



EMERALD

E N S E M B L E

THE TWO ELIZABETHS
MUSIC FIT FOR A MONARCH

Saturday, September 9, 2017

8:00 pm

Trinity Episcopal Parish

Seattle, Washington

Dr. Gary D. Cannon

Artistic Director

EMERALD ENSEMBLE

Our Mission:

The Emerald Ensemble enlightens the mind, uplifts the heart, and enriches the soul through great choral music presented with passion and skill. We envision a world made better through great choral music.

PERFORMING ARTISTS

Sopranos:

Holly Boaz

Maria Männistö

Brenna Wells

Altos:

Julia Benzinger

Emily Ostrom

Kathryn Weld

Tenors:

David Hendrix

Fred McIlroy

Ian Thomas

Basses:

Gustave Blazek

J. Scott Kovacs

Gabe Lewis-O'Connor

Dr. Gary D. Cannon, Artistic Director

J. Scott Kovacs, Executive Director

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The Emerald Ensemble is a Professional Choral Affiliate of the Byrd Ensemble.

PROGRAM

THE TWO ELIZABETHS Music Fit for a Monarch

Emerald Ensemble

Saturday, September 9, 2017

Dance, clarion air (1952)

Michael Tippett (1905–1998)

O Lord, give thy Holy Spirit (after 1566)

Weep, O mine eyes (1599)

Thomas Tallis (c.1505–1585)

John Bennet (c.1575–after 1614)

Mitte manum tuam (2006)

James MacMillan (b.1959)

Fair Phyllis I saw sitting all alone (1599)

O Lord, the maker of all thing

O Care, thou wilt despatch me (1600)

John Farmer (c.1570–c.1605)

William Mundy (c.1528–1591)

Thomas Weelkes (1576–1623)

The Song Sung True (2013)

Judith Weir (b.1954)

1. Sing 2. Song 3. Orpheus 4. Folk Music

intermission

Lullabye for Lucy (1981)

Peter Maxwell Davies (1934–2016)

Come, blessed bird (1601)

O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth (c.1570)

Arise, awake (1601)

Edward Johnson (fl.1572–1601)

William Byrd (c.1540–1623)

Thomas Morley (1557/8–1602)

Choral Dances, from *Gloriana* (1953)

1. Time 2. Concord 3. Time and Concord 4. Country Girls

5. Rustics and Fishermen 6. Final Dance of Homage

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

The Hills (1953)

Andrew Turner, from *Five Epigrams* (1960)

John Ireland (1879–1962)

Nicholas Maw (1935–2009)

White-flowering days (1953)

Gerald Finzi (1901–1956)

PROGRAM NOTES

British music has had the good fortune to flourish during the reigns of its two monarchs named Elizabeth: the First, who reigned 1558–1603, and the Second, who has served as queen since 1952. Tonight's concert celebrates the great British choral tradition by spotlighting those two eras.

Here in Seattle, the sacred polyphony of Renaissance England justifiably receives much attention. The music of **Thomas Tallis** and **William Byrd** is one of the artistic high points of the sixteenth century. We will present two of their less often heard church anthems. Tallis's *O Lord, give thy Holy Spirit* follows slightly conservative traditions, with syllabic text setting and a second section that repeats verbatim. *O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth*, by Byrd, expands this style somewhat. It may have been composed as an application to join the monarch's Chapel Royal. To these we add *O Lord, the maker of all thing* by **William Mundy**, with clear imitative entrances and a brief double-choir episode. In these three composers is found soft devotion not devoid of periodic vigor.

The reign of Queen Elizabeth I was characterized by an increasingly global outlook, including cultural exchanges with continental Europe. One of the most influential was a volume of Italian madrigals called *Musica transalpina*, published in England in 1588. Suddenly English composers began to write in the newly popular Italian style, as in **John Farmer's** ubiquitous *Fair Phyllis* and **John Bennet's** introspective *Weep, O mine eyes. O Care, thou wilt despatch me*, by **Thomas Weelkes**, is more high-falutin', with frequent chromatic lines and dissonant suspensions, yet still manages to include light "Fa-la-la" interludes.

In 1601, **Thomas Morley** initiated a volume of English madrigals to honor Elizabeth titled *The Triumphs of Oriana*. Each madrigal included the same final line of text: "Long live fair Oriana" (a common nickname for the queen). Morley himself contributed two works, including *Arise, awake. A lesser known contribution is Come, blessed bird*, by **Edward Johnson**. It is a little awkward at places, and all the more charming for it. All five of tonight's madrigals demonstrate the elaborate text-painting and rich emotions typical of the era.

Let us fast-forward 350 years. The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II was a party the like of which Britain had never seen. Postwar doldrums had just begun to lift, and the entire realm foresaw a new era of affluence both economic and cultural. The intervening sixty-five years have not disappointed, certainly as regards choral music. To commemorate the coronation in 1953, a new volume of madrigals, called *A Garland for the Queen*, was commissioned as a modern answer to *Triumphs of Oriana*. Among them are three works that we have chosen partly because they are strikingly different. **John Ireland's** *The Hills* is a gentle part-song, so conservative that it sounds almost Victorian, and *White-flowering days*, by

Gerald Finzi, explores richer veins of counterpoint, phrasing, structure, and harmony. On the other hand, *Dance, clarion air*, by **Michael Tippett**, is a joyous and harmonically adventurous romp from a leader of the avantgarde. In a rather grander vein, **Benjamin Britten** composed his coronation opera *Gloriana*. To begin Act Two, seventeenth-century rural townsfolk present a masque—a series of musical vignettes with dancing—in honor of the visiting monarch. Those snippets were later excerpted as a series of *Choral Dances*.

British music has flourished in the following decades. The four recent composers we will present are better known for their major works such as concertos and operas, but they have contributed richly to choral music. **Nicholas Maw's** humorous *Five Epigrams*, on brief poems of Robert Burns, demonstrates expanding harmonies. *The Lullaby for Lucy* by **Peter Maxwell Davies** commemorates the first child born in thirty-two years at the tiny hamlet of Rackwick in the Orkney Islands. The newborn's name, Lucy Rendall, forms an acrostic in George Mackay Brown's poem. In this work, Maxwell Davies challenged himself to use only the white keys of the piano, but the work still has modern fingerprints.

For ten years Maxwell Davies held the largely ceremonial title of Master of the Queen's Music; the holder traditionally composes for official royal functions such as weddings or state visits. His successor—and the first woman in the post—is the Scottish composer **Judith Weir**, who creates satisfyingly edgy harmonies while avoiding harshness for its own sake. The cycle *The Song Sung True* includes four texts about singing. She gives two modern poems music at times sparse, at times full. A Shakespearean text set to quartal harmony (based on fourths, rather than traditional thirds) follows, then a buoyant limerick that suddenly disappears into the mist. Choral music is more central to the output of another Scot, **James MacMillan**. *Mitte manum tuam* is part of his series of "Strathclyde motets" written for various Catholic churches in Scotland. The basses, in the role of Jesus directing Thomas to feel his wounds from crucifixion, are given Scotch snaps (grace notes on the beat) and other ornaments that ingeniously link Scotland to the Middle East amid an aura of awe and wonder.

Hence two remarkable eras from a musically remarkable land, and there are links between them. Gerald Finzi demands a phrasing and attention to text that the Renaissance masters knew well. James MacMillan puts in a modern context a devotion worthy of Tallis. Britten and Judith Weir manage to convey the same joy and lightness as madrigals of yore. History continues. One wonders what British music will be like in another 350 years, and what influence today's composers will have on the future. Perhaps, someday, an Elizabeth III will facilitate further cultural heights.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Dance, clarion air (1952)
Michael Tippett (1905–1998)

Dance, clarion air,
Shine, stones on the shore,
Swept in music by the ocean,
Shine, till all this island [is] a crown,
This island and [these] realms and territories,
Rememb'ring all than human is,
Sound with love and honour for a Queen.
O morning light, enfold a morning throne.
— Christopher Fry (1907–2005)

O Lord, give thy Holy Spirit (after 1566)
Thomas Tallis (c.1505–1585)

O Lord, give thy Holy Spirit into our hearts,
and lighten our understanding,
that we may dwell in the fear of thy name
all the days of our life:
that we may know thee, the only true God,
and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.
— from *Lidley's Prayers*, 1566

Weep, O mine eyes (1599)
John Bennet (c.1575–after 1614)

Weep, O mine eyes, and cease not.
Alas, these your spring-tides methinks increase not.
O when begin you to swell so high
that I may drown me in you.

Mitte manum tuam (2006)
James MacMillan (born 1959)

Mitte manum tuam,
et cognosce loca clavorum, alleluia:
et noli esse incredulus sed fidelis, alleluia.

Stretch out your hand,
and know the place of the nails, alleluia:
and be not unbelieving, but be faithful, alleluia:

— John 20:27

Fair Phyllis I saw sitting all alone (1599)
John Farmer (c.1570–c.1605)

Fair Phyllis I saw sitting all alone,
feeding her flock near to the mountainside.
The shepherds knew not whither she was gone,
but after her lover Amyntas hied.
Up and down he wandered, whilst she was missing.
When he found her, O then they fell a-kissing.

O Lord, the maker of all thing
William Mundy (c.1528–1591)

O Lord, the maker of all thing,
we pray thee now in this evening
us to defend through thy mercy
from all deceit of our enemy.

Let neither us deluded be,
Good Lord, with dream or fantasy,
our hearts waking in thee thou keep,
that we in sin fall not on sleep.

O Father, through thy blessed Son
grant us this our petition,
to whom with the Holy Ghost always
in heaven and earth be laud and praise.

O Care, thou wilt despatch me (1600)
Thomas Weelkes (1576–1623)

O Care, thou wilt despatch me,
if Music do not match thee.
So deadly dost thou sting me,
mirth only help can bring me.

Hence, Care, thou art too cruel.
Come, Music, sick man's jewel:
his force had well nigh slain me,
but thou must now sustain me.



The Song Sung True (2013)
Judith Weir (born 1954)

1. Sing

every single thing sings
everything sings
is singular
sings
in singularity sings and rings
tell the bell
the song sung true
sing everything
is a thing is a thing
is a thing is a thing
is a thing is a thing
sing

— Alan Spence (born 1947)

2. Song

the littlest bird
sang all for me
its song was love
it set me free
sang at my birth
sang at my death
it sang its song
with my last breath
the littlest bird
sang in my soul
its song was joy
it made me whole
it made me whole
it set me free
it sang its song
its song was me

— Alan Spence

3. Orpheus

Orpheus with his lute made trees,
and the mountain tops that freeze,
bow themselves when he did sing.
To his music, plants and flowers
ever sprung: as sun and showers,
there had made a lasting spring.
Every thing that heard him play,
even the billows of the sea,

hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art,
killing care, and grief of heart,
fall asleep, or hearing die.

— From *Henry V* (1613), attributed as a partnership
between William Shakespeare (1564–1616) and John Fletcher
(1579–1625)

4. Folk Music

There was an old man of the Isles,
Whose face was pervaded with smiles;
He sang “High dum diddle”,
And played on the fiddle,
That amiable man of the Isles.

— Edward Lear (1812–1888)

Lullabye for Lucy (1981)
Peter Maxwell Davies (1934–2016)

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)

*For Artistic Director Gary D. Cannon's extended program notes, use
your mobile device to scan the QR code below:*



Come, blessed bird (1601)
Edward Johnson (fl.1572–1601)

Come, blessed bird, and with thy sugared relish
help our declining choir now to embellish,
for Bonnyboots, that so aloft would fetch it,
O, he is dead, and none of us can reach it.
Then tune to us, sweet bird, thy shrill recorder,
Elpin and I and Dorus,
for fault of better, will serve in the chorus:
Begin and we will follow thee in order.
Then sang the woodborn minstrel of Diana:
“Long live fair Oriana.”

O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth (c.1570)
William Byrd (c.1540–1623)

O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth our
queen to rejoice in thy strength;
give her her heart’s desire,
and deny not the request of her lips;
but prevent* her with thine everlasting blessing,
and give her a long life, e’en for ever and ever. Amen.

— after Psalm 21

* prevent = protect



visit our web site for venue and program details
www.CascadianChorale.org

What Cheer

Saturday, Dec. 4, 7:30 pm – Redmond
Sunday, Dec. 5, 3:30 pm – Medina

Shall We Dance?

Saturday, April 7, 7:30 pm – Medina
Sunday, April 8, 3:30 pm – Redmond

Stormy Weather

Saturday, June 2, 7:30 pm – Redmond
Sunday, June 3, 3:30 pm – Medina

**Cascadian
Chorale**

Gary D. Cannon, Artistic Director

Arise, awake (1601)
Thomas Morley (1557/8—1602)

Arise, awake, you silly shepherds sleeping;
devise some honour for her sake,
by mirth to banish weeping.
Lo, where she comes in gaudy green arraying,
a prince of beauty rich and rare for her delighting
pretends to go a-maying.
You stately nymphs, draw near,
and strew your paths with roses;
In you her trust reposes.
Then sang the shepherds and nymphs of Diana:
“Long live fair Oriana.”

Choral Dances, from *Gloriana*, (1953)
Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

1. Time

Yes he is Time,
Lusty and blithe!
Time is at his apogee!
Although you thought to see
A bearded ancient with a scythe.

No reaper he
That cries “Take heed!”
Time is at his apogee!
Young and strong in his prime!
Behold the sower of the seed!

2. Concord

Concord is here,
Our days to bless
And this our land to endue
With plenty, peace and happiness.

Concord and Time
Each needeth each:
The ripest fruit hangs where
Not one, but only two can reach.



3. Concord and Time

From springs of bounty,
Through this county,
Streams abundant
Of thanks shall flow.

Where life was scanty,
Fruits of plenty
Swell resplendent
From earth below!

No Greek nor Roman
Queenly woman
Knew such favour
From Heav'n above.

At she whose presence
Is our pleasance,
Gloriana, Gloriana
Hath all our love!

4. Country Girls

Sweet flag and cuckoo-flower,
Cowslip and columbine,
Kingcups and sops-in-wine,
Flowers-de-luce and calaminth,
Harebell and hyacinth,
Myrtle and bay,
With rosemary between,
Norfolk's own garlands for her Queen.

5. Rustics and Fishermen

From fen and meadow
In rushy baskets
They bring ensamples of all they grow.
In earthen dishes
Their deep-sea fishes;
Yearly fleeces,
Woven blankets;
New cream and junkets,
And rustic trinkets
On wicker flaskets,
Their country largess,
The best they know.

6. Final Dance of Homage

These tokens of our love receiving,
O take them, Princess great and dear,
From Norwich city you are leaving,
That you afar may feel us near.

— William Plomer (1903–1973)

The Hills (1953)

John Ireland (1879–1962)

How calm, how constant are the hills!
How green and white and golden in the summer light!
Their lakes, their leaping wells are bright
With flow'r, leaf, and rain,
And their profounder rivers run
From rocks that are the altars of the sun.

How calm, how constant are the hills!
Our time's dark gale of ice and fire
Thunders around them, but removes them never.
No tempest overthrows their strong humility.
They are both god and temple,
And their stones are holy, the earth's enduring thrones.

How calm, how constant are the hills!

— James Kirkup (1918–2009)

Andrew Turner, from *Five Epigrams* (1960)

Nicholas Maw (1935–2009)

In seventeen hunder' and forty-nine,
Satan took stuff to mak' a swine
And cuist* it in a corner.
But wilily he changed his plan
And shaped it something like a man
And ca'd* it Andrew Turner.

— Robert Burns (1759–1796)

* cuist = cast // ca'd = called



White-flowering days (1953)

Gerald Finzi (1901–1956)

Now the white-flowering days,
The long days of blue and golden light,
Wake nature’s music round the land; now plays
The fountain of all sweetness; all our ways
Are touched with wonder, swift and bright.

This is the star, the bell
While fields of emerald rise, and orchards flower
Brown nooks with white and red, this is the spell
Of timeless dream; Avilion,* happy dell!
The legendary, lovely bower.

Now the bold children run
By wild brooks and woods where year on year
Tall trembling bluebells take their stand; now none
Is bloomless, none quite songless; such a sun
Renews our journey far or near.

Old England of the shires,
Meadowy land of heath and forest ground
And lawny knoll, land of gray towers and spires,
Fairly thy season sings our hearts’ desires
Fulfilled in queenly beauty youngly crowned.

— Edmund Blunden (1896–1974)

* Avilion = Avalon, a fertile island valley in Arthurian legend



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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dr. Gary D. Cannon is one of the Seattle area’s most versatile choral personalities, active as conductor, musicologist, and singer. He is co-founder, Artistic Director, and conductor of the Emerald Ensemble.

Since 2008, Dr. Cannon has served as conductor and Artistic Director of two prominent community choirs. The Cascadian Chorale, a chamber choir based in the Eastside suburb of Bellevue, performs a breadth of mostly unaccompanied repertoire including many premieres of works by local composers. The Vashon Island Chorale, numbering 80–100 singers, is a focal point of its island’s arts community. At the invitation of the Early Music Guild, he founded and directed a Renaissance choir, Sine Nomine (2008–15). He has three times conducted for Vashon Opera. Equally comfortably directing professional and volunteer ensembles, Dr. Cannon has also conducted Anna’s Bay Chamber Choir, Choral Arts, Earth Day Singers, Kirkland Choral Society, Northwest Mahler Festival, Seattle Praetorius Singers, several choirs at the University of Washington, and others.

Dr. Cannon lectures for Seattle Symphony and has provided written program notes for choirs across the country. His research and writing topics span music of nine centuries, with special emphasis on William Walton and other twentieth-century English composers. He taught at Whatcom Community College (2004–6), where he received the Faculty Excellence Award. As a tenor, he has appeared as a soloist with Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle Philharmonic, and the Auburn, Eastside, Rainier, and Sammamish Symphony Orchestras, as well as Byrd Ensemble, Canonici, Les Chanterelles, Choral Arts, Master Chorus Eastside, St. James Cathedral Cantorei, Seattle Bach Choir, and Tudor Choir. A California native, Dr. Cannon holds degrees from the University of California at Davis and the University of Washington.



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UPCOMING EVENTS



SEATTLE SINGS!

*The Third Biennial Choral Festival of the
Greater Seattle Choral Consortium*

Saturday, October 14, 2017, at 11:40 am

Come hear the Emerald Ensemble along with 34 other choruses as they take part in this celebration of choral music in Seattle! Come to hear the Emerald Ensemble and stay to listen to the many other wonderful choirs that sing throughout the day. More information at www.seattlesings.org.



LOVE SONGS

Featuring Brahms' Liebeslieder & Neue Liebeslieder

Wednesday, February 14, 2018, at 7:30 pm
Resonance at SOMA Towers, Bellevue

Come celebrate Valentine's Day with an intimate evening of music and love. Experience solo art songs along with Brahms' beloved *Liebeslieder* and *Neue Liebeslieder* waltzes accompanied by wine, chocolate, and flowers! (Ticket purchase includes your first glass of wine or champagne!)



FINLANDIA

Celebrating the choral heritage of Finland

Saturday, May 19, 2018, at 8:00 pm
Vashon Methodist Church, Vashon

Sunday, May 20, 2018, at 4:30 pm
Nordic Heritage Museum, Seattle

The Nordic Heritage Museum presents the Emerald Ensemble in the inauguration of their new concert hall! Our concert takes its name from Jean Sibelius' eponymous hymn composed in 1899.

THE PERFORMING ARTISTS



Julia Benzinger
Mezzo-Soprano



Gus Blazek
Bass



Holly Boaz
Soprano



David Hendrix
Tenor



J. Scott Kovacs
Bass-Baritone



Gabe Lewis-O'Connor
Baritone



Maria Männistö
Soprano



Fred McIlroy
Tenor



Emily Ostrom
Mezzo-Soprano



Ian Thomas
Tenor



Kathryn Weld
Mezzo-Soprano



Brenna Wells
Soprano

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