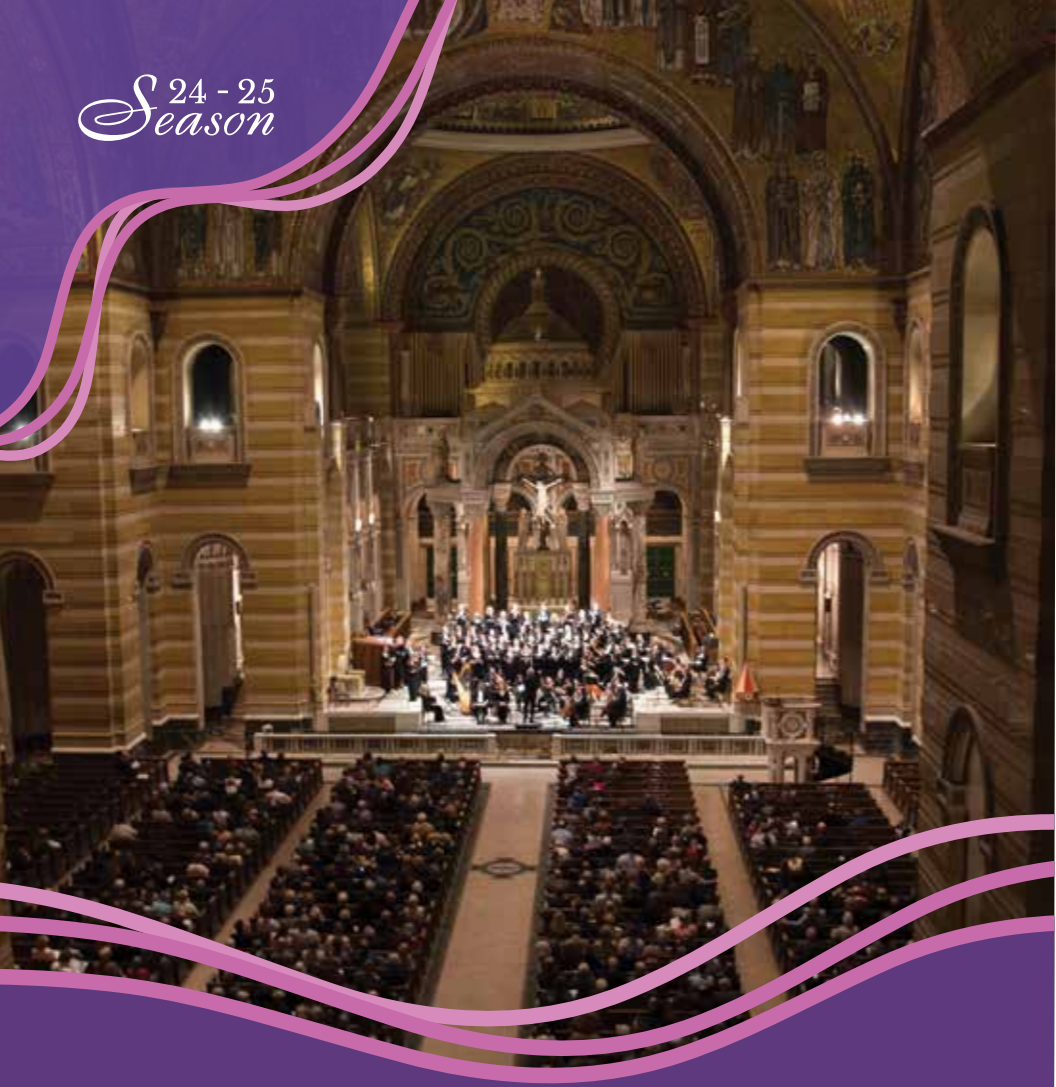


Season
24 - 25



THE BACH SOCIETY
OF SAINT LOUIS

RACHMANINOFF VESPERS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2024 | 7:30 PM
THE CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF ST. LOUIS

PRESENTED IN COLLABORATION WITH CATHEDRAL CONCERTS

A. DENNIS SPARGER MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR



Music Director and Conductor A. Dennis Sparger was critically acclaimed as “a conductor equipped with insight as well as craftsmanship” already in his second season. In the past three and a half decades he has received even more praise for his musical leadership with The Bach Society Chorus and Orchestra; as we enter the 2024-25 season, he has conducted them in more than 200 performances of major works by Bach and other composers.

Under his leadership The Bach Society was presented with the Excellence in the Arts award by the Arts & Education Council of Greater St. Louis, the first chorus to be so honored. Dr. Sparger’s leadership was also a driving force in the Christmas Candlelight Concerts being hailed by BBC Music magazine as “one of the top 20 live Christmas events in North America.”

In 1989, he introduced a Young Artists scholarship program for singers under thirty to cultivate future soloists. To date, over 70 young singers have been assisted by this program. He also established a professional core of paid Principal Singers, providing employment opportunities for singers with additional vocal training.

He was awarded a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting by the University of Illinois and earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Eastern Illinois University where he was named one of the 50 Outstanding Graduate Alumni of the Graduate School. In 2013, in recognition of his work with The Bach Society, he was presented with the Lifetime Achievement award by the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Dr. Sparger has also received awards from St. Louis Cathedral Concerts, the St. Louis chapter of the American Guild of Organists, and the Illinois chapter of the American Choral Directors Association.

Dr. Sparger is a member of the American Bach Society, American Choral Directors Association, Chorus America, the National Society of Arts & Letters, and is a past board member of Artist Presentation Society.

A black and white photograph of Stephen Eros, an Assistant Conductor, wearing a tuxedo and bow tie, holding a baton and looking upwards.

STEPHEN EROS ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Stephen Eros graduated from Webster University with faculty bestowed honors in music. While there, he served as Assistant Conductor of the Webster University Choirs and completed a Master of Arts in Choral

Conducting and Bachelor of Music in Organ Performance; studying conducting and choral music with Trent Patterson, organ with William Partridge, and voice with Robert Ayllón.

Stephen has been Assistant Conductor of The Bach Society of St. Louis since 2013 and has worked in the field of sacred music for over a decade, serving in parishes in the Diocese of Belleville, Springfield (IL), and Archdiocese of St. Louis. Since 2015, he has held the position of Director of Liturgy and Music at St. Clare of Assisi Catholic Church in O'Fallon, IL, where he is responsible for the formation and training of over 400 liturgical ministers, and conducts five different choirs. On the diocesan level, he has served as organist and choirmaster for pontifical liturgies at the Cathedral of St. Peter, and currently serves on the music committee of the diocesan liturgical commission.

As a collaborative pianist, Stephen has served as music director for solo cabarets and musicals in the St. Louis area, and has worked for the Muny St. Louis as a rehearsal pianist. He is a member of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, having served as Sub Dean, Program Committee Chair, and a member of the Executive Committee. He is also a proud union member of the American Federation of Musicians Local 2-197.

A black and white photograph of Sandra Geary, an Accompanist, wearing glasses and smiling, with her hands on a piano keyboard.

SANDRA GEARY, ACCOMPANIST

Sandra Geary is a native of County Cork, Ireland and has received piano performance diplomas from the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity College, London; the Cork School of Music, Ireland and a Bachelor of Music degree from the St. Louis Conservatory of Music. Her teachers

have included John O'Connor, Joseph Kalichstein and Carole Tafoya. On the piano faculty of Washington University, Sandra also accompanies the WU Chamber and Concert choirs.

She has been the Bach Society of Saint Louis accompanist for the past 26 years and also is the accompanist for Webster University Opera studio. She is a vocal coach for the OTSL Artist-in-Training program and Union Avenue Opera's 'Crescendo' Young Artist program. She has collaborated in Voice Masterclasses given by Nathan Gunn, Stanford Olsen, Kevin Short, Erie Mills, Christine Brewer, Mary Ann McCormack and Jennifer Johnson Cano.

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Photography & video recording during the performances is prohibited.

All of our concerts are professionally recorded, so please do your best to minimize excess noise. You will know it's time to applaud when the conductor lowers their arms after the final chord of a piece.

This may not happen after every piece, because sometimes songs are grouped together to create an emotional experience.

Thank you and enjoy the concert.



THE BACH SOCIETY OF SAINT LOUIS
IN COLLABORATION WITH
CATHEDRAL CONCERTS

THE BACH SOCIETY OF SAINT LOUIS CHORUS
A. DENNIS SPARGER, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

PRESENTS

RACHMANINOFF
VESPERS
ALL-NIGHT VIGIL, OP. 37

EMILY MARVOSH, CONTRALTO
JOHN RAMSEYER, TENOR

7:30 P.M.
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2024
CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF SAINT LOUIS
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

...a foretaste and sign of the Heavenly Kingdom”

If the music of Bach reflects the perfection of God, it's the Vespers by Rachmaninoff that reflects the beauty that awaits in the Heavenly Kingdom. Especially when heard in a spacious and resonant church, the Vespers provides a unique experience with the power to transform the listener to another world.

The Composer

Sergei Rachmaninoff was born in northern Russia on April 1, 1873, the offspring of an aristocratic family. At the age of five he entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory to study piano. Three years later he transferred to the Conservatory at Moscow where he continued his studies in piano along with theory and composition. In 1892 the 19-year-old won the gold medal for composition, left the Conservatory and began his career as a concert pianist.


Within a few years Rachmaninoff was hailed as both a composer and conductor as well as a virtuoso pianist. His first symphony premiered in 1909, and the second followed a year later. That same year he visited the United States and, for that occasion, wrote his third piano concerto. Although there were several attempts to persuade him to remain in this country, he returned to Moscow where he lived until 1917, when the Russian Revolution drove him away from his homeland. He never returned. After a brief period of living in Paris, he alternated between Switzerland and the United States. He became an American citizen a few weeks before his death in Beverly Hills, California, on March 28, 1943.

Despite Rachmaninoff's critical acclaim in the world of classical music, program annotator George Gelles describes the spiritual dimension found in this gifted musician:

“Having crafted a career marked by public showmanship at the highest level - by pianism whose virtuosity was second to none, by compositions whose rhetoric was extraverted and extravagant, by a conducting style whose impassioned conviction won wide acclaim from concertgoers and critics alike - Sergei Rachmaninoff would seem an unlikely composer to have set one of the Russian Orthodox Church's most sacred rites whose spiritual essence dates back to Byzantium.”

The Music

The All-Night Vigil, Opus 37, also known as the Vespers, was composed within two weeks in January and February of 1915. It was premiered by the Moscow Synodal Choir on March 10, at a concert to raise funds for war relief where it was warmly received. Four additional performances were quickly scheduled. By



this time Rachmaninoff, having already composed two symphonies, three piano concertos, three operas, *The Isle of the Dead*, numerous chamber works and the *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, was at the height of his creative powers.

Still, Rachmaninoff was plagued by self-doubt and depression, so the *Vespers* was an important success for him. Two years later, however, following the Revolution, the Russian churches were closed, the Synodal School and Choir were disbanded, and the purpose of music was then to glorify the state. The *Vespers*, fortunately, found new life in America when it was published in 1920, in an English translation under the title “Songs of the Church.”

Several of the texts are familiar to today’s audiences in their Latin version, notably the Gloria in excelsis, Ave Maria, Magnificat and Nunc dimittis. Rachmaninoff’s personal favorite was movement no. 5, the Nunc dimittis or Prayer of St. Simeon, and it was this movement he requested be sung at his funeral; sadly, it was impracticable to do so when the time came. Of the 15 prayers, nine are based on ancient Ukrainian, Russian or Greek melodies. The *a cappella* chorus of four parts is often divided into five, six and seven parts, and there are moments when a single voice part is divided into three separate parts, creating extraordinarily rich textures. This is a *tour de force* for any chorus, making demands on the range, control and stamina of each singer.

The *Vespers* is truly sublime music and must be heard in live performance for its ultimate effect. It communicates on multiple levels, best described by Russian-American musicologist Vladimir Morosan:

“In its innermost essence, [it] is about worship, community, and thanksgiving. But it is also about beauty, not for its own sake or for the aesthetic pleasure of those in attendance, but as a foretaste and sign of the Heavenly kingdom, which in terms of history is still to come, but which already exists in the mystery of the sacramental celebration.”

Choral singers often experience this “foretaste” while singing sacred music of the masters, and their greatest joy is sharing that experience with the audience. The Bach Society Chorus previously performed the *Vespers* in 1997, 2001, 2007 and 2017.

Please turn off cell phones, pagers and electronic devices.
The taking of photographs or use of recording equipment is prohibited.

**The aim and final end of all music should be none other than
the glory of God and refreshment of the soul. Johann Sebastian Bach**

I

Stephen Eros, Assistant Conductor

Salvation Is Created

Pavel Chesnokov (1877-1944)

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

O Lord God

O Lord God, hear Thou my pray'r, help Thou me, and give ear to my pray'r.

Daily do I worship Thy great name and Thy pow'r,

Thou alone canst help me; O send me Thy peace and love,

O protect me, my God. Let me never stray, O my Savior.

Leave me not, O God of my salvation.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live, and praise Thy great name while I
have my bearing.

Hear my pray'r. Hear Thou my pray'r, help Thou me, and give ear to my
pray'r.

Glory to Thee.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Hymn #207

Reginald Heber (1826)

Andrew J. Kreigh, Organist

The audience is invited to stand and sing. Music on the following page.

II

All-Night Vigil, Opus 37

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

John Ramseyer, tenor Emily Marvosh, contralto

Though widely known as the "Vespers," Rachmaninoff's All-Night Vigil, op. 37, is actually a composite of the Russian Orthodox vespers (evening prayer) and matins (morning prayer). According to custom these services are combined into one on the eve of great church festivals. In this form the two services become as twin icon panels, mirroring the Old and New Testaments. Taken together, the texts of the All-Night Vigil survey the salvation history of Christianity, proceeding from the Creation, the fall of humanity, and prophecies of the coming Redeemer, to the appearance of Christ on earth, and in particular, the drama of his death and resurrection.

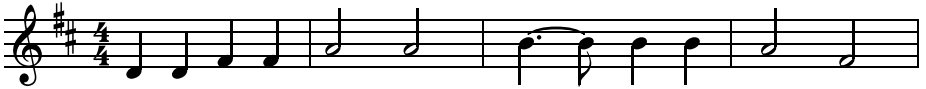
A key to Eastern Orthodox piety is the icon, a consecrated image of Christ, the angels, or the saints. For the Orthodox believer, the icon is to be venerated as a veritable window to the Divine Presence. The All-Night Vigil might well be heard as a kind of sacred Pictures at an Exhibition, in which the individual choruses are as icons, sacred tableaux, set forth with all the sumptuous splendour and light to be seen in this very church, depicting the salient moments in the Christ-Event. These aural images by Rachmaninoff are not only earnest expressions of faith but, as in the music of Mussorgsky, represent an impassioned exaltation of the Russian spirit.

Introductory notes and the following text annotations by Dr. Stephen Mager.

Holy, Holy, Holy!

Reginald Heber (1826)

John B. Dykes (1861)



1. Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord - God Al - might - y!
2. Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! all the saints a - dore Thee,
3. Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! though the dark-ness hide Thee,
4. Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord - God Al - might - y!



Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to Thee;
Cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
Though the eye made blind by sin Thy glo - ry may not see;
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea;



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! mer - ci - ful and might - y!
Cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim fall - ing down be - fore Thee,
On - ly Thou art ho - ly! there is none be - side Thee
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! mer - ci - ful and might - y!



God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
God ev - er - last - ing through e - ter - ni - ty.
Per - fect in pow'r, in love and pu - ri - ty.
God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

PART I: Evening Prayer

1. Come, Let Us Worship

Priidite, poklonimsia Tsarevi nashemu Bogu

Evening prayer opens with this emphatic call to worship, whose four clamorous phrases resound as trumpet fanfares, each more insistent than the previous.

Deacon: Arise, Master, give the blessing.

Celebrant: Glory to the holy, consubstantial, life-creating and undivided Trinity, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. **John Ramseyer, tenor**

Come, let us worship God, our King.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before the very Christ, our King and our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Him.

2. Bless the Lord, O My Soul

Emily Marvosh, contralto solo

Blagoslovi, dushe moya, Ghospoda

[melody from an ancient Greek chant]

Psalm 103 (104), a standard fixture in Orthodox worship, praises God and the wonders of his Creation. Rachmaninoff preserves the antiphonal character of the biblical text, so that as the soloist describes each of the many wonders of the Creator, the chorus responds again and again in gratitude and joyful praise.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

O Lord my God, Thou art very great.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

Thou art clothed with honor and majesty.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

The waters stand upon the mountains.

Marvelous are Thy works, O Lord.

The waters flow between the hills.

Marvelous are Thy works, O Lord.

In wisdom hast Thou made all things.

Glory to Thee, O Lord, who hast created all!

3. Blessed Is the Man Blazhen muzh, izhe ne ide na sovet nechestivih

In this setting of verses from the first three Psalms, the composer embellishes the psalm text with reiterated alleluias that are at once familiar and ever new. One of the miracles of this great work lies in the way Rachmaninoff conforms to the conventional repetitive structures of the traditional Orthodox service, yet fashions and varies each repetition so as to evolve a diverse and magnificent architecture.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in Him with trembling.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him, Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Salvation is of the Lord; and Thy blessing is upon Thy people.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God!

Psalm 1, 1/6; 2, 11/12; 3, 8/9

4a. Gladsome Light (Choral Chant) Svete tihy sviatiya slavi Bessmertnago [melody from an ancient Kiev chant]

4b. Gladsome Light

John Ramseyer, tenor solo

The quintessential evening hymn throughout the Christian world, this ancient Phos Hilaron evokes the glow of the setting sun amid the onset of darkness: an image of the Light of Christ piercing the night of sin and death.

Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the Immortal One--

the Heavenly Father, holy and blessed -- O Jesus Christ!

Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the light of evening, we praise the Father,
Son, and Holy Spirit -- God.

Thou art worthy at every moment to be praised in hymns by reverent voices.

O Son of God, Thou art the Giver of Life; therefore all the world glorifies Thee.



5a. Lord, Now Lettest Thou Thy Servant Depart (Choral Chant)

Nine otpushechayeshi raba Tvoyego, Vladiko

[melody from an ancient Kiev chant]

5b. Lord, Now Lettest Thou Thy Servant Depart

John Ramseyer, tenor solo

After the birth of Jesus, his mother Mary, with her husband Joseph, went to Jerusalem to present the Infant in the Temple, in accordance with the Mosaic Law. It was then that the Holy Family had their remarkable encounter with the prophet Simeon, who responded with those moving words, "Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word": the Nunc Dimittis. Rachmaninoff's poignant setting seems to portray the old man gently cradling the Christ Child in his arms, his eyes fervently upraised in prayer.

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word,
For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people-
A light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

6. Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos

Bogoroditse Devo, raduysia

This is a Theotokion; that is, a hymn to Mary, the "God-Bearer." The chorus chants the "Ave Maria," the words of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin, by whose consent Christ was brought into the world.

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.

INTERMISSION

PART II: Morning Prayer

7. The Lesser Doxology: Glory to God in the Highest

Slava v vishnih Bogu

[melody from an ancient Znamenny chant]

Matins begins with the traditional morning call to worship from Psalm 51, announced, as it were, by a flurry of heavenly voices singing the Gloria in excelsis -- the Christmas hymn of the angels, heralding the dawn of salvation. Here the prophecies and expectation of the Old Testament (and hence, the evening prayer) are fulfilled, in the very incarnation of Christ himself: "God with us."

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.
O Lord, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim Thy praise.

8a. Praise the Name of the Lord (Choral Chant)

Hvalite imia Ghospidne. Allilulia.

[melody from an ancient Znamenny chant]

8b. Praise the Name of the Lord

This radiant anthem initiates the most solemn moment in the matins liturgy, when the lights throughout the church, having been extinguished at the close of vespers, are again illumined, and hymns and acclamations ring out in praise of Christ's death and resurrection.

Praise the name of the Lord.
Alleluia.
Praise the Lord, O you His servants.
Alleluia, alleluia.
Blessed be the Lord from Zion,
He who dwells in Jerusalem.
Alleluia.
O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.
Alleluia, alleluia.
For His mercy endures forever.
Alleluia.
O give thanks unto the God of Heaven.
Alleluia, alleluia.
For His mercy endures forever.
Alleluia.

9. Blessed Art Thou, O Lord
Blagosloven yesi, Ghospodi
[melody from an ancient Znamenny chant]

John Ramseyer, tenor solo

The stunning Troparion of the Resurrection sets forth the dramatic Gospel account of Christ's rising from the dead, and the encounter at the empty tomb. Throughout the movement, the antiphon, "Blessed art thou..." recurs as a unifying motif that contrasts and delineates the successive scenes of this powerful story.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

The angelic host was filled with awe,
When it saw Thee among the dead.
By destroying the power of death, O Savior,
Thou didst raise Adam, and save all men from hell!

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

In the tomb the radiant angel cried to the myrrh bearers:
"Why do you women mingle with your tears?
Look at the tomb and understand!
The Savior is risen from the dead!"

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

Very early in the morning the myrrh bearers ran with sorrow to Thy tomb,
But an Angel came to them and said:
"The time for sorrow has come to an end!
Do not weep, but announce the resurrection to the apostles!"


Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

The myrrh bearers were sorrowful as they neared Thy tomb,
But the Angel said to them:
"Why do you number the living among the dead?
Since He is God, He is risen from the tomb!"

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

We worship the Father, and His Son, and the Holy Spirit:
The Holy Trinity, one is essence!
We cry with the Seraphim:
"Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O Lord!"

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



Since Thou didst give birth to the Giver of Life, O Virgin,
Thou didst deliver Adam from his sin!
Thou gavest joy to Eve instead of sadness!
The God-man who was born of Thee has restored to life those
who had fallen from it!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!

10. Having Beheld the Resurrection of Christ Voskreseniye Hristove videvshe

Equally electrifying, this Hymn of the Resurrection would occur, in an actual worship context, as a direct response to the reading of the Easter lesson from the Gospel of John. The Cross, once an ignominious instrument of execution, has been transformed into a shining symbol of victory over death.

Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ,
Let us worship the holy Lord Jesus, the only Sinless One.
We venerate Thy Cross, O Christ, and we hymn and glorify Thy holy resurrection,
For Thou art our God, and we know no other than Thee; we call on Thy name.

Come, all you faithful, let us venerate Christ's holy resurrection.
For, behold, through the cross joy has come into all the world.
Ever blessing the Lord, let us praise His resurrection,
For by enduring the cross for us, He has destroyed death by death.


11. My Soul Magnifies the Lord Velichit dusha Moya Ghospoda

In Orthodox iconography, Mary is always depicted with the Christ Child in her arms, signifying her essential role as the Mother of God. Similarly, this Magnificat, with its repeated antiphon, is at once a canticle of praise to God, and a gesture of devotion to the Virgin Theotokos: the "God-Bearer."

My soul magnifies the Lord,
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Antiphon: More honorable than the Cherubim
and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim,
without defilement Thou gavest birth to God the Word,
true Theotokos, we magnify Thee.

For He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden.
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.



For He who is mighty has done great things for me,
And holy is His name, and His mercy is on those
Who fear Him from generation to generation....

He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
And has exalted those of low degree;
He has filled the hungry with good things,
And the rich He has sent empty away.

He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy,
As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity forever.


12. The Great Doxology: Glory to God in the Highest Slava v vishnih Bogu, i na zemli mir [melody from an ancient Znamenny chant]

This great hymn to the Trinity is, in part, nearly identical to the liturgical Gloria of the Western Churches. The frequent threefold repetitions of prayers and godly attributes are clearly directed to the divine persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Rachmaninoff once again employs the ancient chant melody which he used for the Lesser Doxology, but here the effect is far more expansive and developed. And yet, the peasant simplicity of the tune gives the entire piece a folk-like sincerity and fervor.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, Good will toward men.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee,
We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.

O Lord, heavenly King, God the Father almighty.
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
Who takest away the sin of the world have mercy on us.
Thou who takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer.

Thou who sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.
For Thou alone art holy,
Thou alone art the Lord, Jesus Christ,
To the glory of God the Father. Amen.



Every day I will bless Thee and praise Thy name forever and ever.
Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers,
And praised and glorified is Thy name forever. Amen.
Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us,
As we have set our hope on Thee.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

Lord, Thou has been our refuge from generation to generation.
I said: Lord, have mercy on me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.
Lord, I flee to Thee, teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God;
For with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light.
Continue Thy mercy on those who know Thee.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

13a. Today Salvation Has Come (Choral Chant)


Dnes spaseniye miru bist

[melody from an ancient Znamenny chant]

13b. Today Salvation Has Come

This is a humble song of thanksgiving for Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, and an exaltation of his victory over death and sin.

Today salvation has come to the world.
Let us sing to Him who rose from the dead, the Author of our life.
Having destroyed death by death, he has given us the victory and great mercy.



14. Thou Didst Rise from the Tomb
Voskres iz groba i uzi rasterzal yesi ada
[melody from an ancient Znamenny chant]

This beautiful and placid hymn is a liturgical alternative to no. 13, above. Within this entire sequence of musical icons, however, it aptly concludes the narrative: Christ, having completed his work of salvation on earth, commissions his disciples to preach to all nations the Gospel of peace.

Thou didst rise from the tomb and burst the bonds of hell!
Thou didst destroy the condemnation of death, O Lord,
Releasing all mankind from the snares of the enemy!

Thou didst show Thyself to Thine apostles, and didst send them forth to proclaim Thee;
And through them Thou hast granted Thy peace to the world,
O Thou who art plenteous in mercy!

15. Hymn to the Mother of God
Vzbrannoy voyevode pobeditelnaya
[melody from an ancient Greek chant]

In several Christian traditions, including the Eastern Orthodox, Mary is believed, at the time of her death, to have been assumed bodily into heaven, and thereby glorified by God. This vigorous final anthem to the Virgin, ever mindful of her identity as "God-Bearer," seeks her motherly guidance, implores her mighty protection, and sings her undying praise.

To Thee, the victorious Leader of triumphant hosts,
We Thy servants, delivered from evil, offer hymns of thanksgiving, O Theotokos!
Since Thou dost possess invincible might, set us free from all calamities,
So that we may cry to Thee: "Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!"

We express our appreciation to diction coach Paul Gurt,
for his considerable suggestions and patience.

Performing scores edited by Vladimir Morosan and Alexander Ruggieri,
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GUEST ARTIST

EMILY MARVOSH, CONTRALTO



American contralto Emily Marvosh has established a reputation as a singing actress with excellent musicianship, a “plum-wine voice,” and “graceful allure,” on national and international stages. Recent solo appearances include the Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Charlotte Symphony, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Tucson Symphony Orchestra, and John Davenant’s *Macbeth* with the Henry Purcell Society of Boston, as well as solo recitals in Arizona, Michigan, and Massachusetts. Awards include the prestigious

Adams Fellowship at the Carmel Bach Festival, the American Prize in the Oratorio and Art Song divisions, and second place in the New England Regional NATSAA competition. In the 2022-2023 season, she was the inaugural Resident Artist with the Lexington (MA) Symphony.

She is a member of the Lorelei Ensemble, which promotes innovative new music for women. With Lorelei, she has enjoyed collaborations with composers David Lang, Julia Wolfe, and Christopher Cerrone; the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, *A Far Cry*, Duke Performances, and major symphony orchestras in Boston, Chicago, Nashville, and San Francisco.

Upcoming work includes Handel’s *Messiah* with St. Thomas Fifth Avenue in New York City as well as European performances with Boston Camerata and the Lorelei Ensemble.

She belongs to Beyond Artists, a coalition of artists that donates a percentage of their concert fees to organizations they care about. She supports Rosie’s Place and the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music through her performances. She holds degrees from Central Michigan University and Boston University.

GUEST ARTIST

JOHN RAMSEYER, TENOR



Hailed as “a particularly fine tenor” (BBC Music Magazine), and whose voice is known for its “shining, clear, elegance” (New York Classical Review), John Ramseyer is a highly sought after soloist and chamber musician. As a soloist, John has performed with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Cathedral Choral Society, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, the American Classical Orchestra, New York Baroque Incorporated, The New Consort, and the four-time Grammy-nominated Clarion Choir. With the Clarion Choir, John provided tenor solos for their Grammy-nominated album, Rachmaninoff: All-Night

Vigil, to great acclaim. Other recent solo recording credits include the Benedict Sixteen Choir’s Frank La Rocca: Requiem for the Forgotten and the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys’ No Small Wonder: Music for the Christmas Season.

Well-versed in operatic repertoire spanning the eras, Mr. Ramseyer has performed leading roles with The Bronx Opera Company, Apotheosis Opera, Resonanz Opera, Christman Opera Company, The Midwest Institute of Opera, and LoftOpera. Ramseyer received a master’s degree in vocal performance from Mannes School of Music. John is also a member of the Metropolitan Opera Extra Chorus, performing in recent productions including Britten’s Peter Grimes, Wagner’s Der fliegende Holländer, and a concert of Brahms’ Ein Deutesches Requiem at Carnegie Hall.

Having been brought up with a tremendous passion for ensemble singing, Ramseyer is also privileged to be a Gentleman of the Choir at Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, as part of the world-renowned Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, under the musical direction of Dr. Jeremy Filsell.

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* indicates 2024-25 Young Artist Award Recipient

YOUNG ARTISTS

RITA SCHIEN SOPRANO I



Rita Schien, soprano, is excited to return for another season with The Bach Society as a Young Artist. She is currently pursuing a degree in Vocal Performance at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, where she studies with Dr. Leslie Allnatt. At UMSL, Rita performs with the University Singers and Vocal Point, and she is actively involved in the Opera Theatre Program. In 2023, she won the Young Artist Concerto Competition at UMSL and earned second place in the Crescendo Program with Union Avenue Opera. Rita was also honored with the prestigious Presser Scholarship Award from UMSL's Music Department in May 2024. Beyond classical music, Rita is deeply engaged with the St. Louis Barbershop Community, serving as a section leader for The Recruits Chorus and for the Acappelloza Summer and Fall Festivals. She is thankful for the opportunities The Bach Society has provided to further her musical growth.

CALISTA GOLDWASSER ALTO I



Calista Goldwasser, mezzo-soprano, joins The Bach Society of Saint Louis as a Young Artist for its 84th season. She holds a Master of Music from Webster University, and a Bachelor of Music from DePauw University. This past year, Calista made debuts in the opera choruses of both Winter Opera of Saint Louis (Don Giovanni, Naughty Marietta) and Union Avenue Opera (Carmen) in addition to performing and stage directing with Webster's Opera Studio. This year, you can find her in the chorus of Anna Bolena with Winter Opera. Though opera is her primary passion, she also loves art song, and early music, particularly from the French impressionist and baroque movements. In addition to performing, Calista teaches voice lessons with Patterson Performing Arts and is the primary instructor for The Bach Society's own "Finding your Voice" outreach program. Calista looks forward to strengthening her relationship with The Bach Society both as a Young Artist and educator.

YOUNG ARTISTS

KELLY BEEKMAN ALTO



Kelly Beekman, alto, is a St. Louis native and a recent graduate from Webster University. She is honored to have been selected by The St. Louis Bach Society to be a part of their young artist program for her second consecutive season. She has devoted her life to music and performance, dazzling audiences with her captivating stage presence and astounding voice in many genres, including classical, jazz, musical theater, and contemporary pop and rock. She was a recipient of the Christine Brewer Annual Scholarship in Vocal Music Performance. She received departmental honors for her tireless dedication to her craft and her outstanding performances in opera and jazz. She has performed with Union Avenue Opera in the chorus for Eugene Onegin (2022) and Carmen (2024). She was also in the chorus for Manon Lescaut and Naughty Marietta with Winter Opera St. Louis (2024). Upcoming roles include chorus for Winter Opera St. Louis's H.M.S. Pinafore and Anna Bolena.

JACK MCFARLING BASS I



Jack McFarling, baritone, is a recent graduate from Truman State University, and is excited to begin his first season as a Young Artist for The Bach Society. After two seasons in the group, he decided to take on a new challenge and pursue this opportunity. Born and raised in St. Louis, Jack has had an interest in music throughout his life. He pursued computer science as well as general music at a collegiate level and has cherished the experience. He was awarded the Vocal Music Service Scholarship, rewarding his hard work and elevating him as a leader in multiple choirs at Truman State. He has received many other awards and honors in the music department, including a feature as a vocal soloist for the December 2021 Inauguration Ceremony. In addition to pursuing music with The Bach Society, Jack jumps at any opportunity to share with the world the music that has enriched his life so greatly.

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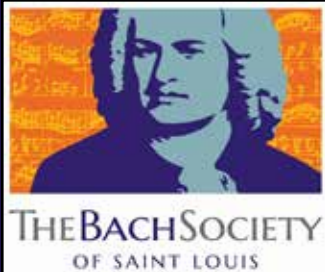
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