cascadian chorale

gary d. cannon
artistic director

SPRING

Saturday, March 12, 2011, 7pm

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
8398 NE 12th Street, Medina

Sunday, March 13, 2011, 3pm

Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross
11526 162nd Avenue NE, Redmond

SPRING

Sing of Spring (1937) ..... George Gershwin (1898–1937)

Set me as a seal upon thine heart (2006) ..... Gary D. Cannon (b.1975)
world premiere performance

The Telephone (1959) ..... Randall Thompson (1899–1984)

If ever two were one (2006) ..... Linda Gingrich (b.1951)

Dirait-on (1993) ..... Morten Lauridsen (b.1943)

O primavera, gioventú dell'anno (1592) ..... Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643)

My bonnie lass she smileth (1595) ..... Thomas Morley (1557/8–1602)

My bonnie lass she smelleth (1971) ..... P.D.Q. Bach (1807–1742)?

intermission

Primavera porteña (1969/1994) ..... Ástor Piazzolla (1921–1992)
arr. Oscar Escalada (b.1945)

The Shower (1914) ..... Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

Lullabye for Lucy (1981) ..... Peter Maxwell Davies (b.1934)

Spring Light (2004) ..... William Hawley (b.1950)
world premiere performance

Vårnatt (1912) ..... Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871–1927)

Våren (1880/1957) ..... Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)
arr. Paul Christiansen (1914–1997)

Ingrid Verhulsdonk, piano

Cascadian Chorale

Gary D. Cannon, conductor

CASCADIAN CHORALE

Sing of Spring by **George Gershwin** (1898–1937)

from the film *A Damsel in Distress* (1937)

George Gershwin started his musical career as a teenager, plugging the newest Tin Pan Alley songs to bandleaders by playing an upright piano on the sidewalks of Manhattan. He eventually became the leading composer in the genre and expanded his music-making to musical theater and to the classical tradition. In 1936, just after completing his magnum opus, the opera *Porgy and Bess*, Gershwin moved to Hollywood to work on scores for RKO films. Gershwin quickly found that Hollywood was not to his liking, as he was not consulted in crucial musical decisions and his song-writing efforts were restricted to singers that he considered "quite limited."

The English setting of the film *A Damsel in Distress*—which starred Fred Astaire and Joan Fontaine and featured one of Gershwin's standards, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*—granted him a little reprieve. As Gershwin wrote in a letter, "We have a madrigal group of singers and have written two English type ballads for background music so the audience will get a chance to hear some singing besides the crooning of the stars." Indeed, *Sing of Spring* is one of Gershwin's few songs written specifically for choir. It is a celebratory paean to the season, with birds singing in jazz harmonies. His original title for this song was *Back to Bach*, though there is little Baroque style other than steady motion in the non-melodic voices.

Early in 1937, around the time that Gershwin composed this bucolic music, he began to experience periods of dizziness and depression. On July 9 he suddenly collapsed into a coma. Gershwin died two days later of a brain tumor, aged only 38.

Spring is here, sing willy-wally-willo!
Spring is here, sing tilly-tally-tillo!
Winter's past, tra-la-li-lo!
The shepherd, free at last, sings piminy mo!
Jug-a, jug-a, jug!

Spring appears: the plough-boy starts to carol;
Spring appears: we don our gay apparel
And fa, la, la! We all rejoice!
Come, lift up ev'ry voice,
And sing of spring!

— Ira Gershwin (1896–1983)

Set me as a seal upon thine heart (2006) **Gary D. Cannon** (born 1975)

Tonight's conductor, whose biographical material appears on page 13, has provided the following note on the present composition.

My setting of the famous *Set me as a seal* text was composed mostly in October 2006, though the opening material incorporates sketches dating back to 1998. The final impetus to complete the work was the desire to craft a suitable wedding present to my wife. We were married on 3 November 2006, and *Set me as a seal* is dedicated "to Marnie, my bride." As this was, however, my first completed composition in nearly ten years, and also my first work for choir, I withheld it from public performance, allowing myself time to tinker with details now and then. My *Set me as a seal* therefore receives its first performances at these concerts.

The work's opening sonority is a conscious homage to the setting by William Walton, one of my favorite composers, as the tenors start with the pitch A. This inaugural material returns twice over the course of the piece, each time having undergone subtle changes of harmonic and textual emphasis as "me" sublimates into "thine." As the piece was intended as a gift for my wife, I incorporated my initials as the pitches G–D–C at the final word of "Many waters cannot quench love" — such are the games composers like to play! The climactic section, to the words "neither can the floods drown it," aims to illustrate the text in music: harmony, rhythm, and counterpoint become increasingly complex to reflect the swirling flood-waters, then simplify as the flood recedes. The opening material gently closes the work to reveal a true home of D major.

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, upon thine arm: for love is strong as death.
Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.

— adapted from Song of Solomon, 8:6–7

The Telephone by **Randall Thompson** (1899–1984)

No. 4 from *Frostiana: Seven Country Songs* (1959)

Randall Thompson has often been hailed as the dean of American choral music. Early in his career, Thompson focused on orchestral works, with three finely crafted symphonies, but by the 1940s he turned predominantly to the choir. Thompson's many illustrious positions included the directorship of Philadelphia's acclaimed Curtis Institute and a professorship at Harvard. His numerous choral compositions form the core of the American repertory, ranging from the idyllic *The Peaceable Kingdom* to the boisterously patriotic *The Testament of Freedom*. His brief *Alleluia* remains perhaps the most frequently performed piece of American choral music. Not bad for a chap who, as an undergraduate, had failed in his first audition to join the Harvard Glee Club: he later quipped, "My life has been an attempt to strike back." Thompson's compositional style is very meticulous—often almost every note on the page has an articulation or related marking—and yet the overall effect is of a spontaneous and sincere reaction to the text.

Frostiana is one of Thompson's most beloved works. Delightful and urbane, it is a collection of "Seven Country Songs" on texts by the great American poet Robert Frost. The cycle was composed in the summer of 1959 to fulfill a commission for the bicentennial of the incorporation of Amherst, Massachusetts. Thompson himself conducted the premiere, which was sung by a volunteer ensemble drawn from throughout the township. Both Thompson and Frost were adopted New Englanders, and Frost was suitably impressed by the work to direct his estate not to allow other composers to set his poems to music, a ban which continues, more or less, today. In 1965 Thompson orchestrated the work and even later made an arrangement for band. Through the course of the 2010–11 season, we will perform the complete original version, with its demanding role for solo piano.

For the middle movement of *Frostiana*, Thompson chose a text which is a conversation between a man and a woman who use a trestle-flower as a telephone-like communication device. You may perhaps picture a fair maiden in a second-story room, speaking into a flower which is connected, like two cans and a string, to a flower at the ground, where listens her beloved. The men are energetic as they re-tell the experience, but the women behave more coyly. Meanwhile, the piano winds up and down the keyboard as the flower's vine would wind up and down the side of the house.

'When I was just as far as I could walk
From here today,
There was an hour
All still
When leaning with my head against a flower
I heard you talk.
Don't say I didn't, for I heard you say –
You spoke from that flower on the window sill –
Do you remember what it was you said?'

'First tell me what it was you thought you heard.'

'Having found the flower and driven a bee away,
I leaned my head,
And holding by the stalk,
I listened and I thought I caught the word –
What was it? Did you call me by my name?
Or did you say –
Someone said "Come" – I heard it as I bowed.'

'I may have thought as much, but not aloud.'

'Well, so I came.'

— Robert Frost (1874–1963)
first published in *You Come Too* (1916)

If ever two were one (2006) by **Linda Gingrich** (born 1951)

Linda Gingrich is a master of all aspects of the choral art: she is an accomplished composer, arranger, teacher, conductor, and singer. Born in Austin, Texas, she moved with her family to Washington State as a child. During vocal studies at Pacific Lutheran University and Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, she began to discover that she didn't have a soloistic singing voice. After a few preliminary studies in composition with Bern Herbolsheimer, she proceeded to a Master's degree in choral conducting at the University of Washington. She composed only rarely until starting the Issaquah Chorale (since re-named Master Chorus Eastside) in 1991, one of the major forces in choral music in the eastern suburbs of Seattle. Eventually she returned to doctoral work at the University of Washington, where for two years she shared an office with tonight's conductor, who commissioned and premiered the present work for the Annas Bay Music Festival.

If ever two were one sets a poem entitled *To My Dear and Loving Husband* by Anne Bradstreet, the first published American poet. Bradstreet was a devout Puritan, arriving in the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1630, where her husband became the colony's chief administrator. As his political duties required extensive travel throughout the colony, Anne was often left at home to raise their children. An avid reader from their copious library, she developed a taste for poetry, privately writing short verses for her family's enjoyment, generally about her love for God and for her husband.

Gingrich's music is very closely linked to the text. For example, when the altos and tenors sing the opening line, they begin as two distinct parts, moving in opposite directions, but unite for the word "one." Much of the composition pairs the inner voices (alto and tenor) together, while the outer voices (soprano and bass) follow. The quick central section (at "I prize thy love") begins with a melody highlighted for sopranos only, to emphasize the single voice of the poem. "All the riches that the East doth hold" are displayed by a full texture dividing the choir into seven parts, and unquenchable rivers are depicted by a line that rushes downward like a sonic waterfall. To depict the final desire that "we may live ever," the choir repeats the final phrase indefinitely, gradually fading away.

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me ye women if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole Mines of gold,
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that Rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee, give recompense.
Thy love is such I can no way repay,
The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.
Then while we live, in love lets so persever,
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

— Anne Bradstreet (?1612–1672)

Dirait-on [So they say] by **Morten Lauridsen** (born 1943)

No. 5 from *Les chansons des roses* [Songs of the Rose] (1993)

In the Northwest, Morten Lauridsen's story is very much one of "Local Boy Makes Good." The town of his birth is Colfax, Washington, nestled at a crossroads between Spokane and Pullman. He was raised in Portland, studied at Whitman College in Walla Walla, and worked as a firefighter near Mount St. Helens. Upon relocation to Los Angeles, Lauridsen undertook further studies at the University of Southern California, where he eventually gained a professorship and has now taught for over thirty years. Yet this Northwest boy regularly returns home: he summers in one of the more remote San Juan Islands. By some accounts, Lauridsen is the most-often-performed living American composer, both at home and abroad—no mean feat for a creator of almost exclusively vocal music.

Dirait-on is one of Lauridsen's most popular works and forms the conclusion of a cycle of French poetry by the great twentieth-century German poet Rainer Maria Rilke. The text centers on a physical description of a rose, whose petals fold in upon itself narcissistically. Lauridsen consciously evokes the simple, melodious style of a French folksong, with its repeated refrain—"dirait-on" ("so they say")—folding in on itself just as a rose's petals.

Abandon entouré d'abandon,
tendresse touchant aux tendresses…
C'est ton intérieur qui sans cesse
se caresse, dirait-on;

se caresse en soi-même,
par son propre reflet éclairé.
Ainsi tu inventes le thème
du Narcisse exaucé.

Abandon enveloped by abandon,
tenderness touching tendernesses…
It is your interior which without ceasing
caresses itself, so they say;

it caresses itself,
by its own clear reflection.
Thus you invent the theme
of Narcissus fulfilled.

— Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926)

O primavera, gioventú dell'anno

by **Claudio Monteverdi** (1567–1643)

from *Il terzo libro de madrigali* [The Third Book of Madrigals] (published 1592)

If you were to ask a musicologist which composer had the greatest influence on the development of Western music, one of the most likely answers would be an enthusiastic "Monteverdi." Claudio Monteverdi was born and trained in Cremona, in north-central Italy. In 1590/1, he took a post at the Gonzaga court of Duke Vincenzo I in nearby Mantua, rising to become the court *maestro della musica* in 1601. His fame spread steadily throughout Europe, and he became the principal defender of a new compositional style that he termed the *seconda prattica*. This "second practice" was in opposition to the florid polyphony which we now know as the High Renaissance style. He argued that the older style subsumed the text to the needs of the music, but the newer style reversed this precedence. He knew of the musical innovations that had been explored in Florence, such as the *basso continuo* and text declamation through recitative, and embraced them in the landmark 1607 opera, Orfeo. This shift from the Renaissance to Baroque styles is perhaps best illustrated in Monteverdi's nine books of madrigals, spanning 1587 to 1651.

O primavera comes from Monteverdi's third book of madrigals, after which he waited eleven years before publishing another; the fourth book reflects a dramatic stylistic shift as he began to promote the *seconda prattica* with vigor. The third book thus represents the last great flowering of the Italian Renaissance madrigal, which had flourished since the 1530s as an emerging middle class, especially Venetian merchants, wanted music they could make in their homes, thereby emulating the elaborate musical entertainments of the wealthy. Madrigals, with their secular texts in the local vernacular language, filled this need perfectly. *O primavera* is typical of the genre: short melodic phrases are passed back and forth among the voices, and the text is only loosely linked to the music as the mood changes.

O primavera, gioventù dell'anno,
bella madre de' fiori,
d'erbe novelle e di novelli amori,
    tu ben, lasso, ritorni,
    ma senza i cari giorni
    de le speranze mie.
Tu ben sei quella
ch'eri pur dianzi,
si vezzosa e bella,
    ma non son io
    quel che già un tempo fui,
    si car' a gl'occhi altrui.

—Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538–1612)

O Spring, youth of the year,
beautiful mother of flowers,
of new herbs and of new loves,
    you even, unhappy, return,
    but without the dear days
    of my hopes.
You even are she
who was just a moment ago,
so charming and beautiful,
    but I am not
    he who a long time ago was,
    so dear to another's eyes.

My bonnie lass she smileth

by **Thomas Morley** (1557/8–1602)

from *The First Book of Balletts to Five Voices* (published 1595)

The name of Thomas Morley is virtually synonymous with the English madrigal, but this popular picture of the composer is woefully incomplete. In 1583 Morley became choirmaster and organist at the cathedral in his native Norwich, having studied with William Byrd. Within nine years Morley had secured the prestigious London posts of organist at St. Paul's Cathedral and gentleman of the Chapel Royal. Throughout the 1590s he published extensively, both his own compositions and those of others, but with a focus on secular vocal music. He also composed sacred anthems, motets, and service music, a book of lute songs, and works for the keyboard. Morley was even a noted music theorist, having published *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* in 1597. His final publication was that most seminal madrigal compilation, *The Triumphs of Oriana*, collecting works from over thirty composers in honor of the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth I. But the spice of Morley's life is even more fascinating. There is, for example, some justified speculation that Morley was Shakespeare's composer of choice, and even some solid evidence that he had been a double-agent spy on behalf of the English crown.

Yet we remember Morley merely as the quintessential creator of madrigals. Among them are such standards as *Sing we and chant it*, *April is in my mistress' face*, *Now is the month of maying*, *Fire! fire!*, and the present *My bonnie lass she smileth*—although, truth be told, these are not particularly representative of the madrigal tradition as established by the Italians and developed by other English composers. Not for Morley so many typically madrigalistic features, such as chromaticism, harmonic ambiguity, or elaborate text-painting. Indeed, strictly speaking, the five works named above are not even true madrigals, but examples of simpler forms such as the ballett and canzonet. *My bonnie lass she smileth*, for example, is a ballett, complete with regular rhythm and "Fa la la…" refrain. In fact, this ballett isn't even a particularly original work: it is based on *Questa dolce sirena* (1591) by Monteverdi's colleague at Mantua, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi (c.1554–1609). Then again, perhaps avoiding originality, with its intrinsically cerebral or emotional characteristics, was entirely the point. After all, Morley wrote in his 1597 treatise: "As for music, the principal thing we seek in it, is to delight the ear."

My bonnie lass she smileth,
when she my heart beguileth.
Fa la la la la…
Smile less dear love, therefore,
and you shall love me more.
Fa la la la la…

When she her sweet eye turneth,
O how my heart it burneth,
Fa la la la la…
Dear love, call in their light,
or else you'll burn me quite.
Fa la la la la…

My bonnie lass she smelleth

No. 1 from *Two Madrigals from The Triumphs of Thusnelda* (published 1971)

by **P.D.Q. Bach** (1807–1742)?
reverently edited by **Professor Peter Schickele** (born 1935)

Ever since 1953, when he discovered an eighteenth-century manuscript in service as a strainer in a south German coffee percolator, Professor Peter Schickele of the University of Southern North Dakota at Hoople has, much to the dismay of musicians everywhere, failed to keep the cat in the bag. That manuscript was of the *Sanka Cantata*, composed by P.D.Q. Bach, the hitherto unknown "last and least of the twenty-odd children of J.S. Bach, and certainly the oddest of the lot." Through Professor Schickele's subsequent discoveries over the last fifty years, it has slowly emerged that P.D.Q. Bach wrote extensively in every genre. Opera houses have been cursed with *Hansel and Gretel and Ted and Alice* and *The Abduction of Figaro*. Orchestras have unwisely undertaken the *1712 Overture* and the *Fanfare for the Common Cold*. Pianists have inexplicably embraced *The Short-Tempered Clavier*. Even the *Sinfonia Concertante*—scored for lute, balalaika, ocarina, left-handed sewer flute, double-reed slide music stand, and strings—has found an occasional outing.

Unfortunately, P.D.Q. Bach also inflicted his efforts upon choirs, gifting them most notably with the *Liebeslieder Polkas*, the *Missa Hilarious*, and two dramatic oratorios, *The Seasonings* and *Oedipus Tex*. Despite our better judgment, we here offer his madrigal *My bonnie lass she smelleth*. Unusually for a work by P.D.Q. Bach, we know quite a lot about the work's origins thanks to the regrettably tireless researches of Professor Schickele. Recalling the great Renaissance madrigal collections such as *The Triumphs of Oriana* (see previous page), the eighteenth-century nobleman Count Pointercount decided to commission a similar collection in honor of his wife, Thusnelda, "a singer who had recently triumphed over earthly cares by holding a high note so long that she died of asphyxiation, complicated by a lack of sufficient oxygen." Unfortunately, given that the madrigal was a genre which had died out two centuries prior, the Count's efforts to recruit a worthy composer were fruitless. He finally came upon P.D.Q. Bach, "a composer who was too dumb to know what was *au courant* and what was *passé*." P.D.Q. Bach composed two works for the collection, including *My bonnie lass she smelleth*. There were no other contributors. The text evokes the same tastelessness as the music, and is thus attributed to the composer himself.

intermission

Primavera porteña [Springtime of Buenos Aires] (1969)
No. 3 from *Las cuatro estaciones porteñas* [The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires] (1964–70)
by **Ástor Piazzolla** (1921–1992)
as arranged (1994) by **Oscar Escalada** (born 1945)

Born in the coastal Argentine city of Mar del Plata, Ástor Piazzolla was raised in New York City. Returning to Argentina at age seventeen, Piazzolla played the bandoneón (which is related to the accordion) in prominent tango bands while studying with Alberto Ginastera, Latin America's leading modernist composer. After a year of further studies with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, he found his unique compositional voice by infusing jazz and classical elements into dance forms, thereby creating a style termed *nuevo tango*. This "new tango" quickly became popular in the West, but met with some resistance in Argentina. Political oppression in his homeland led Piazzolla to settle in Rome and Paris, and indeed several of his works—including the famed *Libertango*—have political overtones.

Buenos Aires is the beating heart of Argentina: its undisputed center of government, culture, population, commerce, industry, religion, tourism, and sport. With over thirteen million people in its metropolitan area, the city is comparable in population to Los Angeles or London. Located at the estuary of the Rio de la Plata, which drains one-fifth of the river-water in South America, Buenos Aires is also one of the world's most important ports. Indeed, its denizens are simply called *porteños*: people of the port. Piazzolla spent much of his life in the city and was thus intimately familiar with is temperaments and seasons. In the 1960s, Piazzolla crafted a cycle of *Las cuatro estaciones porteñas* as a conscious homage to the famous *Four Seasons* violin concertos by Baroque composer Antonio Vivaldi. In fact, ever since classical musicians began taking up Piazzolla's works in the 1980s, these two cycles have been frequently performed together. Over the course of the 2010–11 season, the Cascadian Chorale will present all four of Piazzolla's *Estaciones porteñas*.

Piazzolla's original standard instrumentation for the *nuevo tango* was a quintet of bandoneón, violin, piano, electric guitar, and string bass, though his music has been arranged for various types of instrumental configurations. In the 1980s, Argentinean conductor Oscar Escalada began arranging Piazzolla's tangos for chorus. Escalada employs scat syllables as the text, reinforcing the link between *nuevo tango* and jazz. In *Primavera porteña*, he gives the piano a prominent role, as sometimes the choir merely supplies back-up chordal structure as the piano undertakes to sing the melody. At other times, bits of the melody are tossed among the different sections of the choir.

The Shower by **Sir Edward Elgar** (1857–1934)
No. 1 from *Two Choral Songs*, opus 71 (1914)

Modern audiences tend to think of Sir Edward Elgar as the mustachioed Master of the King's Music, the pinnacle of English music in a Victorian vein: stoic, stodgy, honest, honorable, noble, and, let's face it, a bit pretentious. But throughout his life Elgar retained a fondness for the provincial countryside of his youth, where his father was a piano tuner and ran a music shop. The teenage Elgar was able to find employment as violin teacher, freelance violinist and occasional conductor, including leading the band at the local lunatic asylum. In 1891, after trying his hand in London and failing, Elgar retreated to the town of Malvern, in his native Worcestershire. There he remained as fame very slowly took hold, culminating with the orchestral *Enigma Variations* (1899) and the oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius* (1900). After two more major oratorios, two symphonies and a violin concerto, Elgar moved to the northern London neighborhood of Hampstead in 1912, unquestionably the greatest English composer since the seventeenth century.

However, life in the city did not suit him. He largely ceased composing major works, focusing on miniatures and light music for the theater and ballet. Elgar and his wife took frequent day-trips to towns north of Hampstead. One such jaunt, to the village of Mill Hill, inspired the choral partsong *The Shower*, to a text by the seventeenth-century metaphysical poet Henry Vaughan. As a further sign of Elgar's homesickness for the countryside, *The Shower* is dedicated to one Frances Smart, a former neighbor in Malvern. *The Shower* has brilliant touches of articulation, as a delicate *staccato* occasionally gives the impression of rainfall's gentle patter. Twice an understated E-flat major chord depicts a large "Cloud" hovering motionlessly above. Elgar unleashes impassioned hope that "My God would give a sunshine after rain" in a way that perhaps only an Englishman—or a Seattle-ite—can understand.

Cloud, if as thou dost melt, and with thy train
Of drops make soft the Earth, my eyes could weep
O'er my hard heart, that's bound up and asleep;
Perhaps at last,
Some such showers past,
My God would give a sunshine after rain.

— Henry Vaughan (1621–1695)

Lullabye for Lucy (1981) by **Sir Peter Maxwell Davies** (born 1934)

The north of Scotland is a rather barren place, too cold and windy for much plant life. Further north are the even more barren, cold, and windy Orkney Islands. One of the most sparsely populated of the lot is the Island of Hoy. And nestled in a northern valley of Hoy is the hamlet of Rackwick, population: five. Every once in a while such apparently disappearing communities have brilliant rays of hope. Rackwick had its shining moment in 1980, at the birth of Lucy Rendall, the first child born there in thirty-two years. Two notable Orkney residents joined forces to create a monument to the occasion: the composer Peter Maxwell Davies, who lived on a hill overlooking Rackwick, and the poet and novelist George Mackay Brown.

The poem is an acrostic: the first letter of each line spells out the name of the dedicatee. Maxwell Davies responded with a gentle lullaby for the newborn. The women sing the text above the men's gentle rollicking of the traditional lullaby text "Lulla, lullay." All join together from the central "A pledge and a promise," though the music ends as gently as it began. The composer assigned himself the conceit of using only the white keys of the piano, yielding music with a gentle and mostly consonant harmonic palette. The work was premiered at the 1981 St. Magnus Festival in Kirkwall, the principal town of the Orkneys, where Lucy herself now works as a nurse. At her wedding in 2005, the *Lullabye for Lucy* was sung in Kirkwall again.

A few words about the composer are also in order. In the 1950s, Maxwell Davies gained notoriety as part of the avant-garde group of musicians centered on the northern English city of Manchester. Despite these modernist tendencies, he was also active as a grammar school teacher, in which capacity he greatly influenced British music education through his insistence that children of all ages and aptitudes should and could make music successfully. By the late 1960s, Maxwell Davies had solidified his reputation as an *enfant terrible*, but over time the establishment caught up with him: in 2004 he was named Master of the Queen's Music, the highest official musical post in Britain.

Let all plants and creatures of the valley now
Unite,
Calling a new
Young one to join the celebration.

Rowan and lamb and waters salt and sweet
Entreat the
New child to the brimming
Dance of the valley,
A pledge and a promise.
Lonely they were long, the creatures of Rackwick, till
Lucy came among them, all brightness and light.

— George Mackay Brown (1921–1996)

Spring Light (2004) by **William Hawley** (born 1950)

Since his *Two Motets* were premiered by New York's famed Gregg Smith Singers in 1981, William Hawley has become one of the leading choral composers in America today. Though he had studied with some of the more austere avant-garde composers of the 1970s and had experimented with minimalism, Hawley gradually adopted a more traditional style with emotional expressivity at its core. He soon found that the choral sound is particularly well suited to his preference for thick textures and soft, gently controlled dissonances. He helped to lay an aural groundwork that several better-known American composers, such as Eric Whitacre and Morten Lauridsen, have since embraced. Having spent most of his career in Manhattan, Hawley recently moved to the coast of Maine, surrounded by sounds of nature that have already found their way into his most recent compositions.

The story of *Spring Light*'s genesis and premiere is a convoluted one. In 2004 Hawley received a commission from a Californian professor for a new composition that would serve as a Valentine's Day present for his choral-conductor wife. However, after completing the work, Hawley never heard from them again. Hence when the Seattle-based choir Choral Arts prepared an all-Hawley concert last fall, the composer was eager for *Spring Light* to receive a much belated premiere. Unfortunately, the concert proved to be too long, and several shorter works, including *Spring Light*, were cut from the program. One of the tenors in that performance was tonight's conductor, who asked the composer if Cascadian Chorale could premiere the work. Hawley enthusiastically accepted, and we are honored to present such a beautiful work by one of America's leading choral voices.

Hawley's chosen text is by the famously reclusive Massachusetts poet, Emily Dickinson. (Her original poem is given below, with footnotes to indicate the modernized adaptation Hawley chose.) The music begins with each voice entering separately in imitative fashion. The prevailing harmonic color is of pairs of fourths, often offset by a whole step, which resolve downward into a minor triad. This sonority delicately depicts Dickinson's complex mood of gentleness and restlessness, comfort and melancholy. Listening to Hawley's music, one gets a sense of new colors constantly emerging, tossed to and fro… a sense of a new light, seen only in spring.

A Light exists in Spring
Not present on the Year
At any other period —
When March is scarcely here

A Color stands abroad
On Solitary Fields[1]
That Science cannot overtake
But Human Nature feels.

It waits upon the Lawn,
It shows the furthest Tree
Upon the furthest Slope you[2] know
It almost speaks to you[3].

Then as Horizons step
Or Noons report away
Without the Formula of sound
It passes and we stay —

A quality of loss
Affecting our Content
As Trade had suddenly encroached
Upon a Sacrament.

— Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

[1 hills, 2 we, 3 me]

Vårnatt [Spring Night], opus 30 no. 2 (1912) by **Wilhelm Stenhammar** (1871–1927)

The late nineteenth century saw the rise of nationalism in Scandinavian music. The emergence of world-class composers such as Edvard Grieg in Norway, Jean Sibelius in Finland, and later Carl Nielsen in Denmark put the Nordic lands on the musical map. Today it seems that Sweden somehow missed out, but such a cursory view overlooks the equally worthy contributions of Hugo Alfvén, Otto Olsson, and especially Wilhelm Stenhammar. During his lifetime, Stenhammar was hailed as Sweden's leading pianist and conductor: as director of the Göteborg Orchestral Society (1902–22), he developed that city's musical culture to rival Stockholm's. His Brahmsian ear for the orchestra is best heard in the Serenade (1913) and the Second Symphony (1915).

Stenhammar is unusual among the so-called nationalist composers in that he focused his efforts on composing original works rather than adapting or arranging Swedish folksongs. In this respect he paired well with the poet Oscar Levertin, who likewise eschewed overt nationalism for a more universal approach. Levertin's poem *Vårnatt* is a fine example,

something of a hold-over from his earlier naturalist work. Levertin hails Spring as one who passes throughout the town spreading "all that renews the world," but implores Spring to "forget not the withered leaves." Stenhammar's setting, originally for chorus and orchestra, begins as the women address Spring in a bright, hopeful A-flat major. At the second stanza of text ("Men, o milda vår"—"But, O gentle Spring"), the harmony shifts delicately to a melancholy A-flat minor, and thence proceeds chromatically through Levertin's list of embattled dreams, burnt-out promises, worn-out threads, snapped strings, and long-aching thoughts. Stenhammar finally settles into G minor for Levertin's central point: "Alla de vänta på dig" ("All of these wait for you," i.e., for Spring). As Levertin again invokes the "strålande" ("shimmering") Spring, the choir rhapsodically shifts back to A-flat major, but this tonal center is short-lived, as A-flat minor returns with Levertin's "vissna bladen" ("withered leaves"). Stenhammar leaves us with an empty heartbeat on octave A-flats and a melancholy that only a Scandinavian under the influence of Brahms could perfect.

Vackra, hvita vår, du, som på stjärnlyst strimma tyst öfver vägarne går, lätt genom nattens dimma. Du, som ger växt och grodd, du, som ger sol och grönska, skänker, blott du blir trodd, hjärtana allt hvad de önska, strö nu i fulla fång dagg och doft på färden, gnistor, glömska och sång, allt, som förnyar världen.	Lovely, white Spring, you, as a starlit beam silently over the roads do go, lightly through the nocturnal mist. You, who give growth and sprouting of plants, you, who give sun and greenery, you grant, it is believed, to hearts all that they desire. Scatter with full arms dew and fragrance in your journey, sparks, forgetfulness and song, all that renews the world.
Men, o milda vår, minns, att du bärer förhoppning ock för det, som aldrig får mera tänka på knoppning: dröm, som i kamp blödt slut, löften långsamt förbrunna, trådar, som sakta nötts ut, hur fast de en gång varit spunna, strängar, som oförmärkt brustit, men länge måst skälfva, tankar, som stridit ock värkt, tills de left öfver sig själfva. Alla de vänta på dig, vänta till hvila bli burna, längta från uttrådd stig att varda aska i urna.	But, O gentle Spring, remember that you bear hope also for those who never can again think of budding: dreams, as in the battle bled completely; promises slowly burnt out; threads that slowly have worn out, how tightly they once were spun; strings which unnoticed have snapped, but long had to quiver; thoughts that have fought and ached until they have outlived themselves. All wait for you, wait until to rest they are borne, longing from the well-worn path to become ashes in urns.
Vackra, hvita vår, gjut din lycka kring staden, men där du strålande går, glöm ej de vissna bladen.	Lovely, white Spring, spread your joy throughout the town, but where you shimmering go, forget not the withered leaves.

— Oscar Levertin (1862–1906)
published in *Dikter: Tredje Samlingen* [Poems: Third Collection], 1901

Våren [Spring]
No. 2 from *Tolv melodier* [Twelve Melodies], opus 33 (1873–80)

by **Edvard Grieg** (1843–1907)
as arranged (1957) by **Paul J. Christiansen** (1914–1997)

In the nineteenth century, all Scandinavian culture was dominated by Denmark, with Copenhagen the most cosmopolitan city north of Germany. Grieg began his training at the prestigious German conservatory in Leipzig. Not until living in Copenhagen in the mid-1860s did Grieg first become exposed to the nationalist literature and heritage of his native Norway. Hence his most famous work, the early Piano Concerto of 1868, is essentially Germanic, but Norwegian folk melodies infuse the songs and piano miniatures for which he is also justly hailed. By the mid-1880s, Grieg was one of the most recognized musicians in northern Europe, touring regularly as pianist and conductor. He and his sometime collaborator, the playwright Henrik Ibsen, remain even today as the most recognized figures in Norwegian culture throughout the world.

We will present one of Grieg's most famous songs for solo voice and piano, *Våren*, often translated as *The Last Spring*. Here are all the hallmarks of Grieg's natural gift for lyricism, with delicate textures and subtly passing chromatic notes (pitches not found in the key). Our version was prepared by the great Minnesotan choral conductor Paul Christiansen. This unaccompanied arrangement deftly fills in some of the harmonies that the original song leaves spare, though using as a guide the version for string orchestra made by Grieg himself. Other than the melodic sopranos, the choir remains wordless until the central climax. The full ensemble drifts away into a wordless hum invoking the hope of summer.

> Yet once again I could see winter leave, and springtime advancing,
> Buds soon appeared on hedge and tree, and flowers were dancing.
> Life in its beauty once again I see, but must from it sever;
> Sad then of heart I wonder if this be the last spring forever.
> Green was the grass, and the flowers now shown forth, in brilliant array
> Once more I hear the joyous song of spring, and of summer.
>
> — after *Våren* (1859) by Aasmund Olavsson Vinge (1818–1870)

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- Profiles on individual choir members

Program notes and translations
by Gary D. Cannon

Program produced by Barb Fraley

Gary D. Cannon, Conductor

Gary D. Cannon is one of the Northwest's most dynamic choral personalities, active as a conductor, singer, composer and musicologist. He is, since 2008, Artistic Director of both the Cascadian Chorale and the Vashon Island Chorale. Also in 2008, the Early Music Guild invited him to found and direct a Renaissance choir, Sine Nomine. In 2010 he debuted as Principal Conductor of Vashon Opera, in performances of Copland's *The Tender Land*. He has been Chorusmaster for the Northwest Mahler Festival since 2001. He has served as Choir Director at Bethel Lutheran Church in Shoreline and at St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Lynnwood. Cannon has also conducted the Annas Bay Chamber Choir, the Kirkland Choral Society, and several ensembles at the University of Washington.

As a tenor, Cannon has appeared as a soloist with Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle Philharmonic, and the Auburn, Rainier, and Eastside symphony orchestras. He also sings regularly with The Tudor Choir and Choral Arts. He has performed with the Kronos Quartet, the Seattle Opera Chorus, and members of the Tallis Scholars. He sings frequently for video game and film soundtracks and trailers. Cannon is formerly an adjunct instructor at Whatcom Community College, where he received the Faculty Excellence Award. His musicological research emphasizes twentieth-century British music. He holds degrees from the University of California–Davis and the University of Washington, where he is currently researching a doctoral dissertation on the early life and works of William Walton.

Ingrid Verhulsdonk, Piano

Very active as a freelance accompanist in the area, Ingrid is also principal organist at Sacred Heart Church in Bellevue and accompanist for The Market Street Singers of Ballard. She holds degrees in piano performance from the University of Washington and the University of Hawaii. She is on staff at the University of Washington drama department and has been a regular accompanist with Northwest Opera In Schools, Etcetera (NOISE) and Cornish College of the Arts.

Linda Gingrich, Composer-in-Residence

Hilling Design

Linda Gingrich wears many hats as a musician—conductor, teacher, author, lecturer—but it is her work as a composer that has had the most far-reaching impact. Her compositions have been performed around the Puget Sound region and across the country by high school, college, youth, church and community choirs, and the score of at least one piece has been carried overseas to Iceland. She brings well-honed skill to her choral compositions due to her many years as a choral conductor and her instinctive, deeply ingrained sensitivity to the rhythm and beauty of words. And she sometimes unleashes a sense of humor and playfulness in her work which reveals her joy in music and makes her pieces a delight to sing.

Dr. Gingrich has D.M.A. and Master's degrees in choral conducting from the University of Washington and a Bachelor's degree in voice from Cornish College of the Arts. She is best known locally as the founder, conductor and artistic director of Master Chorus Eastside.

Cascadian Chorale Members

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Holly Allin	Carol Fielding	Christopher Fraley	Ken Black
Pinar Bosschaart	Joanne Hinkle	Corey Fujimoto	Dennis Kruse
Barb Fraley	Mary L'Hommedieu	Russ Jones *	David Nichols
Joscelyne Gray	Elfie Luther	Özer Özkaraoğlu	Trevor Tsang
Anita Gross	Tara O'Brien Pride *	Rick Thompson	Doug Wyatt *
Brenda Kruse	Katherine Robbs		
Paula Rattigan	Elaine Tsang	* Section Leader	
Cristina Sega			
Pamela Silimperi *			

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Gary D. Cannon
Artistic Director

Ingrid Verhulsdonk
Pianist

Linda Gingrich
Composer-in-Residence

Our Mission

is to express and nurture a love of choral music by:

- inspiring and educating our singers, our audience and the broader community;
- presenting quality performances of fine choral music from various historical, cultural and stylistic traditions; and
- collaborating with composers, professional musicians and other arts organizations.

Our Vision

a community engaged in great choral music performed with passion and skill.

Support Cascadian Chorale

The Cascadian Chorale is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Ticket sales cover only 30% of organizational costs, with gifts from supporters making up the remainder. Your tax-deductible gift is welcome and appreciated.

We can now accept online credit card donations via PayPal. Visit our website, www.CascadianChorale.org, and click on the "Donate" button.

For more information about making a donation to Cascadian Chorale, please contact our voicemail at 206-286-6028 or email Barb Fraley at president@CascadianChorale.org.

The Cascadian Chorale thanks the following people and organizations for their generous donations:

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Concluding "The Season of Seasons"

The morning sunrise, a day in the garden, a game of baseball… summer may be short-lived in the Northwest, but its pleasures are deeply loved. Samuel Barber's choral masterpiece, *Reincarnations*, captures both the season's calm and intense moments. Eric Whitacre's *A boy and a girl* depicts two young lovers alone at the beach. Music by Ástor Piazzolla, Harry Burleigh, Henk Badings, Randall Thompson, and the Cascadian Chorale's own Chris Fraley highlight various elements of the season. We will close the concert, and the season, with an overture: Composer-in-Residence Linda Gingrich's arrangement of Rossini's *William Tell Overture*. Surely there is no sunnier piece to celebrate the brilliance of summer!

Visit www.CascadianChorale.org for complete information and to purchase tickets.

2011-2012 Season

Save these dates for next season's concerts:

November 19 & 20, 2011
December 17 & 18, 2011
March 2012 TBD
June 2 & 3, 2012

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