

Lorelei ensemble

Beth Willer, Artistic Director

Noted for her “directorial command,” “technical expertise,” and work with women’s vocal ensembles, Founder and Artistic Director Beth Willer has led Lorelei Ensemble since 2007 to become recognized one of country’s most highly regarded vocal ensembles. Committed to Lorelei’s mission to expand the repertoire women’s voices, Willer has initiated collaborations with composers from the U.S. and abroad, leading the ensemble in numerous world, U.S. and regional premieres, while working to expose lesser-known works of the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods.

In addition to her work with Lorelei, Willer has served as the conductor of various professional and collegiate ensembles. In the fall of 2015, Willer begins as Assistant Professor and Director of Choral Activities at Bucknell University where she will lead the Bucknell Camerata and Chorale. Most recently, she served as Resident Conductor of the Radcliffe Choral Society, conductor of The Boston Conservatory Women’s Chorus, and chorus master for the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. A passionate educator and conductor of young artists, Willer has also led ensembles at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, The Walnut Hill School, New England Conservatory’s Preparatory School, The Boston Arts Academy, and Memorial High School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. A versatile and vibrant clinician, Willer also enjoys guest work as a conductor, engaging with community choruses, church choirs, high school choirs, and regional and state honor choirs.

Willer holds graduate degrees in conducting from Boston University (DMA and MM), and an undergraduate degree in Music Education from Luther College, having studied with Ann Howard Jones, David Hoose, Bruce Hangen and Weston Noble. In 2014, Willer received the prestigious Louis Botto Award for “Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal”, and Boston

University's Kahn Career Entry Award, both recognizing her work with Lorelei.

Sonja Tengblad, soprano

Commended by the Boston Globe for her "crystalline tone and graceful musicality", soprano Sonja DuToit Tengblad is a versatile performer with credits spanning the Renaissance era through the most current composers of our time. Recent highlights include Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* with Boston Baroque (as La Fortuna and Giunone), Handel's *Acis and Galatea* with the Blue Hill Bach Festival (Galatea), appearances with the Handel and Haydn Society in Purcell's *King Arthur* (Cupid) and Handel's *Samson* (Israelite Woman), Knussen's *Symphony No. 2* for high soprano with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and her Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center debuts, both with the New York City Chamber Orchestra. She was awarded 2nd place in the 2014 American Prize competition's art song and oratorio division.

A champion of new music, Ms. Tengblad has premiered many roles and works including the Boston premiere of Kati Agocs' *Vessel* for three solo voices and chamber ensemble, and Agocs' world premiere of *The Debrecen Passion* (written for the Lorelei Ensemble) for which she was a featured soloist, both performed and recorded with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. She created the role of Maria in Diego Luzuriaga's *El Niño de los Andes* with VocalEssence of Minnesota. A highlight for Ms. Tengblad was appearing in a concert celebrating the 80th birthday of composer Dominic Argento (in attendance) for which the Minnesota Star Tribune reported her to have given "the most affective performance of the evening". The 2014-2015 season will feature a collaboration with the laudable Shirish Korde ensemble (www.shirishkorde.com) on a multimedia operetta depicting the experiences of female war veterans, and the continuation of her recital project with percussionist Jonathan Hess that will premiere works by Adam Simon, Matthew Peterson (ASCAP Nissim Prize winner, 2013), and Emmy award-winning composer Karen Roustom.

Ms. Tengblad performs with the Grammy-winning ensemble Conspirare out of Austin, Texas; the Yale Choral Artists, and Boston's Blue Heron, Lorelei Ensemble, Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, and Emmanuel Music. Upcoming solo appearances include Mozart's *Waisenhausmesse* and Bach's *St. John Passion* with the Handel and Haydn Society, Vivaldi's *Juditha triumphans devicta Holofernis bolbarie* (Abra and Ozias) and Mozart's *Magic*

Flute (First Lady) with Boston Baroque, and *Carmina Burana* with the Tucson Symphony.

Margot Rood, soprano

Margot Rood, hailed for her “luminosity and grace” by The New York Times, performs a wide range of repertoire across American stages.

Ms. Rood has appeared as soloist with some of the United States’ premiere new music ensembles. Notable recent engagements include her Carnegie Hall debut in the world premiere of Shawn Jaeger’s *Letters Made with Gold* under the direction of Dawn Upshaw and Donnacha Dennehy, Kati Agocs’ *Vessel* and Soprano Evangelist in Arvo Pärt’s *Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Joannem* with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, as well as the world premiere of Christopher Trapani’s *Past All Deceiving* in New York City with Argento Ensemble. Ms. Rood is a core member of Boston’s Lorelei Ensemble, an all-female vocal ensemble dedicated to the performance of new music, and is a founding member of the Michigan Recital Project, which features commissions by emerging composers. Also sought after as a collaborator, Ms. Rood has been invited by composers at Columbia University, University of Pennsylvania and Keene State College for performances and masterclasses.

Other recent stage performances include Emily Webb in Rorem’s *Our Town* with Monadnock Music, Johanna in *Sweeney Todd* with St. Petersburg Opera, Ramiro in Helios Early Opera’s production of Cavalli’s *Artemisia*, and God of Dreams in Purcell’s *The Indian Queen* with Handel and Haydn Society.

Also an accomplished and sensitive ensemble singer, Ms. Rood performs regularly with top ensembles around the country including Seraphic Fire, Tucson Chamber Artists, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Skylark Ensemble, Emmanuel Music, Music at Marsh Chapel, and Handel and Haydn Society.
www.margotrood.com

Emily Marvosh, alto

American contralto Emily Marvosh has been gaining recognition for her “flexible technique and ripe color,” “sterling voice,” and “graceful allure,” on the stages of Carnegie Hall, Jordan Hall, Disney Hall, Prague’s Smetana Hall, and Vienna’s Stefansdom. Following her solo debut at Boston’s Symphony Hall in 2011, she has been a frequent soloist with the Handel and Haydn

Society under the direction of Harry Christophers. Other recent solo appearances include the Charlotte Symphony (*Messiah*), Music Worcester (Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*), L'academie (Vivaldi's *Nisi Dominus*), Back Bay Chorale (Bach *Magnificat*), the Brookline Symphony (*Sea Pictures*), the Boston Early Music Festival Fringe, the Chorus of Westerly (Dvorak *Stabat Mater*), the White Mountain Bach Festival (Vivaldi's *Salve Regina*), Opera Boston (*La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*), and Boston Lyric Opera (*Rusalka*); she is often featured on the Marsh Chapel Choir Bach Cantata Series. Awards include the prestigious Adams Fellowship at the Carmel Bach Festival (2013), the American Prize in the Oratorio and Art Song divisions (2013), and second place in the New England Regional NATSAA competition (2014).

A frequent recitalist and proud native of Michigan, she has created a chamber recital that celebrates the history and culture of her home state. The Michigan Recital Project features commissions by emerging composers and performances by fellow Michiganders. The recital, for which Miss Marvosh won a St. Botolph Club Foundation Emerging Artist Award, has ongoing performances across the country.

Upcoming solo engagements include the Tucson Symphony Orchestra (Mahler's *3rd Symphony*), Chorus Pro Musica (Stravinsky's *Les Noces*), and the Nashoba Valley Chorale (Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*). Ensemble appearances in the past and upcoming seasons include the Oregon Bach Festival under the direction of Helmut Rilling, the Bachakademie Stuttgart, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Tucson Chamber Artists, Boston Camerata, the Skylark Chamber Ensemble, the Yale Choral Artists, and Cambridge Concentus. A regular member of Miami-based Seraphic Fire, Miss Marvosh can be heard on their recent GRAMMY-nominated recording of Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*. She holds degrees from Central Michigan University and Boston University. www.emilymarvosh.com

Christina English, mezzo-soprano

Known for her "agile mezzo-soprano voice" (Boston Classical Review) and "striking" presence (The Arts Fuse), Christina English brings dramatic commitment and musical sensitivity to a versatile array of opera, concert and musical theater performances throughout the New England area. Christina's recent performances include her "intriguing" portrayal (The Boston Globe) of the hateful stepmother Háta in Smetana's *The Bartered Bride* with Boston Midsummer Opera, and the role of Florinda in Lyric Stage Company of Boston's IRNE Award-winning production of Sondheim's *Into the Woods*.

This summer she joins St. Petersburg Opera Company (FL), covering the role of Woman #1 in Sondheim's *Putting it Together*.

Engagements in the 2014-15 season included her return to the Lyric Stage Company in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*, regular school performances with the Handel & Haydn Society outreach vocal quartet, and her ensemble debut with Boston Baroque in Bach's *St. John Passion*. Ms. English also continues to present private performances of original holiday and Broadway revues with Union Park, a vocal quartet led by music director Catherine Stornetta and stage director Patricia-Maria Weinmann.

A sought-after interpreter of art song and contemporary works, she made her Carnegie Hall debut in Weill Recital Hall performing Malcolm Peyton's *Songs from Walt Whitman*. Composer John Heiss invited her to perform his Songs from James Joyce in New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, and she presented Mohammed Fairouz's *Three Shakespeare Songs* at the Kaufmann Center under the composer's direction. She was awarded Second Prize in Voice in the 2009 Grieg Festival Young Artists Competition in Florida, performing selections from Grieg's *Haugtussa*.

She has been a Young Artist with the Janiec Opera Company at Brevard Music Center and the Seagle Music Colony. Additional training and performance includes Boston Opera Collaborative, OperaWorks, Operafestival di Roma, MetroWest Opera, Riverside Theatreworks, and Crittenden Opera Studio. A native of San Jose, CA, she earned her B.A. in Music and a minor in dance from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, and her Master of Music from the New England Conservatory. www.christinaenglish.com

Clare McNamara, mezzo-soprano

Praised for her "lushly evocative mezzo" and "attentive and precise" musicianship, Clare McNamara is a soloist and ensemble musician with a passion for early and new music.

Clare began the 2014-2015 season with the Apollo Master Chorale (Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN), the newly-minted professional extension of the Twin Cities' historic Apollo Club. She then made her European debut with the acclaimed Renaissance vocal ensemble Cut Circle, performing Brumel's *Earthquake Mass* at the Musica Sacra Festival in Maastricht, The Netherlands. This season also marks Clare's first as an ensemble member with Boston's prestigious Handel and Haydn Society.

Clare is a core member of Boston's Lorelei Ensemble, a unique all-female vocal octet dedicated to performing early and new music for women's voices, ranging from chant to commissioned world premieres. This season she joins Lorelei in professional residencies at Pittsburg State University and Mt. Holyoke College, in addition to several concerts and recordings. This January, Lorelei joins Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP) for "Magyar Madness," a concert and recording project dedicated to the work of Hungarian composers. Clare will be a featured soloist in a world premiere by contemporary composer Kati Agócs. Clare also sings as a core member in Skylark Vocal Ensemble (Atlanta, GA), Vox Humana (Dallas, TX), and Ensemble Origo (Hartford, CT).

This December, Clare appears as alto soloist with the New England Classical Singers in Zelenka's *Dixit Dominus* and Handel's *Messiah* (Part 1). Recent solo engagements include a critically-acclaimed Jordan Hall debut with Boston Cecilia in J.S. Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, and featured alto for both Heinrich Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien* with Newton Choral Society and for Boston Cecilia's recent winter concert "The Miraculous Rose." On the baroque opera stage, Clare has sung Antippo in Telemann's *Der Geduldige Socrates* with Amherst Early Music Festival, and Athamas in John Eccles' *Semele* with Harvard Early Music Society, among others.

In the recording studio, Clare most recently provided solo vocals for "On the Nature of Things," commissioned by the internationally-recognized modern dance troupe Pilobolus Dance Theatre from composers Michelle DiBucci and Ed Bilous. Pilobolus maintains this work as a regular centerpiece of their active performance repertoire. Clare also sang the title character on a demo recording of Michelle DiBucci's opera *Charlotte*, based on the life of the German-Jewish artist Charlotte Solomon. Clare can also be heard on "Live.Know.Love", (Lorelei Ensemble), "forgotten dreams" (Skylark Vocal Ensemble), "I Wonder as I Wander" (The Copley Singers), and composer Emily Lau's "The Isle of Lucidity."

Clare earned her Masters of Music in Early Music (Vocal Performance) from Longy School of Music and her Bachelor of Arts in Music from Princeton University. She currently resides in Boston.

Stephanie Kacoyanis, alto

Contralto Stephanie Kacoyanis has received critical acclaim for her "velvet voice," "vocal agility," and "spiritually rich performances" and is gaining

recognition for her versatile performances in opera, concert, and musical theater.

Recent opera roles include Meg Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Boston Midsummer Opera), Saint Cecilia in *Four Saints in Three Acts* (Boston Modern Orchestra Project), Aunt March in *Little Women* (Opera del West), and Juno in *Semele* (Harvard Early Music Society). She is also pleased to be in her third season as a professional ensemble member with Boston Lyric Opera.

Especially recognized for her interpretations of contemporary music, she has performed in several world premieres with ensembles including Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Intermezzo Opera, and ALEA III. She also created the role of Lucy Steele in the world premiere of *Sense and Sensibility: The Musical* (Wellesley Summer Theatre).

Her concert work includes solo appearances with Canto Armonico (under Simon Carrington), Chorus North Shore, Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum, The Rachmaninoff Choir, Wellesley College Choir, Metropolitan Chorale of Brookline, and Newton Choral Society.

Upcoming engagements include *Four Poems of St. Teresa of Avila* with Odyssey Opera and the role of Nancy in *Martha* with Boston Midsummer Opera.

Ms. Kacoyanis holds degrees from Wellesley College (B.A., English) and Boston University (M.M., Voice). www.stephaniekacoyanis.com

Emily Culler, soprano

Emily Curtin Culler earned a Master of Music from Boston University in 2006, and a Bachelor of Music from Samford University (Birmingham, Alabama) in 2002. She also completed a special course of study in vocal performance at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, England (2002). In 2013, Emily received a Master of Science degree in Arts Administration with a certificate in Fund Raising Management from Boston University. Emily is an active soloist, chorister, and chamber musician in the Boston area. She is a core member of the Lorelei Ensemble, and has also appeared with Juventas!, the Marsh Chapel Choir and Collegium, and the Connecticut Early Music Festival. In addition to her work as a musician, Emily is a non-profit management and development professional, and has worked at Alabama Operaworks, the Metropolitan Arts Council of

Birmingham, Alabama, the Danielsen Institute of Boston University, the Boston University Tanglewood Institute (BUTI), and WGBH (2012 – present).