

THE MYSTIC RIVER CHORALE AND MYSTIC CHAMBER SINGERS

Frank Martignetti - Conductor
Linda Pezzullo - Interim Accompanist
John Frascarelli - Percussionist

Non Nobis Domine..... Rosephayne Powell (b. 1962)
Sure on this Shining Night Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
“Gloria: Pied Beauty” from *Missa Gaia*..... Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

Ave Maria David Conte (b. 1955)
Regina Caeli..... Gregor Aichinger (1564-1628)
Mystic River Chamber Singers

Bogoroditse Devo (Ave Maria) ... Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1942)
Cantique de Jean Racine Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)
Stars I Shall Find..... David Dickau (b. 1953)
“Somewhere”
from *West Side Story*..... Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990),
arr. Edgerton

Intermission

Balia di Sehú..... Aruban, arr. E. Toppenberg
How Can I Keep from Singing? Robert A. Lowry (1826-1899),
arr. Jeffrey Honoré
Keep Your Lamps Spiritual,
arr. André Thomas (b. 1952)
Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit..... Spiritual,
arr. William L. Dawson (1899-1990)

Rufus V. Smith, tenor soloist
Mystic River Chorale

FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2011 • 7:30 PM • HARKNESS CHAPEL, CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

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Bullerengue Columbian Folksong, ed. Megias
Dúlamán Michael McGlynn (b. 1964)
Brian Green, tenor soloist
Mystic River Chamber Singers

Ah! Si Mon Moine Voulait Danser..... French-Canadian Folksong,
arr. Donald Patriquin
Star of the County Down..... Irish Folksong,
arr. Donald Patriquin
Alle Brider.....Yiddish Folksong,
arr. Joshua Jacobson
David Rinzler, tenor soloist

When I Fall in Love..... Heyman & Young,
arr. Kirby Shaw
Michelle Mencer, soprano soloist

I've Got You Under My Skin..... Cole Porter,
arr. Kirby Shaw

Finis

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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

This evening's program celebrates song's power to richly express the full panoply of human emotion across places and times. We are grateful for your presence here tonight as we join together to create beauty and build community—for that is the power and the potential of live performance. Choral singing unites an array of individuals, each with their own backgrounds, skills, talents, and aspirations, and unites them in producing something more powerful than any can accomplish alone. In this respect, I believe choral music is uniquely positioned to connect people, a process badly needed in our world today.

The program begins with contemporary Alabama-based composer Rosephayne Powell's inspiring setting of *Non Nobis, Domine*, asking glory not for ourselves, but for the name of God. We then present Samuel Barber's unforgettable *Sure On This Shining Night*, perhaps the iconic example of twentieth-century art song. Our first set concludes with Libby Larsen's setting of a favorite poem of mine, "Pied Beauty". This text by the Irish Jesuit poet Gerald Manley Hopkins gives praise to God in thanks for creation, expressed in unusually vivid, even quirky, terms I felt were worth quoting in their entirety:

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:

Praise him.

We then juxtapose two Marian motets, one from the twentieth century and one from the Renaissance, as the Chamber Singers perform San Francisco-based composer David Conte's *Ave Maria*, followed by Aichinger's *Regina Coeli*.

Our final set of the first half juxtaposes three familiar pieces and one that may be new to many of you. Rachmaninov's setting of *Ave Maria* is an often-excerpted movement from his beloved Vespers. Choral music lovers everywhere are familiar with Fauré's *Cantique de Jean Racine*—it is one of a small handful of pieces I program for my college choir every four years, since everyone should have the chance to sing it! Minnesota-based composer David Dickau has given us an exquisite setting of Sara Teasdale's poem *There Will Be Rest*. I will let him speak for the piece:

Stars I Shall Find is about the hope one has in that which is desired, yet not immediately attainable. The author of this beautiful text suffered from depression and tragically ended her life far before her time. She saw the stars as beacons of hope and inspiration. The spirit of this piece celebrates these hopes and dreams, which inspire and motivate.

Finally, I must acknowledge a debt to Dr. Tim Seelig, who, in his capacity as conductor of the 2007 South Dakota All-State HS Choir, chose to segue into another cry for something better and beyond: *Somewhere*.

The second half of this evening's concert begins with *Balia di Sehu*, a song from Aruba, which is in Papiamentu, a language which includes elements of Portuguese, Spanish, English, Dutch, and various African languages.

The *Sehú* is a harvest dance which is sung in April or May when it is time to harvest the corn. The dancers, who often decorate themselves with parts of the harvested corn, form two lines facing each other with the corn between them. They stand with their hands on the hips of the people next to them

and shuffle toward each other to the rhythm of the music. When they reach the middle, they shuffle back to their original places. This lasts for long periods of time, often all day and all night.

— Peter Wordelman

After we experience the power of Robert Lowry's wonderful hymn, *How Can I Keep From Singing?*, and two spirituals which provide hope in the face of despair and exaltation at the power of the Spirit, we turn to folksongs from around the world.

Bullerengue (Columbia) and *Dúlamán* (Ireland), *Ah! Si Mon Moine Voulait Danser* (Canada), and *Star of the County Down* (Ireland) all combine exuberance and wit. We hope you find hearing them as enjoyable as we find singing them! Our folksong set concludes with a Yiddish song, *Alle Brider*, in which we celebrate unity by asking you to join your voices with ours!

The evening concludes with three fine examples of the great American songbook, a great gift our country has made to the world. I believe that these songs will continue to stand the test of time, as they continue to be performed and loved today.

We hope you have enjoyed this evening of song. Thank you for your support and your presence!

— Frank Martignetti

