaso, yo te bendigo, Vida,
porque nunca me diste ni esperanza fallida,
ni trabajos injustos, ni pena inmerecida;
porque veo al final de mi rudo camino
que yo fui el arquitecto de mi propio destino;
que si extraje la miel o la hiel de las cosas,
fue porque en ellas puse hiel o mieles sabrosas:
cuando planté rosales coseché siempre rosas.

Cierto, a mis lozanías va a seguir el invierno: imas tú no me dijiste que mayo fuese eterno!

Hallé sin duda largas las noches de mis penas; mas no me prometiste tan sólo noches buenas; y en cambio tuve algunas santamente serenas... Amé, fui amado, el sol acarició mi faz. ¡Vida, nada me debes! ¡Vida, estamos en paz! —Amado Nervo

Architect of life, architect of himself
So near to my end, I bless you, Life,
because you never gave me false hope,
unjust work or undeserved sorrow;
for I see at the end of my rough road
that I was the architect of my own destiny;
and if I extracted honey or gall from things,
it was because I myself gave them gall or delicious honey:
when I planted rosebushes I always gathered roses.

True, my youthful vigor shall be followed by winter: but you never said May would be eternal!

I discovered without a doubt the long nights of my sorrows; for you never promised me only good nights; and yet I had some that were serenely sacred...

I loved, I was loved, the sun caressed my face. Life, you owe me nothing! Life, we are at peace! —Translation by Katie Villaseñor

### WHEN MUSIC SOUNDS

John Rutter

### PROGRAM NOTE:

This piece premiered last April at the Cathedral of Saint Paul with John Rutter conducting. It was commissioned by Sue Shepard in honor of her husband, Don Helgeson's 90th birthday, as well as the VocalEssence  $50^{\rm th}$  anniversary.

-Philip Brunelle

When music sounds, gone is the earth I know, And all her lovely things even lovelier grow; Her flowers in vision flame, her forest trees Lift burdened branches, stilled with ecstasies.

When music sounds, out of the water rise Naiads whose beauty dims my waking eyes, Rapt in strange dreams burns each enchanted face, With solemn echoing stirs their dwelling-place.

When music sounds, all that I was I am
Ere to this haunt of brooding dust I came;
While from Time's woods break into distant song
The swift-winged hours, as I hasten along.

—Walter de la Mare

### HERITAGE FROM PEACEFUL WARRIOR

Billy Taylor

### PROGRAM NOTE:

In 1999, Billy Taylor came with his trio and performed the Midwest premiere of his oratorio. Billy was a national jazz figure, and it was wonderful to get him. I selected this piece because it is an especially strong and timely message for today and was one of the

movements that Billy was most fond of. VocalEssence first performed this piece on February 12, 1999 at Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis.

-Philip Brunelle

If you really are concerned, then show it.
If you really want to help, you can.
If you lend a helping hand to struggling people right around you,
You can make a different world.

If you really are concerned, then speak up.
You can demonstrate your point of view,
But you've got to get involved with pressing problems closest to you,
If you want to change the world.

It's easy to sit on the sidelines, to ask "What can one person do?"
But each person has something special to give, and no one can give it for you.

If you really are concerned, then show it.

If you really want to help, you can.

But you'd better start right now by making changes while you're able,
Or your world will disappear.

He was brilliant and innovative, the symbol of our struggle. With energy and eloquence he led us in our fight With his preaching, his teaching, his sharing, his caring. He was our peaceful warrior, helping us unite.

So when I think about the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, I think of the wonder of the human spirit.

The freedom to be myself, and peace and love.

—Billy Taylor

### THE LAST INVOCATION

Dominick Argento

### PROGRAM NOTE:

Dominick was the first composer commissioned by VocalEssence. On March 9, 1974 we premiered his wonderful work *Jonah and the Whale*, which starred Vern Sutton as Jonah and LeRoy Lehr as the Voice of God. *The Last Invocation* by Dominick was written as a gift for long-time VocalEssence soloist Maria Jette. Maria's first performance with VocalEssence was in 1987 when she performed as the "Dog" in Benjamin Britten's *Paul Bunyan*.

-Philip Brunelle

At the last, tenderly,
From the walls of the powerful fortress'd house,
From the clasp of the knitted locks, from the keep of the
well-closed doors,
Let me be wafted.

Let me glide noiselessly forth; With the key of softness unlock the locks—with a whisper, Set open the doors O soul.

Tenderly—be not impatient, (Strong is your hold O mortal flesh, Strong is your hold O love.)

—Walt Whitman

### TCHAIKOVSKY FROM LADY IN THE DARK

Kurt Weill

### PROGRAM NOTE:

Vern Sutton has had a long history with VocalEssence and started at Orchestra Hall when we performed Kurt Weill's music on September 6, 1993. This song was the show-stopper!

-Philip Brunelle

### BEHOLD EL CAPITAN FROM EL CAPITAN

John Phillip Sousa

### PROGRAM NOTE:

I went to the Library of Congress and discovered boxes of Sousa music, including this operetta which was first performed locally at Minnesota Opera in the 1975-76 season when I was music director. VocalEssence performed it at the Ted Mann Concert Hall in Minneapolis with Bradley Greenwald as El Capitan on October 8 and 9, 2010.

-Philip Brunelle

Behold El Capitan!
Gaze on his misanthropic stare,
Notice his penetrating glare.
Come match him if you can.
He is the champion beyond compare...
This campaign leave to me,
And have no further anxiety.
I'll rid this land, you'll see,
Of Don Medigua's society.
And when I meet him, I shall greet him
Without much propriety.
To arms... For liberty!

—Charles Klein

### ANGEL GOSPODEN' FROM THE SEALED ANGEL

Rodion Shchedrin

### PROGRAM NOTE:

Rodion Shchedrin is regarded as the successor to Shostakovich and we presented a week-long festival of his music, including the US premiere of his cantata, *The Sealed Angel*, at the Basilica of Saint Mary on November 3, 1991. Shchedrin's wife, the prima ballerina Maya Plisetskaya, was also here for the festival and was featured in an evening of Shchedrin's ballets at Northrop Auditorium.

-Philip Brunelle

Truly. Angel of God, let your tears flow. May I enter into your presence. Truly.

—Translated from the Russian Orthodox by Lilliana Branitski and Veronica Falk

### THE PROMISE OF LIVING FROM THE TENDER LAND

Aaron Copland

### PROGRAM NOTE:

We began with Aaron Copland 50 years ago and this beautiful chorus is from his opera *The Tender Land*, which we performed at The Ordway on September 26, 1989 and then recorded. This opera was the last major Copland work to be recorded while he was still alive.

-Philip Brunelle

The promise of living with hope and thanksgiving Is born of our loving our friends and our labor. The promise of growing with faith and with knowing Is born of our sharing our love with our neighbor. The promise of living, the promise of growing Is born of our singing in joy and thanksgiving!

For many a year we've known these fields And known all the work that makes them yield. Are you ready to lend a hand? We're ready to work, we're ready to lend a hand. By working together we'll bring in the blessings of harvest.

We plant each row with seeds of grain And Providence sends us the sun and the rain. By lending a hand, by lending an arm, Bring in from the land, bring out from the farm, Bring out the blessings of harvest.

Give thanks there was sunshine, give thanks there was rain, Give thanks we have hands to deliver the grain. O let us be joyful, O let us be grateful to the Lord for his blessing.

The promise of ending in right understanding Is peace in our own hearts, and peace with our neighbor. O let us sing our song, and let our song be heard. Let's sing our song, with our hearts and find a promise in that song.

The promise of living, the promise of growing, The promise of ending is labor, and sharing, and loving!  $-Horace\ Everett$ 



### **CONCERT BROADCAST**

Mon, Nov 19, 2018 AT 7 PM classicalmpr

### STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2020 | TOGETHER WE SING



Founded in 1969, VocalEssence has decades of history as one of the world's premier music organizations. While mindful of our global influence, we recognize the power of singing together, and routinely pioneer ways to strengthen Minnesota's singing community.

As we begin our 50<sup>th</sup> year, we celebrate our recognition not only locally and regionally, but nationally and internationally for innovation, leadership, and advancement of this art form. Within the strength of our position as a leader in this field, our challenge is to remain relevant and responsive within the rapidly changing demographic landscape.

This Strategic Plan is reflective of these times of change and the exciting opportunities before us. It reflects new organizational directions and tests new strategies around program development and constituent engagement. It sets us on a course of strategic experimentation, learning, and adaptation to ensure our future and enhance the lives of thousands of people in our community and beyond.

### **MISSION**



VocalEssence champions choral music of all genres, celebrating the vocal experience through innovative performances, commissioning of new music, and engaging with diverse constituencies.

### **VISION**



We transform lives by singing together, assuring a place for everyone's voice.

We live out our artistic vision by:

- · Championing singing together
- Engaging diverse constituencies
- Creating innovative performance and learning experiences
- Commissioning new music

### **CORE VALUES**



- Ensuring a culture of excellence
- Engaging people across race, culture, and age
- Celebrating many traditions of music
- Fostering a collaborative environment
- Stewarding our resources







### THREE KEY AREAS FOR ADVANCEMENT



### STRENGTHEN ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE & REPUTATION:

Push our artistic boundaries through new creative and engagement opportunities.



### **ADVANCE INCLUSION, ACCESS, & EQUITY:**

Develop future singing generations in ways that are reflective of and responsive to diverse constituencies.



### **SECURE A SOLID FUTURE:**

Ensure our capacity to carry out our vision through attention to fiscal health, operating capacity, and leadership development.

### **BIOGRAPHIES**

### **DESSA**

Dessa is a musician and writer based in Minneapolis and Manhattan. Her most recent album, *Chime*, debuted on the Billboard 200 list; her first hardcover collection of essays, *My Own Devices*, was published in September. http://www.doomtree.net/dessa/

### **BRADLEY GREENWALD**

Bradley Greenwald has appeared with VocalEssence in *El Capitan, The Most Happy Fella, Of Thee I Sing, The Shoemaker's Holiday, Barnum's Bird,* and *Cabaret Songs* with William Bolcom. He has performed opera, theater, music-theater, concert, and recital repertoire with many Twin Cities arts organizations, including Guthrie Theater, Jungle Theater, and 10,000 Things. Bradley is the recipient of a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship in music, the McKnight Fellowship for Theater Artists, and a 2006 Ivey Award.

### **JANIS HARDY**

Mezzo soprano Janis Hardy has performed in countless concerts with Philip Brunelle and VocalEssence since its earliest days. She has sung leading roles for major American opera companies including as a member of Minnesota Opera's Resident Ensemble. With Philip Brunelle she recorded a solo album of Copland's *Old American Songs* and sang the roles of "Ma" in Copland's *The Tender Land*, "Sister" in Libby Larsen's *In A Winter Garden* and Poppet the cat in Britten's *Paul Bunyan*.

### **MARIA JETTE**

Soprano Maria Jette's wide-ranging career has encompassed everything from early Baroque opera to world premieres in the United States and abroad. She has performed with VocalEssence on numerous occasions, including the U.S. premiere of Jonathan Dove's *There Was a Child* in 2013, Welcome Christmas in 2012 and The Sound of Eternity in 2011. Her orchestral résumé includes The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, and more. http://www.mariajette.com

### **SIGRID JOHNSON**

Sigrid Johnson, professor emerita of music at St. Olaf College and associate conductor emerita at VocalEssence, is known for her skill at blending voices and perfecting tone. While now retired from her academic tenure, she is active as a conductor and clinician specializing in women's choral literature. Sigrid earned her bachelor of music degree in vocal performance from St. Cloud State University and a master of music degree in voice performance from the University of Michigan.

### DR. JENNIFER KENNARD

Dr. Jennifer Kennard is the adjunct Professor of Flute of the Concordia University, St. Paul Music Department, where she has taught since 2010. As an orchestral musician, she has performed with the Minnesota, Chautauqua, Grand Rapids, Lansing, and West Shore symphony orchestras and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. She has performed as a solo and chamber musician throughout the United States and in Australia.

### **CLARA OSOWSKI**

Mezzo-soprano Clara Osowski, who sings "from inside the music with unaffected purity and sincerity" (UK Telegraph), is an active soloist and chamber musician throughout the United States and

Europe. She was a 2012 Metropolitan Opera National Council Upper-Midwest Regional Finalist, and was a recipient of the prestigious 2018-2019 McKnight Artist Fellowships for Musicians. Clara is a former VocalEssence Ensemble Singer and soloist. http://www.claraosowski.com/

### JIM RAMLET

Jim Ramlet has appeared at the Guthrie Theater, Theatre Latté Da, American Repertory Theater, Children's Theatre Company, History Theatre, Frank Theatre, Illusion Theater, Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company, Nautilus Music-Theater, and VocalEssence. Also an accomplished operatic performer, he has performed with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Vienna State Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Washington National Opera, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Jim is a former VocalEssence Ensemble Singer.

### **DON SHELBY**

Don Shelby is considered the most decorated local journalist in the country, having won all five of the top national journalism awards including twice the recipient of the George Foster Peabody Award, the broadcast equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize. He is the author of a book on basketball and life lessons titled *The Season Never Ends* and has been married to Barbara for more than 40 years; they have three daughters and three grandchildren.

### **VERN SUTTON**

Both as a singer on stage and a director behind the scenes, Vern Sutton has made a tremendous impact on many VocalEssence productions over the years, among them *El Capitan, The Most Happy Fella, Lady in the Dark, Of Thee I Sing, The Road of Promise, A White House Cantata, The Shoemaker's Holiday, La Finta Giardiniera, The Snow Maiden, Sir John in Love, The Tender Land, and the 1987 and 1993 productions of <i>Paul Bunyan*.

### **POP WAGNER**

Pop Wagner has quite the reputation as a singer, picker, fiddler, lasso twirler, poet, and downright funny guy. He appeared frequently on Public Radio's *A Prairie Home Companion* during the show's formative years and for the last five decades has worked his cowboy magic throughout 44 states and ten countries. His cowboy anthems crackle with the warmth of a prairie campfire while he serves up spellbinding rope tricks and tall stories. https://popwagner.com/

### **ORCHESTRA**

Jennifer Kennard, flute and piccolo
Sarah Carmack and Lindsey Thompson, oboe
Paul Schulz, clarinet and bass clarinet
Matt Bertrand, bassoon
Marty Hodel and Pam Humphrey, trumpet and piccolo trumpet
Alex Wolff, trombone
Paul Budde, tuba
Erik Barsness, timpani and percussion
Brenda Mickens and Alastair Brown, violin I
Ian Snyder and Zachary Saathoff, violin II
Tamas Strasser and Valerie Little, viola
Jane O'Hara, cello
Charles Block, bass

### ABOUT VOCALESSENCE

VocalEssence, called "one of the irreplaceable music ensembles of our time" by Dana Gioia, past chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts—and the choir that Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones says "sings magnificently"—impacts thousands of students, singers, and composers each year through its initiative programs, contests, and support for innovative art. VocalEssence was founded in 1969 and has debuted more than 300 commissions and world premieres. For more information, visit www.vocalessence.org.



PHILIP BRUNELLE

Artistic Director and Founder

Philip Brunelle, artistic director and founder of VocalEssence, is an internationally-renowned conductor, choral scholar, and visionary. Philip has conducted symphonies, choral festivals, and operas on six continents. He recently completed 9 years as Vice President of IFCM (International Federation for Choral Music), holds five honorary degrees, and has been recognized for his commitment to choral music by the governments of Norway, Hungary, Sweden, Mexico, and the United Kingdom. His thoughts on music are at RenaissanceManpodcast.com. http://vocalessence.org/philipbrunelle



**G. PHILLIP SHOULTZ, III** 

Associate Conductor and Director of Learning, Engagement, and Community Programs

Known for his innovative pedagogy and ability to inspire singers, **G. Phillip Shoultz, III**, serves as the Associate Conductor and Director of Learning, Engagement, and Community Programs at VocalEssence. Phillip completed doctoral studies at the University of Minnesota and also earned degrees from the University of Georgia and Georgia State University. The winner of the 2015 American Choral Directors Association Graduate Student Conducting Competition, Phillip appeared as a Conducting Fellow with the Oregon Bach Festival. http://www.vocalessence.org/gps/



**MARY JO GOTHMANN** 

Accompanist

Mary Jo Gothmann joined VocalEssence as staff accompanist in 2015. She enjoys a varied career as a chamber musician, soloist, opera coach, and organist. Mary Jo performs frequently with the Minnesota Orchestra and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and is a graduate of the Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Program, University of Minnesota, New England Conservatory, and St. Olaf College. Mary Jo is the founder and Artistic Director of the Joya Chamber Music Series at Zion Lutheran Church in Anoka.

### Celebrate Philip Brunelle's 50<sup>th</sup> year as Organist and Choirmaster at Plymouth Church

### Sun, Nov. 18, 2018 at 2 PM

King David by Arthur Honegger Plymouth Congregational Church Choir, St. Mark's Cathedral Choir, soloists, orchestra, and actors combine for a special production.

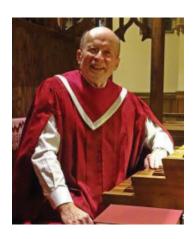
Thurs, Jan. 31, 2019 at 7:30 PM Piano Recital: Angela Hewitt A great treat to hear this international artist in an all-Bach concert!

### Sun, Feb. 10, 2019 at 4 PM

Organ Recital: Daniel Roth Known for his thrilling improvisations, he is head organist of St. Sulpice in Paris

### Plymouth Congregational Church Proud home of VocalEssence

1900 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis 612/871-7400 www.plymouth.org Find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram



### **VOCALESSENCE CHORUS**

### **VOCALESSENCE CHORUS**



The VocalEssence Chorus is an exceptional group of talented, committed singers from many walks of life. A staple on the VocalEssence season, the Chorus also performs at community events including the VocalEssence WITNESS Young People's Concerts at Orchestra Hall and the VocalEssence iCantaré! Concert at the Ordway. Last November. the VocalEssence Chorus was selected to perform at the 2017 Fall Convention for the American Choral Directors Association of Minnesota.

www.vocalessence.org/what-we-do/performing-ensembles/vocalessence-chorus/

### **SOPRANO**

Amanda Allen Laura Amos AnnaLisa Anderson Barbara Anderson Libby Anderson Jessica Belt Whitney Al Bembenek Ali Biatek Julia Braaten Jennica Date Regan Debban Judy Drobeck Maria Gisselquist Kristina M. Guiffre Tommie Hollingsworth Rebecca Hovsepian Sally Jaffray Lisa Kapsner-Swift Jeanne Kenney Kartra Kohl Joy MacArthur Erin Mever Lisa Moncur Christina Pederson Naomi Porter Shira Rabkin Leah Refuerzo Elizabeth Robbins Alexa Rosenbaum **Chervl Roberts** Saunders Susan Scofield

LeAnn Stein

Abbie Sulik

Dana Terres Amanda Troolin Katherine True Jennifer S Vickerman\*\* Laura Walklet Hilary Wiek Dannika Wright

### **ALTO**

Akosua Obuo Addo Kellie Asher Jo M. Beld Alyse Carbonell Constance Chen **Becky Gaunt** Judy Gaunt Yvonne Grover Autumn Gurgel Mary Haasl Marjorie Hakala Meghan Hanna Shannon Hart Dee Hein Susan E. Hill Kristin Howlett Aileen Rosa Kasper Jenny Kisner Jeenee Lee Rebecca Modert Kristi Mueller **Emily Nelson** Nadia Pedersen Samantha Phillippe Ana Lucía Piedrahita

Fernández

Marty Raymond Miriam Sahouani Coral Sampson Debra Samuelson Erin Sandsmark Katie Sandsmark Heidi Schleif Forrest Schrader Johanna Smith Kelsey Stout Sandra Swami Laura Tanner Rosita Tendall Cassandra Warn Allie Wigley

### **TENOR**

Steve Aggergaard Andrew Alness David Andrew Beccue Larry Brandts Josh Brockbank Rvan Coopergard Ben Demaree Blake Downing Samuel Fouts<sup>†</sup> Flynn Franzen Jason Kaiser Reagan Lee Andrew Leshovsky David Paese Jonathan Posthuma Rabindra Tambyraja Adam Van der Sluis

### **BASS**

Robert Atendido

Haskel Black

Max Cerny

Phil Bratnober

David Erickson

Matt Ferguson David Fillman Tim Graham Alex Halverson John Henrich Ward Jacobson James LeVoir Philip Lowry Walker MacSwain Nicholas Mroczeki Milo Oien-Rochat David Olson Thomas Paulson Brian Ruhl Joseph Scheller Richard L. Shallbetter William B Smale Trent Stenoien Timothy Supol Stephen Tendall Matthew Terhaar David Toht **Brady Toone** Liam Vance Christopher John Wallace

\*Board liaison †Section leader

### **VOCALESSENCE** ENSEMBLE SINGERS

### **VOCALESSENCE ENSEMBLE SINGERS**



Minnesota is home to an international choral music gem-the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers. Declared by the Oxford Times (UK) as having "a blend that could-and shouldbe the envy of every choir in the business," this 32-voice professional chorus is enjoyed by millions from Duluth, Minnesota to Shanghai, China. The VocalEssence Ensemble Singers are equally at ease premiering music by Pulitzer Prize winning composers as well as teen moms in our Lullaby Project. www.vocalessence.org/what-we-do/ performing-ensembles/vocalessenceensemble-singers/

### **SOPRANO**

Jennifer Bevington JoAnna Johnson Chloe Johnson Myrtle Lemon Meghan Lowe Natalia Romero Margaret Sabin Mari Scott

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

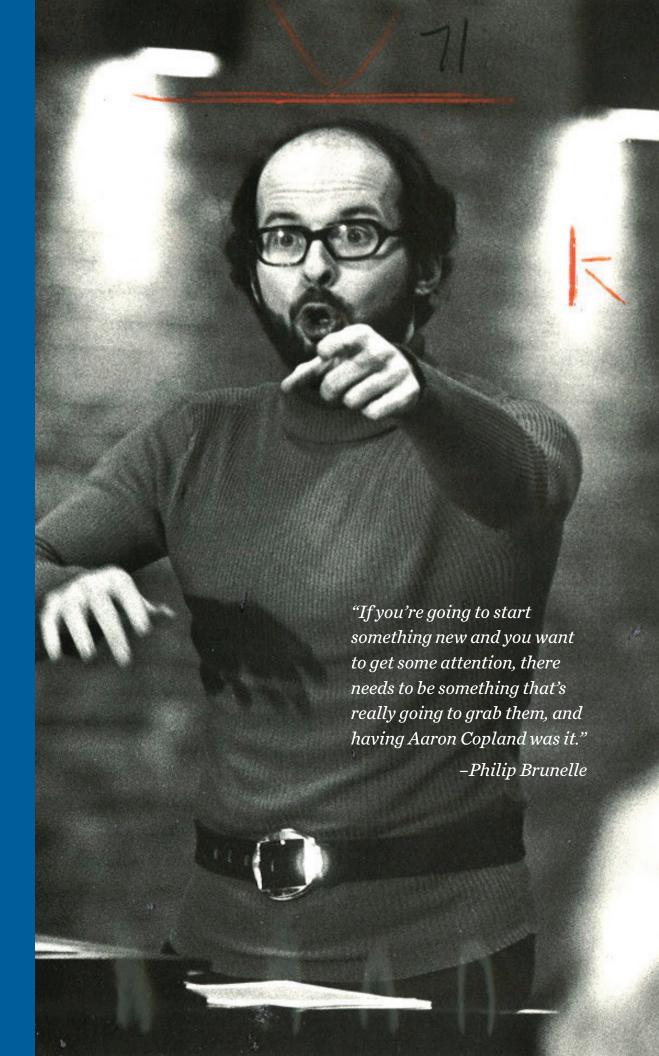
### **TENOR**

Eli Baumgartner Anders Eckman Michael Fairbairn Robert J. Graham William Pederson Kyle Schwartz Jacob Watson

### **BASS**

Joshua Conroy Joseph Ellickson David Gindra Erik Krohg A.J. Lund Nicholas R. Mattsson Nathan Petersen-Kindem Robert Smith

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### **EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED: THE FIRST 50 YEARS**

### 01. SPRING 1969

Long-time Plymouth Congregational Church organist and choirmaster Arthur Jennings resigns from his position and his young organ student, Philip Brunelle, is appointed to continue the legacy of music in the church.

### 02. 1969-1970

With support from the Church Board, Philip steers music at Plymouth Congregational in a new direction by electing to perform a series of choral concerts and organ recitals in addition to weekly Sunday service duties. The new series takes on the title 'Plymouth Music Series.'

### 03. FEBRUARY 22, 1970

American composer Aaron Copland travels to Minneapolis to conduct a program of his choral works including *Lark* (1938), *In the Beginning* (1947), and selections from *The Tender Land* (1956). This noteworthy performance helps put the Plymouth Music Series on the map as a respectable and talented ensemble.

"As I think back to Minneapolis and the Plymouth Music Series concert of my music, it all seems like a glorious picnic—a musical one!"

-Aaron Copland, composer



### **04. JEANNE PATTERSON**

Near the end of the first season, it became clear to Philip that he could use some administrative assistance to make the Plymouth Music Series into what he truly envisioned. Jeanne Patterson, an organ student of Philip's, gladly came on board as a volunteer to assist in preparing for concerts and would continue to serve as managing director for the twenty seasons to follow.

### 05. THE FIRST DECADE: 1970-1980

With the spirit of performing under-appreciated music, Philip led the Plymouth Music Series in six lesser-known Handel oratorios during the first decade of programming. The exceptional performances of these less-familiar works were especially appealing to early audiences composed of mostly church members, but also served as inspiration for choruses across the country to consider including these oratorios in their standard repertoire.

### 06. OCTOBER 31, 1971

In the third season of the Plymouth Music Series, Philip programs Benjamin Britten's *Noye's Fludde* (Noah's Flood). The performance involved 120 children in costume acting as animals in the Biblical flood. This performance helped expand the reach of the Series beyond adult church members to include younger members from a broader community.

### 07. 1973-1974

Following this season, Philip makes the decision to transition the series's organ recitals into its own self-sustaining 'Plymouth Organ Series' relieving some of his own workload and focusing the concert series on the choir.

### 08. JULY 6, 1974

The first episode of Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion* airs on the radio, with Philip Brunelle at the piano. Over the years, the Ensemble Singers would appear as guests on *A Prairie Home Companion* several times a year, fostering a loyal partnership and friendship.



### 09. MARCH 1974

Philip's first venture into commissioning a new work inspires a working relationship with former University of Minnesota professor of music and composition Dominick Argento. The result, a 45-minute Biblical allegory titled *Jonah and the Whale*, begins a legacy of newly commissioned works as a pillar of the Plymouth Music Series repertoire. This work also inspired the first recording for Plymouth Music Series that was released in 1982.

### 10. 1977-1978

The first **Welcome Christmas** concert is performed at Orchestra Hall, opening an opportunity for the community to hear a holiday concert of pieces different from the canon of traditional Christmas carols.

### 11. 1979

The Plymouth Music Series officially becomes a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization. The series is now promoted as a separate, sustainable entity which also grew the case for obtaining grant funding from organizations like the National Endowment for the Arts.

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### **EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED: THE FIRST 50 YEARS**

### 12. MARCH 1984

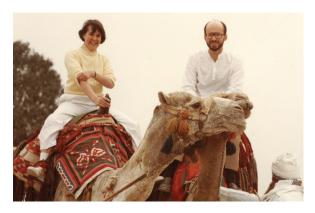
Philip programs J.S. Bach's two-and-a-half-hour *The Passion of Our Lord According to St. Matthew.* Knowing that audiences might find it hard to sit through such a long work, Philip programmed a dinner meal during the intermission. Additionally, he built in opportunities for the audience to join in singing the chorales with the intention to cultivate a deeper spiritual connection and engage the audience as an active part of the concert experience.

### 13. JANUARY 1985

Professor Peter Schickele, also known as P.D.Q. Bach, comes to Minneapolis to help celebrate J.S. Bach's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday in a comical way including the Plymouth Music Series's commission *Birthday Ode to "Big Daddy" Bach*.

### 14. APRIL 1986

An extensive commissioning project involving Libby Larsen and Jehan Sadat, wife of assassinated Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, comes to fruition with a well-received performance featuring Lynda Russell and Jubilant Sykes as soloists with narration by Sadat herself. The piece, titled *Coming Forth Into Day*, expands the scope of the Series's commitment to commissioning of an international spectrum and shares a message of peace amidst times of unrest in US history.

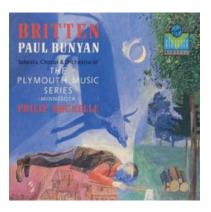


### 15. MAY 1987

The semi-staged performance of Benjamin Britten's opera *Paul Bunyan*, in collaboration with stage designer Vern Sutton, brings favorable audience response to an unknown piece and ultimately earning the organization international attention.

### 16. JUNE 1988

After a successful performance in the previous year, the Series takes the semi-staged production of *Paul Bunyan* to the Aldeburgh Music Festival in England where Virgin Classics records the performance to release as the inaugural album for their classic music series. Later that year, the Plymouth Music Series is awarded the Gramophone Record Award for Best Operatic Recording.



### 17. 1989

The Plymouth Music Series Endowment is officially founded with over \$850,000 raised by the Series and a National Endowment for the Arts match contribution of \$250,000 bringing the initial total to more than \$1,100,000.



### **EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED: THE FIRST 50 YEARS**

### 18. FEBRUARY 10, 1991

The Plymouth Music Series devotes a concert to celebrate and share the artistic contributions of African Americans to fine arts. The first WITNESS concert is held at the Basilica of Saint Mary accompanied by one high school performance. From there, the WITNESS program continues as an annual concert and grows its educational component exponentially.

### 19. 1991

After securing a significant grant through the Northwest Area Foundation, the existing part-time staff is able to assume full-time responsibilities and a small group of the singers are able to be paid, developing a small professional core within the Plymouth Music Series, later taking on the name Ensemble Singers.

### 20. 1991

St. Olaf College professor Sigrid Johnson joins the artistic staff as associate conductor.



### 21. FEBRUARY 1994

Celebrity James Earl Jones comes to Minneapolis to narrate a newly commissioned piece based on Leo Lionni's fairytale *Frederick's Fables* in the February WITNESS concert.



### 22. JUNE 1994

For the first time, the Ensemble Singers tour overseas visiting Leipzig, Nuremberg, and Prague.

### 23. OCTOBER 1996

The 28<sup>th</sup> Season opens with performances of Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus's musical *Kristina från Duvemåla*. The story portrays characters moving from Sweden to the St. Croix Valley. An additional performance is scheduled for the high school gym in Lindström, MN, the town where the fictional character Kristina had lived. The program was even recorded by Swedish national television for a documentary.



### 24. NOVEMBER 1996

To celebrate Thanksgiving, the Ensemble Singers are joined by Garrison Keillor for *Over the River and Through the Woods*, which creatively presents the history of the Thanksgiving holiday with a mixed range of repertoire. The performance is recorded and released on CD for audiences to purchase.

### 25. SPRING 1997

The Ensemble Singers embark on a pan-European tour to Czech Republic, Paris, London, and Belgium. Highlights of the tour include performing at the esteemed Prague Spring Festival and recording at the Church of St. Sulpice in Paris.

### 26. OCTOBER 1999

This season begins with a performance of George and Ira Gershwin's *Of Thee I Sing* starring nationally renowned Maureen McGovern as Mary Turner and Minneapolis native Bradley Greenwald as John P. Wintergreen.

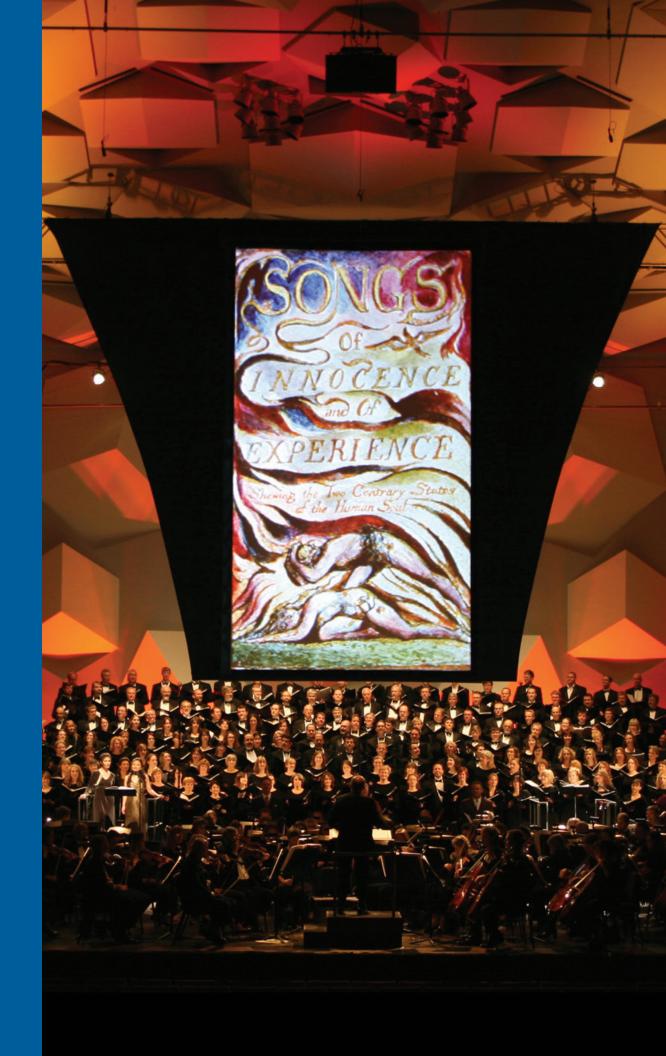
### 27. 1999

For the first time, the Series hosts the *Welcome Christmas!* Carol Contest promoting the principle of encouraging composers to contribute to and expand the choral carol repertoire.

### 28. MARCH 1999

"The Spirit of Finland" festival centers around music by Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara, marking one of the biggest successes for the organization in audience turnout for an unfamiliar work.

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### **EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED: THE FIRST 50 YEARS**

### 29. NOVEMBER 2000

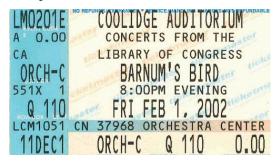
A Garland for Linda, a benefit concert for Linda McCartney who had passed away from breast cancer in April of 1998 is a "poignant and memorable" afternoon honoring humankind's eternal hope, struggle against disease, and quest to understand the world of life after death.

### 30. OCTOBER 2001

A well-received performance of Kurt Weill's *Lady in the Dark* adds semi-staged Broadway musicals and revivals of vintage musicals to the repertoire list for seasons to come.

### 31. FEBRUARY 2002

A special world premiere of a Series commission, *Barnum's Bird* by Libby Larsen, is held at the Library of Congress Coolidge Auditorium. The opera centers on the story of P.T. Barnum's touring star Jenny Lind who is also referred to as the Swedish Nightingale. The project stemmed from research Larsen had been doing for another composition when she came across references to Lind's tour and the concept of American entertainment in that era of history.



### 32. MAY 2002

After a lengthy process of brainstorming and feedback, the Plymouth Music Series of Minnesota adopts the new name: VocalEssence. The new name is announced at the season's gala with almost 1,000 in attendance.

### 33. AUGUST 2002

The Sixth World Symposium on Choral Music is held in Minneapolis, featuring 80 concerts in just 10 days. Philip Brunelle serves as one of the primary leaders for the Symposium and the Ensemble Singers are featured performers.

### 34. 2002-2003 SEASON

The fully-staged opera *Loss of Eden* premieres, celebrating the life and accomplishments of Charles Lindbergh and bolstering a collaborative friendship with composer Cary John Franklin that would produce several other VocalEssence commissions.

### **35. FEBRUARY 2004**

The VocalEssence WITNESS School Program and concert selections turn their focus to one particular personality or theme each year. Since this shift, programs have included

Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks, Duke Ellington, Gordon Parks, and the Harlem Renaissance.

### 36. APRIL 2004

VocalEssence presents Steve Heitzeg's *Nobel Symphony* through the varied dimensions of music, voice, narration, and visual images. The work was originally commissioned by Gustavus Adolphus College with six movements to represent each of the Nobel Medals.

### 37. OCTOBER 2005

In celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Norway's independence from Sweden, singers from the Norwegian National Opera, National Theatre, and National Ballet join VocalEssence in performing Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt*. In the audience was special guest His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon.

### 38. APRIL-MAY 2007

The *Illuminating Bolcom* festival ended the 2006-2007 season with a series of master classes and concerts to highlight the works of composer William Bolcom. The festival culminated with Bolcom's massive work *Songs of Innocence and Experience* featuring a multitude of art forms, including animation, and more than 350 performers.

### 39. 2008-2009

This season brings something new to the VocalEssence focus on community education. It is the first year of the VocalEssence iCantaré! School Program, which hosts select composers from Mexico, to serve as artists in residence with elementary and high school classes, working together to learn about Mexican music and culture as well as composing new music for each specific school. The program culminates in a community concert held at Orchestra Hall where the new compositions are premiered.



### 40. MARCH 2009

The **Eric Whitacre Extravaganza** brings together 160 singers of MN High School Honors Choir, The St. Olaf Choir, and the VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers, all led in concert by Eric himself. Eric's iconic style has brought his music to extreme popularity for ensembles around the country.

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### **EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED: THE FIRST 50 YEARS**

### 41. APRIL 2010

The **Mallets & Melodies** concert includes a performance of Gabrieli's *Magnificat a 33* featuring 20 marimba players as well as the VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers.

### **42. NOVEMBER 2014**

The Ensemble Singers embark on a Minnesota tour funded by the Arts Tour grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board and funding from Land O'Lakes Inc. On the tour, the singers perform **River Songs & Tales with Mark Twain** with the help of Don Shelby, Molly Sue McDonald, and Sara Pajunen.

### 43. 2014-2015 SEASON

VocalEssence introduces a new community program titled Vintage Voices—a program for singers at assisted living homes and senior centers to sing in a choir and reap the many benefits of singing.



### 44. MAY 2015

Associate Conductor Sigrid Johnson retires after 24 years with VocalEssence. G. Phillip Shoultz, III, affectionately known as GPS, joins VocalEssence as full-time Associate Conductor and Director of Learning, Engagement, and Community Programs.



### 45. SPRING 2015

2015 is an inaugural year for the new VocalEssence ReMix program. This program, sponsored by the American Composers Forum and American Choral Directors Association of Minnesota and funded by the Jerome Foundation, allows break-out artists to work in mentorship with four established composers. The music written during this mentorship gets performed by VocalEssence singers in front of audiences in search of new choral music.

### **46. ROLLING STONES DEBUT**

VocalEssence is invited to perform "You Can't Always Get What You Want" with the Rolling Stones at TCF Bank Stadium in Minneapolis on June 3, 2015 in front of an audience of more than 40,000 people. VocalEssence Artistic Director and Founder Philip Brunelle and Associate Conductor G. Phillip Shoultz, III both conducted.



### 47. FALL 2015

VocalEssence becomes the first choir nationally to participate in the Lullaby Project, a program of Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute. The program offers the opportunity for young mothers to work with musicians to compose original lullabies for their children or children they're expecting.



### 48. JUNE 2016

Chorus America awards VocalEssence with the Chorus America Brazeal Wayne Dennard Award that recognizes organizations whose work shows a commitment to diversity, inclusiveness, and furthering African-American and other diverse choral traditions through performance, research, or creation of new compositions.

### 49. 2017-2018

The newly-formed VocalEssence youth choir, Singers Of This Age, begins with a focus on reflecting the diversity of the Twin Cities community in its membership and extending beyond choral singing to develop a multi-faceted art form.

### 50. MAY 2018

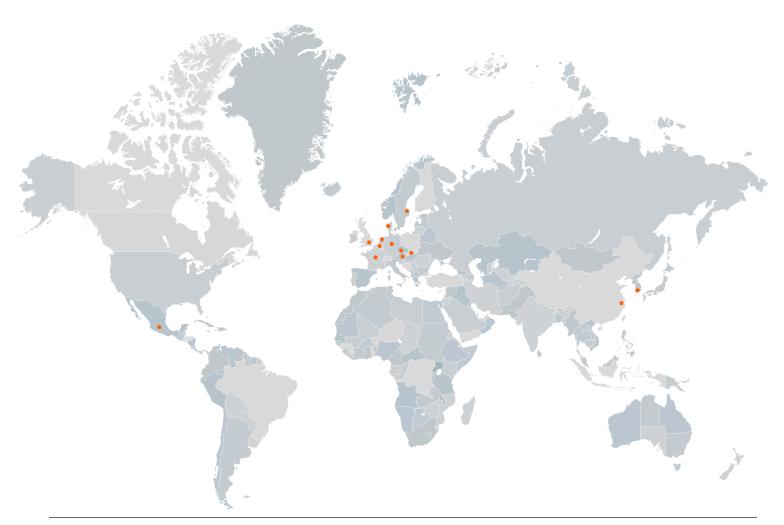
VocalEssence Board approves a 2018-2020 Strategic Plan with a new vision for the organization: to transform lives by singing together, assuring a place for everyone's voice.

### **VOCALESSENCE AROUND THE WORLD**

VocalEssence has traveled everywhere from Saint Peter, Minnesota to Shanghai, China spreading the power of singing to connect us to one another.

### **INTERNATIONAL**

1994	Leipzig and Nuremberg, <b>Germany</b> ; Prague, <b>Czech Republic</b>
June, 1997	Pan-European Tour: Prague (for the Prague Spring Festival), <b>Czech Republic</b> ; London, <b>England</b> ; Paris, <b>France</b> (recorded at Church of St. Sulpice); <b>Belgium</b>
December, 1998	Stockholm, <b>Sweden</b> for a televised New Year's Eve performance
July, 1999	Guest performances at the World Choral Symposium in Rotterdam,  The Netherlands
July, 2001	European Tour: Berlin and Dresden, <b>Germany</b> ; Cesky Krumlov, <b>Czech Republic</b> ; Vienna, <b>Austria</b> ; Copenhagen, <b>Denmark</b> ; <b>Slovakia</b> ; Paris, <b>France</b>
January, 2006	Performance in <b>The Netherlands</b> at the DeDoelen Concert Hall
January, 2009	Tour of <b>England</b> : Oxford, Birmingham, London, Cambridge, and Ely
August, 2014	Asia Pacific Tour: Seoul, <b>South Korea</b> ; Shanghai and Nanjing, <b>China</b>
August, 2018	Mexico City, <b>Mexico</b> to perform with Orquesta Sinfónia de Minería



### **NATIONAL**

January, 1998 Guest performers in the Phipps Center Concert Series: Hudson, WI

February, 1999 National ACDA in Chicago, IL

January, 2004 Special performance of A Prairie Home Companion in Sioux City, IA

February, 2005 Performance of the WITNESS concert in Lansing, MI

June, 2006 America Sings! Launch of American Masterpieces: Choral Music; Strathmore

Center, Bethesda, MD

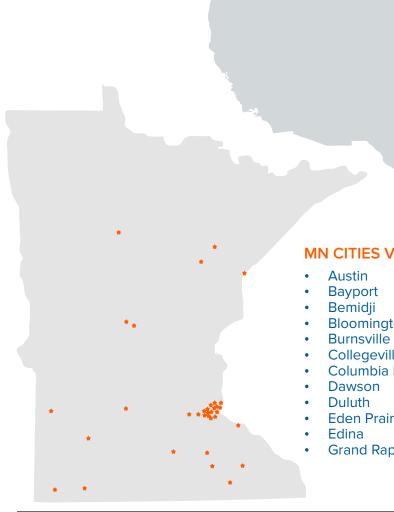
July, 2009 Mason City, IA (for the Iowa Choral Directors Association Conference)

March, 2013 Performances at Myerson Symphony Center and Winspear Opera House in

Dallas, TX for National ACDA

February-March, 2014

'Heartland Tour': Cincinnati, OH; Chicago, IL



### **MN CITIES VISITED**

- Austin
- **Bayport**
- Bemidji
- Bloomington
- Collegeville
- Columbia Heights
- Dawson
- Duluth
- Eden Prairie
- Edina
- **Grand Rapids**

- Hibbing
- Hopkins
- Lindström
- Luverne
- Mahtomedi
- Marshall
- Minneapolis
- Minnetonka
- Montevideo
- Northfield
- Owatonna
- Red Wing

- Rochester
- Roseville
- Saint Peter
- St. Cloud
- St. Paul
- Stillwater
- Victoria
- Waconia
- Wayzata
- Willmar
- Worthington

### **VOCALESSENCE RECORDINGS**

In our 50 years, VocalEssence has recorded 33 albums that have been sold around the world by sellers including Amazon, Gothic Records, CD Baby, and Instant Encore. The singers acknowledge the power of these recordings to carry the musical message of VocalEssence beyond the concert hall to audiences across the globe to sustain an international audience. Thousands of copies of VocalEssence recordings have been sold, and recently listeners have been able to download digital albums and can even access content on iTunes and Spotify.























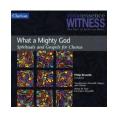
















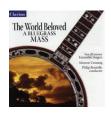




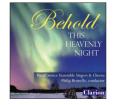


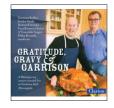




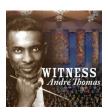


















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VocalEssence is fortunate to have decades of leaders who have envisioned our organization's future and whose contributions helped us build a dynamic, innovative, and world-class organization. While there is no way to thank everyone who has helped VocalEssence thrive, we would like to take a moment to thank members of our family whose work was key to our success: our donors, board members, singers, and staff. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you. You made this possible. Because of you, together we sing.

If your name is not listed below (and it should be), we sincerely apologize. Please call 612-547-1451 or email info@vocalessence.org and we will update our records.



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The Philip Brunelle Founder's Society recognizes those who make a provision for VocalEssence in their will or estate plans. The society is named in honor of our visionary founder, Philip Brunelle, who every day inspires the community to open their ears to new music from diverse cultures.

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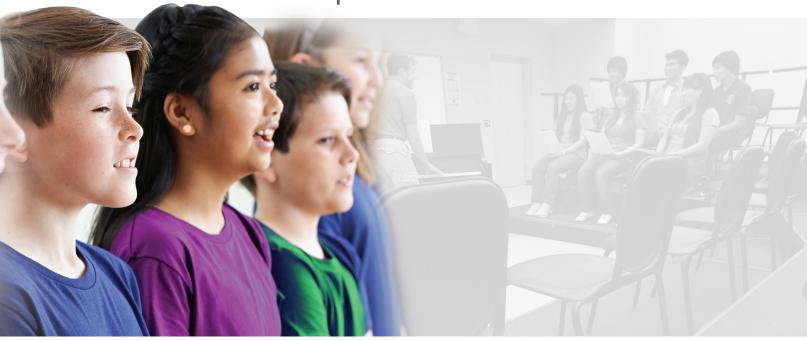
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