

King Solomon's Singers
and
The Rookery
present



Nuptial Bliss:

**Choral Music from Weddings Ancient
and Modern**

Saturday, August 27, 7:30PM

St. Josaphat Parish, Chicago

NUPTIAL BLISS: CHORAL MUSIC FROM WEDDINGS ANCIENT AND MODERN

PART 1: A Wedding Mass of Sorts (King Solomon's Singers)

<i>Processional:</i> <i>Ingredere felicissimis</i>	Francesco Corteccia (1502 – 1571)
<i>Offertory:</i> <i>Ubi caritas</i> <i>Ubi caritas</i> <i>Rise up, my love</i>	Plainchant Maurice Duruflé (1902 – 1986) Healey Willan (1880 – 1968)
<i>Sanctus / Benedictus:</i> <i>Missa brevis</i>	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525 – 1594)
<i>Blessing:</i> <i>Beati quorum via</i>	Charles Villiers Stanford (1852 – 1924)
<i>Agnus Dei:</i> <i>Missa brevis</i>	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525 – 1594)
<i>Communion:</i> <i>I beheld her, beautiful as a dove</i> <i>Ave Maria...virgo serena</i>	Healey Willan (1880 – 1968) Josquin des Pres (d. 1521)

PART 2: Recessional / Reception (The Rookery and King Solomon's Singers)

<i>Ave Maria</i>	Franz Biebl (1906 – 2001)
<i>Seigneur, je vous en prie (from Quatre petites prieres de Saint François d'Assise)</i>	Francis Poulenc (1899 – 1963)
<i>Canticum Canticorum I:</i> <i>1. Surge prospera amica mea</i> <i>2. Descendi in hortum meum</i> <i>3. Ego dilecto meo</i>	Ivan Moody (b. 1964)
<i>The Song of Songs</i>	Howard Skempton (b. 1947)
<i>Maspindzelo (Traditional Georgian toasting song)</i>	Traditional
<i>Excerpts from the 1589 Medici wedding intermedii:</i> <i>Coppia gentil</i> <i>Or che le due grand'Alme</i> <i>O qual risplende nube</i>	Cristofano Malvezzi (1547 – 1599)
<i>Spaseniye sodelal</i>	Pavel Chesnokov (1877 – 1944)
<i>Bogoroditse devo</i>	Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873 – 1943)

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

The program notes for certain King Solomon's Singers concerts have been Very Serious Works of Scholarship, complete with annotations, bibliographies, and ten-dollar words. These are not those program notes. But then, this is not a typical King Solomon's Singers concert. We are performing music by composers who are barely in their graves; we are singing in strange languages (Italian! Russian!¹ English!); and we have Special Guests. All of this strangeness arises because 2016 is a year of anniversaries for the Solomons and friends—wedding anniversaries in particular.

Weddings have traditionally been associated with a certain type of music, call it Western Classical Greatest Hits. Even the most hardcore “classical music” haters can be persuaded to program Pachelbel's Canon or Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring on their wedding day. For people who already love that tradition of music (though maybe not Pachelbel in particular), their wedding can be the occasion to program their own Greatest Hits album. For singers, this can be especially rewarding because of the vast selection of beautiful wedding-appropriate texts that have been set by the great composers of choral music over the last 500+ years. This was certainly the case for two of the members of KSS who celebrate major anniversaries this year. My own wedding was 15 years (minus 11 days) ago, and other than the prospect of marrying my beautiful bride, Cathryn, the aspect of the wedding I was most excited about was choosing the music. The supremely talented composer, conductor, and singer (and friend) Kevin Allen was kind enough to direct the choir—which included KSS member Heather Ahrenholz—and I chose a mass setting and motets that I had come to love in my first real church job at Church of the Atonement. I later realized my choices (the Palestrina *Missa brevis*, two of Healey Willan's settings of Responsaries from an Office of Our Lady, and the Duruflé *Ubi caritas*) were not exactly groundbreaking, but I have never regretted them, and I am delighted to have this opportunity to program them again (plus I get to sing this time!). The *Missa brevis*, though not quite as famous as Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli*, is in my opinion a nearly perfect piece of contrapuntal writing and text setting. No note or syllable is where it should not be, but in this case perfect does not equal lifeless; on the contrary, the voice leading and text setting give the singers instinctual cues to the emotional content of the piece. The Willan pieces, settings of gorgeous Song of Songs poetry, give a nod to their Renaissance (or even Medieval) predecessors but use modern devices such as dynamic contrast, tempo shifts, and dissonance to communicate the text. The Duruflé is also a wedding of ancient and modern styles, with the plainchant melody of the antiphon and verses woven into shimmering chords of clearly modern French character.

Five years after my own wedding, friends Peter Olson and Mary Bellmar were married. The three of us and several others who you see on stage were singing in Chicago Chorale under Bruce Tammen at the time, and it was obvious that Bruce would select a small group from Chorale and direct music for the wedding. But something came up (exactly what, I don't remember) and Bruce couldn't do it. In a bold (some would say foolhardy) leap of faith, Peter and Mary asked me to substitute, neglecting the fact that I had never prepared or conducted a choir for any real performance anywhere. Amazingly, the result was a categorical non-disaster, and in a very real way the ensemble for that wedding was the germ of King Solomon's Singers. (Seven current or former Solomons were either in the choir or at the altar that day, including Heather Ahrenholz, who holds the distinction of being the only person to sing in both of these wedding choirs.) Not surprisingly, Peter and Mary chose wonderful music for us to sing, including Josquin's *Ave Maria...virgo serena*, Stanford's *Beati quorum via*, and two pieces from the era of rebirth of Russian Orthodox church music: Chesnokov's *Spaseniye sodelal* and *Bogoroditse Devo* from Rachmaninoff's *All Night Vigil*. The Josquin is among the greatest choral pieces of any era, with its deceptively simple canon and mood that ranges from devotional to ecstatic, all within the confines of perfect Renaissance counterpoint. Stanford's *Beati quorum via* is harmonically rich and complex, with multiple modulations, but also has a simple tonal beauty. The two Russian pieces are hall-filling gems perfect for the wonderful St. Josaphat acoustic—wait 'til you hear how much sound seventeen voices can make.

Yes, seventeen, not just twelve. Because for these Russian pieces, we will be joined by a group celebrating their own anniversary: The Rookery Men's Choir. Five years ago this month, Bill Chin and Matt Dean—members of KSS, and members or directors of about seventy-three other ensembles²—founded The Rookery, and several other Solomons were in the first Rookery lineup. In addition to joining KSS on the Russian pieces, the Rooks will perform a set of their own in the middle of the evening; more on that later from Matt Dean.

¹ OK, Old Church Slavonic

² 73 is a rough estimate and may contain a mild amount of hyperbole.

Finally, this evening is not **all** about our weddings and anniversaries. Though Peter and Mary and I and lots of others have had the luxury of choosing a choir and repertoire for our wedding, it's a rare couple that gets to ask (require, really) the finest composers in the land to make up some brand new pieces for their wedding and hire the best singers and instrumentalists around to perform them. For a good chunk of Western history, most couples with the money and power to do this were Medicis. Rounding out the repertoire for tonight's performance are selections from the two most chorally lavish Medici weddings: the 1539 wedding of Cosimo de' Medici to Eleanor of Toledo, and the 1589 wedding of Ferdinando de' Medici to Christine of Lorraine. From the 1539 wedding we perform the dazzling eight-part fanfare for the entrance of the bride, *Ingrederere felicissimis*, by Francisco Corteccia. The 1589 wedding celebration included a full five-act pageant, with choral intermissions, or *Intermedii*. Two years ago, I was lucky enough to participate in a full performance of the *Intermedii* from the 1589 wedding, presented by Danny Johnson and the Texas Early Music Project, and I've chosen three small excerpts from that massive undertaking to present this evening.

We hope you enjoy this somewhat out-of-character performance from King Solomon's Singers and our friends The Rookery this evening, and I promise a return to dense, intellectual program notes and music you've never heard of next year!

— Tom Crawford, August 2016

Tonight is the 5th anniversary outing of The Rookery, which began as a summer project in August 2011. This past season, The Rookery was praised by Tribune jazz critic Howard Reich, noted by Chicago Classical Review for "luminous quality, assiduous balance, [and] spot-on intonation," and cited for its "endearing cacophony" in the raucous medieval Roman de Fauvel with The Newberry Consort. We are honored to be guests of founding Rookery countertenor Tom Crawford and his King Solomon's Singers, and have picked two pieces especially in his honor, introduced to us by Richard Childress and performed on our March concert this year at St. Clement. Ivan Moody's *Canticum Canticorum* was written for the Hilliard Ensemble, and sets the familiar Song of Songs texts in a tintinnabulating frame of bell tones and overtones. English pianist-composer Howard Skempton meditates on the fact that this same text belongs to, and emerges from, Solomon himself. This shimmering approach to the repeated text has been called an emancipation of the consonance (in contrast to Schoenberg's emancipation of the dissonance). We wish continued love and wisdom to all fellow choral ensembles and their members.

— Matthew Dean, August 2016

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Ingrederere felicissimis (Francesco Corteccia, 1502 – 1571)

Ingrederere felicissimis auspiciis urbem tuam Helionora
ac optime prolis fecunda ita domi similem patri
foris avo sobolem producas ut Mediceo nomini
eiusque devotissimis civibus securitate prestes eternam.

Enter, Eleonora, under the most favorable auspices into your city.
And, fruitful in excellent offspring, may you produce descendants
similar to your father and forebears abroad, so that you may
guarantee eternal security for the Medici name and for its most
devoted citizens.

Ubi caritas (Plainchant and Maurice Duruflé, 1902 – 1986)

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsultemus et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus nos amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.

Where true charity and love dwell, God himself is there.
Christ's love has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him.
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.
And may we love each other with a sincere heart.

Rise up, my love (Healey Willan, 1880 – 1968)

Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear upon the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come;
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away, come away, away.

Sanctus and Benedictus (*Missa brevis*, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, 1525 – 1594)

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus	Holy, holy, holy,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.	Lord God of Hosts.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria Tua.	Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Hosanna in excelsis.	Hosanna in the highest.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.	Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.
Hosanna in excelsis.	Hosanna in the highest.

Beati quorum via (Charles Villiers Stanford, 1852 – 1924)

Beati quorum via integra est:	Blessed are the undefiled in the way,
qui ambulant in lege Domini.	who walk in the law of the Lord.

Agnus Dei (*Missa brevis*, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, 1525 – 1594)

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,
miserere nobis.	have mercy on us.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,
miserere nobis.	have mercy on us.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,
dona nobis pacem.	grant us peace.

I beheld her, beautiful as a dove (Healey Willan, 1880 – 1968)

I beheld her, beautiful as a dove, rising above the waterbrooks; and her raiment was filled with perfume beyond all price.
Even as the springtime was she girded with rosebuds and lilies of the valley.
Who is this that cometh up from the desert like a wreath of sweet smoke arising from frankincense and myrrh?

Ave Maria ... virgo serena (Josquin des Pres, d. 1521)

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum, virgo serena.	Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, serene virgin.
Ave, cuius conceptio, solemnata plena gaudio,	Hail, thou whose conception, full of great joy,
Caelestia, terrestria, nova replet laetitia.	Fills heaven and earth with new gladness.
Ave, cuius nativitas, nostra fuit solemnitas,	Hail, thou whose nativity became our great celebration,
Ut lucifer lux oriens verum solem praeveniens.	As the light-bearing morning star anticipates the true sun.
Ave pia humilitas, sine viro fecunditas,	Hail, faithful humility, fruitful without man,
Cuius annuntiatio nostra fuit salvatio.	Whose annunciation was our salvation.
Ave vera virginitas, immaculata castitas,	Hail, true virginity, immaculate chastity,
Cuius purificatio nostra fuit purgatio.	Whose purification was our cleansing.
Ave, praeclara omnibus angelicis virtutibus,	Hail, glorious one in all angelic virtues,
Cuius assumptio nostra fuit glorificatio.	Whose assumption was our glorification.
O mater Dei, memento mei.	O mother of God, remember me.
Amen.	Amen.

Ave Maria (Franz Biebl, 1906 – 2001)

Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae
et concepit de Spiritu sancto.

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum;
benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui.

Maria dixit: Ecce ancilla Domini.
Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

Ave Maria...

Et Verbum caro factum est
et habitavit in nobis.

Ave Maria...

Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.

Amen.

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary;
And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord:
Be it done unto me according to Thy word.

Hail Mary...

And the Word was made flesh:
And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
Holy Mary, pray for us now and in the hour of our death.

Amen.

Seigneur, je vous en prie (Francis Poulenc, 1899 – 1963)

Seigneur, je vous en prie, que la force brûlante et douce de
votre amour absorbe mon âme
et la retire de tout ce qui est sous le ciel,
afin que je meure par amour de votre amour
puisque vous avez daigné mourir par amour de mon amour.

Lord, I beg Thee, let the burning and gentle force of Thy love
pervade my soul
and withdraw it from all that is beneath Heaven,
that I might die through love of Thy love,
since Thou didst deign to die through love of my love.

Canticum Canticorum I (Ivan Moody, b. 1964)

1. Surge propera amica mea, formosa mea et veni.
Iam hiems transit, imber abiit et recessit.
Flores apparuerunt in terra, tempus putationis advenit;
vox turturis audita est in terra nostra;
ficus protulit grossos suos;
vine florentes, dederunt odorem suum.

Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come,
And the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.
The fig tree puts forth her green figs,
And the vines with the tender grapes give a good fragrance.

2. Descendi in hortum meum ut viderem poma convalium
et inspicerem si floruisset vinea et germinassent mala punica.
Revertere Sunamitis, revertere ut intueamur te.

I went down into my garden to see the fruits of the valley,
And to see whether the vine flourished and the pomegranates
budded.
Return, return, O Shulamite; return, that we may look upon thee.

3. Ego dilecto meo et ad me conversio eius,
veni dilecte mi, egrediamur in agrum,
commoremur in villis;
mane surgamus ad vineas, videamus si floruit vineas.

I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.
Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field;
let us lodge in the villages.
Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish.

The Song of Songs (Howard Skempton, b. 1947)

The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.
Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair, thou hast dove's eyes.
The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

Maspindzelo (Traditional)

Coppia gentil (Cristofano Malvezzi, 1547 – 1599, text by Ottavio Rinuccini)

Coppia gentil d'aventuros'amanti
Per cui non pur il Mondo si faliet'e giocondo,
Ma fiammegiante d'amoroso zelo
Canta, ridendo, e festeggiand'il Cielo.

Most noble and most favored couple
For whom not only the Earth is merry and joyful,
But, blazing with amorous zeal,
Even Heaven sings, laughs, and celebrates.

Or che le due grand'Alme (Malvezzi, text by Giovambattista Strozzi)

Or che due grand'alme insiem'aggiunge
Un sald'amor celeste
D'un altra gioia il mondo si riveste
Ogn'alma al ben oprar s'accend'e punge
Volane lune la cagion' dei pianto
E felice ritorna etemo canto..

Now that two great souls are joined
By a steadfast heavenly love,
The earth is decked in raiment of great joy;
Every soul aspires and yearns to do good,
Every cause of weeping flies away,
And joyful song returns eternally.

O qual risplende nube (Malvezzi, text by Rinuccini)

O qual, o qual risplende
Nube nell'aria e di si bei colori:
Accorrete Pastori,
E voi vezzose e liete
Belle Ninfe accorrete accorte e preste:
Al dolce suon dell'Armonia celeste.

Oh how resplendent are the clouds
Of beautiful shades on high in the air.
Hasten here, Shepherds,
And you, charming and happy
Beautiful Nymphs, come swiftly and listen
To the sweet sound of celestial Harmony.

Spaseniye sodelal (Pavel Chesnokov, 1877 – 1944)

Spaseniye sodelal yesi posrede zemli, Bozhe.
Alliluya, alliluya, alliluya.

Salvation is created in the midst of the earth, O God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Bogoroditse devo (Sergei Rachmaninoff 1873 – 1943)

Bogoroditse Devo, raduysia,
Blagodatnaya Mariye, Ghospod s Toboyu.
Blagoslovenna Ti v zhenah,
i blagosloven Plod chreva Tvoyego,
yako Spasa rodila yesi dush nashih.

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos,
Mary full of grace, the Lord is with You.
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the Fruit of Your womb,
for You have borne the Savior of our souls.

PERFORMERS

KING SOLOMON'S SINGERS:

Heather Ahrenholz
Mike Byrley
Bill Chin
Tom Crawford

Stephanie Sheffield Culica
Matthew Dean
Tammy Ghattas
Joe Labozetta

Amy Mantrone
Jessica Melger
Keith Murphy
Peter Olson

THE ROOKERY:

Mike Byrley
Bill Chin
Tom Crawford
Matthew Dean

Michael Hawes
Joe Labozetta
Keith Murphy
Peter Olson

Wain Parham
Todd Stura
Noel Taylor
Frank Villella

ABOUT THE ENSEMBLES

Founded in 2010, **King Solomon's Singers** is an ensemble dedicated to the performance of Renaissance polyphony and chant. The members of the ensemble are professional and semi-professional singers from the Chicago area—members of ensembles such as Chicago Chorale, Schola Antiqua of Chicago, The Oriana Singers, The Rookery, The Newberry Consort, and Chicago *a cappella*—who share a love of this particular repertoire. For more information, visit our website at <http://www.king-solomons-singers.org>, or find us on Facebook.

The Rookery was formed by Bill Chin and Matt Dean in 2011 from conductors and soloists from many area ensembles and singing traditions, including the Chicago Symphony Chorus, The Oriana Singers, Rockefeller Chapel Choir, Golosa Russian Choir, Chicago A Capella, Alioni Georgian Choir, Bella Voce, King Solomon's Singers, and the Schola Antiqua of Chicago. Each singer brings repertoire and artistic insight to the programming. The Rookery refers to both the iconic Chicago building (Burnham & Root, 1888) and its namesake roosting songbirds, keeping good company in the big city.

SPECIAL THANKS

King Solomon's Singers and The Rookery wish to thank Danny Johnson and Edward Lambert for permission to use their editions of the Malvezzi and Corteccia, respectively; Ascension Lutheran Church for providing rehearsal space; Cathryn Crawford for help with concert logistics; and especially the clergy and staff of St. Josaphat Parish for hosting us at their wonderful space.