

PROGRAM NOTES

I *Choeur des Soldats/Soldiers’ Chorus from Faust Act IV*

Charles François Gounod was among the most respected and prolific composers in France during the second half of the nineteenth century. He was born in Paris in 1818. Gounod composed in all branches of music, yet he is only remembered today as a composer of church music and operas.

In 1852, Gounod assumed the direction of the *Orphéon de la ville de Paris*. The Paris Orphéon was a male-voice choral society with membership drawn from the working class and lower bourgeoisie. During the eight and a half years in which Gounod held the post of director of the Orphéon, the experience he gained in handling massed choral forces was to prove useful. Gounod’s first great success, written when he was forty, was produced in 1859. At first though, no theater would produce *Faust* and no publisher would bring out the score. It is staggering to think that the public of that time was so long in waking to the fact that here was a work of beauty and charm destined to live. At last a publisher was found. Antoine de Choudens, who was just starting in the business, offered his entire capital of 10,000 francs for the publishing rights. Choudens’ gamble paid off; by so doing, he laid the foundation of the fortunes of one of France’s great music publishing houses. In thirty years, the modest sum Choudens timidly advanced brought in nearly three million francs. *Faust* eventually became a fixture on the Parisian musical stage and second only to Bizet’s *Carmen* as the world’s most popular French opera. Gounod’s fifteen or so other operas, with the single exception of his *Roméo et Juliette* (1867) have not enjoyed any measure of popularity. When Gounod died in 1893, *Faust* had been performed over a thousand times in Paris alone.

Faust, along with seven of Gounod’s other operas, was written with librettists Jules Barbier and Michel Carré. They based their classic tale of *Faust* closely on the first part of the Goethe masterpiece of the same name. It was Leon Carvalho, director of the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, who finally agreed to stage the opera. Marie Miolan-Carvalho, the director’s wife, was so struck with the

role of Marguerite, that Monsieur Carvalho begged Gounod to let her sing it. Carvalho had faith in the ultimate triumph of Gounod’s *Faust* and pushed it to a fifty-seventh performance, at which point he failed and the theater was closed. *Faust* was not heard again in Paris until 1862.

In an ironic coincidence, Gounod’s second great success came in the same year in which he introduced his *Faust*. He composed a *Méditation* for soprano solo – an obbligato to be sung with the first prelude of J. S. Bach’s *The Well-tempered Clavier*. He dedicated his *Mélodie religieuse* to Mme. Marie Miolan-Carvalho. *Méditation* quickly became popular with the public. Gounod’s *Méditation sur le Premier Prélude de Bach* soon became known as *Ave Maria*. Audiences, which had been cold to his earlier works, went mad for Gounod. It became fashionable for ladies to hear *Ave Maria* with expressions of idyllic piety and for gentlemen to listen with manly respect. No *soirée musicale* was complete without a performance of this ubiquitous morsel. Gounod deplored the immense popular success of his unconsidered trifle and felt the annoyance of all artists when they see their important works ignored in favor of minor ones. Today, Gounod is best remembered for his opera *Faust* and his *Ave Maria*. Both works immortalized their author.

Act III, scene 3, of *Faust* takes place in a town square. Soldiers triumphantly sing of their return from war. Over the years, choral societies have enjoyed the justly famous *Soldiers’ Chorus*. This is the Gounod of the Orphéon. And to think this regal, patriotic, uplifting march was added to the full score as an afterthought! The vigorous melody was originally an unaccompanied Orphéon male-voice chorus from 1854, *Le Vin de Gaulois*.

Composers are notorious for borrowing from themselves. Charles Gounod was no exception to this practice. The most famous chorus in his opera *Faust* does not appear in the original manuscript! The tune only found its way into the production at the last moment. Gounod had used the *Soldiers’ Chorus* melody for yet another project in 1856 – his stillborn opera which was to have been called *Ivan le terrible*. The composer was persuaded late in 1858

to include the chorus in *Faust* – and not a moment too soon – the premiere took place at the *Théâtre-Lyrique* in Paris on March 19, 1859.

On opening night of New York’s Metropolitan Opera House, October 22, 1883, *Faust* was chosen as the inaugural score. When Hal Prince staged the current revival of *Faust* as the Met, his was a *Soldiers’ Chorus* of wounded, traumatized veterans.

—GH

*Let’s lay down our arms;
here we are returned at last
to the hearth and home!
Yes, it’s a pleasure in families
to tell tales to the children,
who shudder in silence,
to the old people and the girls,
of war and its battles!
Immortal glory of our forefathers,
do not desert us, let us die as they did!
And, beneath thy wings,
conquering soldiers,
direct our steps and fire our hearts!
For thee, our mother country,
face to face with destiny,
thy sons, their souls inured to war,
have braved death!
Thy sacred voice cries to us:
Forward, soldiers!
Sword in hand, fly to battle!
Immortal glory, etc.
Let us hasten our steps to our homes!
We are expected; peace is concluded!
No more sighs! Don’t let’s delay!
Towards our hearths, let’s hasten our steps!
Our country stretches forth her arms to us!
Love beckons and makes much of us!
And many a heart shudders in silence
at the memory of our battles!
Immortal glory, etc.*

Chor der Pilger

(Pilgrim’s Chorus)

Beglückt darf nun dich, o Heimat
from *Tannhäuser*, Act III, Scene I

Wagner completed his libretto for *Tannhäuser* on his 30th birthday, May 22, 1843 and the musical setting two years later, on April 13, 1845. Composed between the *Flying Dutchman* and *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser* was first performed on October 14, 1845, at the Dresden Hofoper where the 32-year-old composer was court conductor. Some of the scenery, ordered from Paris, had failed to arrive on time, and there were problems with the cast; not until the

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third performance did the opera come into its own. Gradually, other German theaters produced *Tannhäuser*. The U.S. premiere took place at the Stadttheater, New York, on April 4, 1859. The second season of the Metropolitan Opera, 1884-85, opened with *Tannhäuser*, Leopold Damrosch conducting.

Wagner was frustrated with what he saw as the outmoded artistic practices of his time. He railed against the opera of the day (embodied in Meyerbeer) and saw himself as the “artist of the future,” battling the uncomprehending academy. For Wagner, *Tannhäuser* comprised a revolutionary transitional moment, a turning point. In *Tannhäuser* the composer emerges “struggling to utter himself.”

With *Tannhäuser*, Wagner took another step away from the conventional opera of the period – with its division into set arias, ensembles and recitatives – toward music drama, in which words, music and action form a dramatic whole. None of his other works was subject to so many changes. Twice more in 1847 and in 1861, Wagner revised the opera. His revisions were aimed at making the opera a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a total work of art.

The story of *Tannhäuser* is laid in and near Eisenach where, early in the 13th century, the Landgraves of the Thuringian Valley held sway. They were lovers of poetry and music, and at the Wartburg many peaceful contests between the famous *minnesingers* took place.

In the first scene of Act III, near the Castle of Wartburg, in a valley dark with the shadows of an autumn evening, the approach of a band of pilgrims returning from Rome is heard in the distance. The procession nears, then the pilgrims march by. Triumphant in their faith, they joyfully greet their homeland. GH

*With joy, my homeland, I now behold thee
and gladly greet thy smiling meadows;
now I lay down my pilgrim's staff,
for, faithful to God, I have made my pilgrimage.
By atonement and repentance I have made my
peace with the Lord,
to whom my heart bows down.
He has crowned my remorse with blessing,
the Lord to whom I raise my song.
The grace of salvation is granted to the penitent.
He shall enter into the peace of heaven!
Hell and death cannot frighten him;*

*Therefore I will praise God all the days of my life.
Hallelujah, for evermore!*

II *Ave Maria*

Jules Massenet was born in the French provinces in 1842. At the age of ten he was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire for piano and solfège studies. At nineteen, he entered the composition class of Ambroise Thomas. During this period, he supported himself while gaining experience as an extra percussionist at the Opéra and as a café pianist. In the decade that followed, he made his first steps toward an illustrious career in opera that would continue for the next 35 years. His place in the history of French music is secure.

Nineteenth century Parisian audiences had an unlimited appetite for exotic music and remote geographical or historical settings. Massenet generously satisfied the tastes of the *belle époque* with his opera *Thaïs*, the twelfth of his twenty-seven operas. Based on the well-known novel by Anatole France, *Thaïs* received its premiere at the Paris Opéra in 1894. The opera was a great success and remained in the repertory of the Paris Opéra continuously until 1956, by which time it had racked up nearly 700 performances.

Massenet had a fascination for themes of religious fervor intertwined with erotic passion – the tension and struggle between sensuality and asceticism were hallmarks of his operatic style. Simply put, the plot of Massenet's opera traces the life journeys of two wholly contrasting characters – *Thaïs*, a fourth century Egyptian courtesan who is converted to Christianity by a pious hermit monk, and Athanael, a holy man on a mission, a religious fanatic who himself is converted from asceticism to carnal passion and descends into love-obsessed madness.

Some of Massenet's most lyrical and subtle vocal writing can be found in *Thaïs*. The famous *Méditation Religieuse*, an orchestral entr'acte between acts two and three, symbolizes *Thaïs*' awakening conscience.

The *Méditation* has been heard in a terrifying variety of transcriptions for every sort of instrument, including ocarina, harmonica, tuba, theramin, you name it.

Once it was even reborn as a fox trot! Not surprisingly, the *Méditation* has survived. That is because it is a unique gem of its kind, a simple, sensuous heart-song.

We proudly present Massenet's *Méditation* in a unique arrangement done for Orpheus by one of our singers, Tom Wentzel. Wisely, I believe, Tom chose to preserve the *Méditation* in the original form, leaving the entire violin solo intact. As a basis for his four-part choral arrangement for men's voices, Tom used *Ave Maria – composé sur la Méditation de Thaïs* – an obscure setting for solo voice issued by Massenet's own publisher Heugel the same year in which the opera was premiered. —GH

III *O Magnum Mysterium*

In December 1994 the Los Angeles Master Chorale, directed by Paul Salamunovich, presented the world premiere of a setting of the Latin chorus *O Magnum Mysterium* by Morten Lauridsen, then a little-known 51-year-old professor of composition at the University of Southern California, Thornton School of Music.

Morten Lauridsen was born February 27, 1943, in Colfax, Washington. He worked for a time as a Forest Service firefighter and lookout on an isolated tower near Mt. St. Helens before traveling south to study composition with Halsey Stevens and In-golf Dahl at USC. Lauridsen began teaching there in 1967 and has been a member of the USC faculty ever since.

Lauridsen cites as his primary inspiration for *O Magnum Mysterium*, a 1633 painting by Francisco de Zurbarán, “Still Life With Lemons, Oranges and a Rose,” which resides in the Norton Simon Museum of Art in Pasadena. The objects in this work are symbolic offerings to the Virgin Mary, and Lauridsen describes it as projecting “an aura of mystery, powerful in its unadorned simplicity, its mystical quality creating an atmosphere of deep contemplation.” He strove to create a setting of *O Magnum Mysterium*, a Latin text best known in its renaissance setting by Tomas Luis de Victoria, which mirrored this simplicity. Lauridsen found it to be one of the most difficult pieces for him to compose, because he wanted it to be short and direct,

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and so had to eliminate all extraneous thoughts.

Director Salamunovich predicted the work would become the 20th century counterpart of de Victoria's setting, and indeed it has. Twenty-two years after its premiere, choirs the world over regularly perform Lauridsen's *O Magnum Mysterium* and his numerous other works, earning him the title of today's most frequently performed American choral composer. In 2007 he became the recipient of the National Medal of Arts. The 73-year-old composer now divides his time between Los Angeles, lectures and residencies in the Americas and Europe, and his home on remote Waldron Island in the San Juan Archipelago off the northern coast of Washington state. More information on Morten Lauridsen as well as an excellent documentary by filmmaker Michael Stillwater, *Shining Night: A Portrait of Composer Morten Lauridsen*, can be found at www.mortenlauridsen.net. —TW & GH

Latin text

*O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
jacentem in praesepio!
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera
meruerunt portare
Dominum Christum.
Alleluia.*

English translation

*O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new-born Lord,
lying in a manger!
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear
Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!*

Cantique de Jean Racine,

Opus 11

Gabriel Urbain Fauré was born in Pamiers, France, the sixth child of a schoolmaster. By the age of eight he was able to play and improvise on the village harmonium. The next year he was sent to Paris to study as a free boarder at Louis Niedermeyer's École de Musique Religieuse et Classique, a school which focused on the study of church music and the preparation of church organists and choirmasters. There he received a thorough musical

instruction from prominent French musicians, including his piano and composition professor, Camille Saint-Saëns who introduced him to the music of Liszt, Schumann and Wagner. At Niedermeyer, Fauré learned the art of modal harmony, taught with an eye toward preparing the student to accompany plainsong. Up-to-date chromatic harmony, counterpoint and fugue were also in the syllabus.

Fauré's strengths as a composer were to lay within the more intimate musical forms – works for the piano, chamber music and songs – in contrast to the often more grandiose forms of the Austro-German tradition which dominated European music from the time of Beethoven until well into the 20th century. Fauré admired his contemporary Wagner but remained one of the few composers of his generation not to come under his influence even temporarily. He possessed a fastidious mind, satisfied only with the allusive and subtle *note juste*. Fauré incorporated French traditions to complete a body of work at once classical and novel while expressing with ease and distinction all that is finest in Gallic civilization.

The nineteen-year-old Fauré composed *Cantique de Jean Racine*, op. 11, his first significant work, in 1864 during his final year at the École Niedermeyer. Fauré won first prize in the school competition for composition with this work. It is a simple meditative piece, offering a foretaste of the calm and peace of his *Requiem*, op. 48, which he would begin work on twelve years later. *Cantique* belongs to a style known as Saint-Sulpicien, named after the fashionable church of Saint-Sulpice on the Paris Left Bank where well-heeled congregations delighted in lyrical motets with easy melodies. (In 1871, Fauré became assistant organist and accompanist to the choir at Saint-Sulpice).

Fauré's text is based on the Jean Racine (1639-1699) translation of a hymn from the Latin of the Roman Breviary (the daily order of service). *Censors paterni luminis*, which dates from the middle ages. French poet and dramatist Jean Baptiste Racine, a contemporary of Molière and Corneille, was 17- or 18-years-old when he wrote these verses in 1655 or 1656. He would go on to establish himself as one of the giants

of French classical drama. Fauré captures Racine's devotional text with the simplest of means. *Cantique* represents the youthful work of two nascent French geniuses.

Fauré left École Niedermeyer in 1865, destined to become one of the most prominent in a line of distinguished late 19th and early 20th century French composers. First, though, he had to take up a succession of provincial posts as church organist.

In 1883, Fauré married and became a father of two sons. To support his family, he gave harmony and piano lessons. At that time, he earned next to nothing from his compositions because his publisher was able to purchase them, copyright and all, for 50 francs apiece! In 1892, Fauré succeeded Jules Massenet as instructor of composition at the Paris Conservatoire where his students would include Nadia Boulanger and Maurice Ravel. In 1896, Fauré succeeded his former mentor Saint-Saëns as choir director and later chief organist at L'Église de la Madeleine, one of Paris' most fashionable churches. From 1903 for 28 years, Fauré worked as music critic for *Le Figaro*. Fauré was named director of the Paris Conservatoire in 1905, a post he held for fifteen years. The last years of his life were marked by growing deafness and failing health. Fauré died at the age of 80 in 1924, was given a state funeral at the Madeleine, and is buried in the Cimetière de Passy in Paris.

Originally composed for four-part mixed (SATB) choir with organ or piano accompaniment, *Cantique de Jean Racine* was first performed in 1866. A version for harmonium and string quintet was conducted by César Franck in 1875. A full orchestral version followed in 1906. After his *Requiem*, op. 48, *Cantique de Jean Racine* remains Fauré's most popular choral work. Its sober, limpid harmonies and pliant, unfolding melodic lines reveal Fauré's deep familiarity with the polyphonic masters of the 16th and 17th centuries. Orpheus presents *Cantique de Jean Racine* in an arrangement for male-voice choir, violin and piano by K. Lee Scott (b. 1950). As you listen to *Cantique*, breathe in the transcendent calm and peace of a French cathedral. —GH

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*Word of God the most high, our sole hope,
eternal day of the earth and heavens,
as we break the silence of the peaceful night,
divine savior, look down upon us.*

*Imbue us with the fire of thy great mercy
so that hell itself will flee at the sound of your
voice;*

*disperse the sleep which leads our languishing
souls*

to stray from the path of righteousness.

*O Christ, show your favor to your faithful people
who have come together to worship you;*

*receive the praises that they offer up to your
immortal glory and*

*may they come back laden with the gift of your
grace.*

II

Bogoródyitse Dyévo

(Rejoice, O Virgin Mary)

Sergei Rachmaninoff was, by nature, a solemn, brooding introvert. Throughout his life he suffered extended bouts of severe depression, self-doubt and writer's block. Despite the toll these inner torments inflicted on his creative instinct, Rachmaninoff was able to transcend his legendary gloom and translate his soul-storm into a language of soaring lyricism. He became not only the last truly great representative of Russian late romanticism, but one of the half-dozen greatest piano virtuosos of the twentieth century.

Rachmaninoff remained stubbornly unconcerned with the new aesthetic trends in composition swirling around him, e.g., Debussy and the Impressionists, the Serial music of Arnold Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School. Instead, all of his compositions are imbued with the spirit of Russian singing.

He left Russia in 1917, never to return. His beloved estate at Ivanovka that had provided him with the uninterrupted peace and tranquility he needed for composing was razed to the ground in the revolutionary maelstrom that ensued.

The All-Night Vigil, Op. 37 – popularly known as the *Vespers* – stands as the crowning achievement of the “Golden Age” of Russian Orthodox sacred choral music. During that period, which began in the 1880's and lasted until Communist takeover in 1917, dozens of Russian composers turned their creative energies to composing choral music on texts drawn

from the Russian Orthodox liturgy.

Rachmaninoff created a monumental work that elevates the spirit by its lofty expressiveness and captivates the ear by its sheer beauty. As his musical vehicle, Rachmaninoff uses a living, breathing instrument – the human chorus – in a way that few composers have used it before or since. His choral writing makes full use of the rich sonority and timbral colors developed by his predecessors in the Russian choral school of the late 19th/early 20th centuries.

After giving due praise to God, the Orthodox Church always pays homage to the Virgin. *Bogoródyitse Dyévo*, perhaps the most widely known hymn from Rachmaninoff's cycle, captures both the gentle simplicity of the angelic greeting and the awe-struck glorification of her response to God.

This hymn to the Mother of God recurs in many places in Orthodox worship. Here it is sung three times with great solemnity, and afterwards the priest gives a blessing, which brings *Vespers* to an end on a note of rejoicing. All of the lights are then dimmed and the doors are closed. —GH

*Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos,
Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with Thee.
Blessed art Thou among women, and
blessed
is the Fruit of thy womb,
for Thou hast borne the Savior of our souls.*

Spasyenyiye Sodyelal

Russian music lovers recently marked the 120th birthday of Pavel Grigoryevich Tschesnokov, the Orthodox composer and one-time leader of many church choirs. Tschesnokov is widely considered to be in a class with Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, and Ippolitov-Ivanov – all members of the so-called Moscow School of composing, famous for its profound lyricism and rich psychological undertones. Tschesnokov's sensitivity to choral sonority enabled him to create a jewel such as *Spasyenyiye Sodyelal* out of the simplest melody. *Spasyenyiye Sodyelal* adapts the text from Psalm 74 for a solemn hymn that has become a choral classic. Built around a chant melody from Kiev, the piece was originally composed for a chorus of mixed voices. Orpheus will perform it for you in an

arrangement for male voices that preserves the phrasing and serene, ecstatic reverence of the original. The structure is simplicity itself with the second half identical to the first except for the “Alleluia” text and the final cadence. Tschesnokov used uncomplicated harmonies. In the Russian Orthodox Church, it is traditional that no instruments, not even an organ, are used in worship. Our bass section therefore has the honor of singing the low notes that the organ pedal might otherwise provide. At the end of the first section you will hear (we hope!) the basses descend to a low B-flat below the staff and at the end to a low D.

A devout Christian, Tschesnokov could hardly believe that an Orthodox nation like Russia would some day fall victim to a revolution that would upturn the very pillars of Russian society and render useless all his noble achievements. This man was larger than life. He was the last precentor at the Christ the Savior Cathedral that was deliberately blown up during the time of Stalin when so many churches were destroyed. When the Cathedral went down, Pavel Tschesnokov was so appalled that he stopped writing music altogether. He even took a vow of silence. It is said that, as a composer, Tschesnokov died with his cathedral. —GH

Спасение соделал еси, посреде земли,
Боже,
Salvation is created in the midst of earth,
O God.

Аллилуия, Аллилуия, Аллилуия.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Intermission

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Sons of Orpheus The Male Choir

Grayson Hirst Foundation
25th Anniversary Concert

Sunday, April 10, 2016, 3:00 P.M.
Casas Adobes Congregational Church
6801 N. Oracle Rd.

Saturday, April 16, 2016, 8:00 P.M.
Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church
2331 E. Adeline Rd.

I

Déposons les armes/ Gloire immortelle de nos aïeux..... Charles Gounod (1818-1893), arr. V. Williamsen
Choeur des Soldats/Soldiers' Chorus from Faust, Act IV

Janet Tolman and Brent Burmeister, *piano*

Chor der Pilger.....Richard Wagner (1813-1883)
Pilgrim's Chorus from Tannhäuser, Act III, scene I

Janet Tolman and Brent Burmeister, *piano*

II

Ave Maria.....Jules Massenet (1842-1912), arr. T. Wentzel
From Méditation de Thaïs, Act II, Scene I

Klara Wojtkowska (4/10) / Kai Skaggs (4/16, 24), *violin*

O Magnum Mysterium.....Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)

Cantique de Jean Racine, Op. 11.....Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Klara Wojtkowska (4/10) / Kai Skaggs (4/16, 24), *violin*

III

Bogoródytse Dyévo (Rejoice, O Virgin).....Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
From The All Night Vigil, Op. 37, No. 6

Spasyeniye Sodyelal (Salvation is Created), Op. 25, No. 5.....Pavel Chesnokov (1877-1944)

Intermission

Brent Burmeister, *piano*

Orpheus Choir of Tucson



Artistic Director
Gala Spring Concert

2016, 3:00 P.M.
Cathedral Episcopal Church
1000 N. Oracle Ave., Tucson, AZ 85724

Sunday, April 24, 2016, 3:00 P.M.
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Northeast Chapel, 7650 N. Paseo del Norte

IV

La Mer (Beyond the Sea)..... ..Charles Trenet (1913-2001), arr. James Filipek

Les Feuilles Mortes (Autumn Leaves).....Joseph Kosma (1905-1969), arr. James Filipek
Lindsey McHugh, *soprano*

Vois sur ton Chemin.....Bruno Coulais (b.1954)
From *Les Choristes* (Miramax, 2004) Violin transcription: Tom Wentzel
Klara Wojtkowska (4/10) / Kai Skaggs (4/16, 24), *violin*

V

Sure on this Shining Night.....Morten Lauridsen

The Road Not Taken.....Randall Thompson (1899-1984), arr. M. Hill
From *Frostiana*, poetry by Robert Frost

The Awakening.....Joseph M. Martin (b. 1959)

Vocalise.....Wilbur Chenoweth (1899-1980)
Lindsey McHugh, *soprano*

VI

Arizona, Arizona.....Truck Stop, arr. V. Williamsen
Bryce Tomlin, *tenor*

Ghost Riders in the Sky.....Stan Jones (1914-1963)

The 3:10 to Yuma.....George Duning (1908-2000), arr. M. Hill
Jeremiah Gaefke, *tenor*

Theme from Rawhide.....Dimitri Tiomkin (1894-1979), arr. M. Hill

IV

La Mer

“La Mer” (“The Sea”) was composed during World War II by Charles Trenet (1913-2001) as an ode to the changing moods of the sea. The song was first recorded in 1945, but it was not until 1946, when Trenet recorded his own version, that it became an unexpected hit. It has remained a chanson classic and jazz standard ever since.

The American version is “Beyond the Sea” by American songwriter Jack Lawrence (1912-2009). By just adding “Beyond” to the title, he was inspired to create a pop romantic love song with unrelated lyrics about someone mourning for a lost love. The 1959 recording by American singer and actor Bobby Darin (1936-1973) is the best known. It became his signature song and was featured in Kevin Spacey’s *Beyond the Sea*, a 2004 film based on Darin’s life. —CD

Autumn Leaves

“Autumn Leaves” originally was a 1945 French song, “*Les feuilles mortes*” (literally “The Dead Leaves”), with music by Hungarian-French composer Joseph Kosma (1905-1969) and lyrics by French screenwriter and poet Jacques Prévert (1900-1977). After its introduction in a 1946 film, the actor and singer Yves Montand (1921-1991) added it to his concert repertoire. At first, it was received coolly. No beat, an over-complicated structure, a relentlessly sad message, it had everything going against it, but Montand kept sing-

ing it. Within a few years, it became his biggest hit and most requested song.

Johnny Mercer (1909-1976), who wrote the lyrics to more than fifteen hundred songs, put English lyrics to Kosma’s music in 1947. It was a completely different song from the rambling elegy Prévert and Kosma had created. While the original was about an all-consuming passion, Mercer’s was more about a fleeting attachment, more nostalgic than angst-ridden, more bittersweet than bitter.

Jo Stafford (1917-2008) was among the first to perform this version. She was under contract with Capitol Records, a company founded and co-owned by Mercer. Édith Piaf sang the French and the English version of the song on a 1950 radio program. After Nat “King” Cole took Mercer’s version to No. 1 on the hit parade in 1955, it made the rounds as standard fare for nightclub singers from Frank Sinatra to Tony Bennett to Eartha Kitt. —CD

Vois sur ton Chemin

(Look to your path)
from *Les Choristes*

A modest, low-budget movie about a music teacher in post-war France who wins over the troubled students at a boarding school arrived in theaters with little advance hype. Defying industry expectations, this affecting tale proceeded to break box-office records. The tale of a music teacher’s lasting impact on his young charges gained Academy Award and Golden Globe nominations as 2005’s Best Foreign Language Film, as well as an Oscar

nod for Best Song, *Vois Sur Ton Chemin* (Look to Your Path).

Les Choristes (*The Chorus*) is a tale about children rejected by French society, incarcerated in the aptly named *Fond-de-l’Étang* (*Bottom of the Pond*), a boarding school ruled by a despotic director and disfigured by his bleak reformist philosophy. In 1949, an unemployed music teacher and failed composer in search of worthwhile work arrives at the school. The boys are difficult, quasi-murderous brats who, according to the headmaster, will learn to behave themselves only if they are beaten with a stick or put in confinement – or both. The music teacher thinks otherwise. Although he has been warned that the boys are monsters disguised as human beings, he takes a liking to them and sparks a surprising passion for singing among his class, which is made up of kids regarded as delinquent only because of the illegitimate nature of their wartime conception. The teacher, through firmness, kindness and understanding, tames the savage hearts of his pupils. Lo and behold, these unlikely choirboys come to master the art of choral singing, and in so doing, gain for themselves a sense of self-worth, while coincidentally, rekindling the music teacher’s abandoned devotion to music.

Bruno Coulais’ songs for the soundtrack have become standards of contemporary French choral repertoire. Teachers have children singing *Vois sur ton Chemin* and other pieces from the movie. Many of the students had never sung before!

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The film's overriding message concerns social inclusion brought about through music. In delivering the message of hope to the world, *Les Choristes* also projects a potent advertisement for singing as a participatory pursuit. Did *The Chorus* inspire audiences to boost the diminishing ranks of amateur choral societies? You bet it did. Estimates have it that over 300,000 people joined France's 8,000 choirs or established new singing groups that year! "This movie proves that anybody, with some work, can sing this type of music in choirs and get great pleasure from it," says Coulais. "Through singing, people can access something missing from their daily lives." The men of Orpheus agree and give *Les Choristes* their four-star rating. Here for your pleasure (and ours) is *Vois sur ton Chemin*. —GH

Look to your path
Children lost, forgotten
Give them a hand
To lead them
To other tomorrows.
Direction in the darkest night,
Wave of hope,
Passion for life,
Path of glory.
Childhood pleasures,
Too soon forgotten, erased.
A golden light ever shines
At the end of the path.
Direction in the darkest night,
Wave of hope,
Passion for life,
Path of glory.



V *Sure On This Shining Night*

It is indeed a brave American composer who would dare to follow Samuel Barber in setting that remarkable poem of timeless beauty, *Sure On This Shining Night*. The poem, by James Agee (1909-1955), inspired Barber to compose one of the greatest and most popular art songs of the 20th century.

Having sung and taught Barber's setting for many years, I was not prepared to believe any other version could be as moving. Well, I was mistaken. Morten Lauridsen, whose *O Magnum Mysterium* was performed earlier in this program, has captured the beauty and wonder of Agee's poem, evoking the great expanse of the universe beheld in a summer night sky by a lone wanderer. His setting is spare, flowing and stunningly beautiful.

The poem comes from James Agee's *Permit Me Voyage*, published in 1934 by Yale University Press. While working for *Fortune Magazine*, the 25-year-old poet, novelist, journalist, film critic, screenwriter, and social activist published what was to be his only volume of verse.

—GH

*Sure on this shining night
Of star made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.
The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.
Sure on this shining night I weep for
wonder wand'ring far
alone
Of shadows on the stars.*

The Road Not Taken

In 1958, Randall Thompson received a commission to compose a setting of the poetry of Robert Frost to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the incorporation of the Town of Amherst, Massachusetts. On October 18, 1959, *Frostiana* was first performed in the Amherst Regional High School Auditorium by the Bicentennial Chorus comprised of singers from the township. The composer conducted. Frost and Thompson knew and admired each other's work. In *Frostiana*, we have one of the jewels of Americana choral music. At the premiere, when the last bars of music had died away, Robert Frost shouted, "Sing that again!"

The complete *Frostiana* is a set of seven choruses, five of them for mixed choir, two for 4-part male chorus. One of those is *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Thompson originally set *The Road Not Taken* for mixed chorus. Orpheus will perform it for you in an arrangement for men's voices arranged by Maurice Hill. —GH

The Awakening

Joseph M. Martin, a native of North Carolina, earned his Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina, and a Master of Music degree in Piano Performance at the University of Texas, Austin. Recognized throughout the United States for his many choral compositions, Mr. Martin has more than 300 of his works currently in print – and the list contin-

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ues to grow. Joseph M. Martin's *The Awakening* was commissioned by the Texas Choral Directors Association in honor of their 40th anniversary in 1995. The work received its premiere in San Antonio at the annual TCDA convention that year with Dr. Donald Bailey, Director of Choral Activities at Baylor University, conducting the 1st TCDA Men's Chorus. The text by the composer moves dramatically through contrasting sections from a dream in reality, to a nightmare where no birds sing, where every song withers and dies, to an awakening in a world filled with the beauty of music. Martin's writing for male voice choir is highly regarded. With *The Awakening*, he joins the ranks of other outstanding contemporary American choral composers of his generation like Daniel E. Gawthrop, J. Chris Moore, David C. Dickau, and Morten Lauridsen. *The Awakening* is truly a marriage of music and lyrics that effectively proclaims all that we feel about our love of music. —GH

Vocalise

Composer, conductor, and pianist Wilbur Chenoweth was born on June 5, 1899, in Tecumseh, Nebraska. He attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and taught there from 1925 to 1931 as a professor of piano, organ and theory. Chenoweth wrote Nebraska's *Hail Varsity*, one of the greatest college fight songs. He moved to Santa Monica, California, in 1938 and was a professor at Occidental College from 1938 to 1945. I sang for Wilbur Chenoweth at the Neighborhood Church in Pasadena where he was

organist and choirmaster. My voice teacher, Carolyn Allingham, attended the Neighborhood Church. When she learned that Chenoweth was looking for a tenor for his double quartet, she recommended me. Thanks to Miss Allingham, I got my first regular paid singing job not long out of high school.

Wilbur Chenoweth was a kindly gentleman with a full head of snowy white hair. I was very much in awe of him. There were no weekly rehearsals. We simply went through the music before the Sunday morning service. The other singers were all seasoned, professional, crackerjack sight-readers. I didn't have great chops. I was a greenhorn. For me, this was going to be sink or swim. Much of the music we sang was one voice to a part. When I struggled, Wilbur knew it. He did not suffer fools lightly. His piercing blue eyes could fix you with an icy stare. I got plenty of those. I had to learn to carry my own weight, and pronto! This was valuable on-the-job training for a young aspiring singer. At first, it was a struggle, but I learned and I survived. As I look back on it, I'm sure that Wilbur must have taken pity on me.

It was right about this time that Chenoweth produced one of his most popular and endearing compositions, *Vocalise*, for soprano. Orpheus will sing Wilbur Chenoweth's arrangement for four-part chorus of men's voices and soprano solo. We are pleased to have talented Lindsey McHugh to do the honors. Wilbur Chenoweth retired from the Neighborhood Church in 1962. I had left to seek my fortune

by then as well. He continued to maintain a music studio in Los Angeles up until his death on March 23, 1980. Thank you, Wilbur, for giving a kid a break. —GH

VI

Arizona, Arizona

Sons of Orpheus completed a successful two-week concert tour of Germany, Austria and Hungary during the summer of 2000. debut concert in Germany took place in Hürth-Bärenrath suburb of Cologne. We were invited to perform a joint 3-choir concert with Männergesangverein Cäcilia and another touring men's choir from Austria, Männergesangverein Gries Kirchen Tollertau. At the post-concert party/gemütlichkeit there was dancing with light music provided by a fellow playing a keyboard synthesizer. He was also a singer and, as you would expect, his vocal selections consisted of current popular German favorites. Naturally, my ears pricked up when I heard him singing *Arizona, Arizona*. My curiosity was peaked. A German song about Arizona? He told me it was a song by a group called "Truck Stop," a western band out of Hamburg! To make a very long story short, our choir secretary at the time, Vern Williamsen, contacted Truck Stop in Hamburg, and they sent us a copy of their version. You have heard many other fine choral arrangements by founding member Vern Williamsen. Now we present his choral arrangement of Truck Stop's *Arizona, Arizona*. GH

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Ghost Riders in the Sky

Stan Jones was born on June 5, 1941, ninety miles south of Tucson in Douglas, Arizona. He learned the fundamentals of guitar playing from Arizona cowboys.

When Stan Jones and an old cowpoke named Cap Watts went ridin' out one day on the D. Hill Ranch in southern Arizona, there was unrest in the air. Ominous cloud silhouettes grouping, regrouping, backlit with yellow and sun-red accents looked to the imaginative mind like nothing more than a line of riders racing through the ragged skies. Stan Jones and Cap Watts began to tie down the blades on a windmill when masses of dark, fast-moving clouds appeared on the horizon forming spectral figures. Cap Watts warned prophetically, "Ghost riders."

While working as a park ranger in Death Valley in 1949, Stan Jones acted as a guide for movie locations for a film starring John Wayne. With some reluctance, he sang his own special brand of campfire music for the Hollywood group. *Ghost Riders in the Sky* changed Stan Jones' life overnight!

Later that year he appeared in the Gene Autry movie, *Riders in the Sky*, that featured his song. He later composed music for John Ford's *Wagonmaster* and the title song for the John Wayne classic *The Searchers* in 1956. He died in 1963 and is buried in his hometown, Douglas, Arizona. —GH

3:10 to Yuma

Mention the movie title and almost everybody can call up an image of Glen Ford playing a bad guy, and Frankie Lane singing the title song. The song is a gift from George Duning, one of the many gifts Duning gave us all in his long career in the movie business.

Duning was born into a musical family in Richmond, Indiana, in 1908. He was educated at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. After graduating, he turned away from his classical training to star in Kay Kyser's Kollege of Musical Knowledge, a job that garnered him a contract with the musical staff at Columbia Pictures.

Among the films for which Duning wrote scores are two of the best examples of western genre – the original *3:10 to Yuma*, and *Cowboy*. He also composed for films as diverse as *My Sister Eileen*, *The World of Suzie Wong*, *Me and the Colonel*, *The Devil at Four O'Clock*, *Bell, Book, and Candle*, *Any Wednesday*, and *Toys in the Attic*.

George Duning was nominated for five academy awards. He was also a leader in his profession, serving on the boards of directors of ASCAP and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He was recognized by the Society for the Preservation of Film Music with its annual award in 1995. George Duning died in San Diego at the age of 92. —NM

Rawhide

Television's western series have produced some memorable music. *Rawhide*, starring Clint Eastwood as Rowdy Yates, ran on CBS from 1959 to 1966. It featured theme music by Dimitri Tiomkin. It is ironic that a Russian could so readily distill the essence of the American West into authentic musical terms, but Tiomkin was a composer without peer when it came to providing accompaniments to big, outdoorsy entertainments. He has carved himself a permanent niche in the pantheon of legendary film composers with contributions such as *Gunfight at the OK Corral*, *High Noon*, *Red River*, *Duel in the Sun*, *Giant*, *Alamo*, and *Rawhide*.

—GH



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