



New Amsterdam Singers
Fiftieth Anniversary
Clara Longstreth, Music Director

Rejoice in the Lamb
A Century of Choral Favorites



New Amsterdam Singers
Clara Longstreth, Music Director
Bryan Zaros, Assistant Conductor
Nathaniel Granor, Chamber Chorus Assistant Conductor
Pen Ying Fang, Piano
Raymond Nagem, Organist

Saint Ignatius of Antioch Church
554 West End Avenue, New York City
Wednesday, May 30, 2018 at 8 p.m.

Nunc dimittis Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)
Lauren Goff, soprano soloist

Concord; Time and Concord (from *Gloriana*)
Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Green Broom (from *Five Flower Songs*) Benjamin Britten
Nathaniel Granor, conductor

I See; Do You Believe? (from *Three Spirituals*)
Robert S. Cohen (b. 1945)
The Chamber Chorus

The Wave Rises Ben Moore (b. 1960)

On Life

So the days pass
I want to appear a success
But when the self speaks to the self
Now is life very solid

On Beauty

It was nothing of course

On Death

And in me too

Pen Ying Fang, piano
Commissioned by New Amsterdam Singers
in honor of its founder and Music Director, Clara Longstreth
on the occasion of the chorus's 50th anniversary

Intermission

Rejoice in the Lamb

Benjamin Britten

Rejoice in God, O ye tongues

For I will consider my Cat, Jeoffry

Clara Schuhmacher, soprano soloist

For the Mouse is a creature of great personal valor

Robin Beckhard, alto soloist

For the flowers are great blessings

Scott Wilson, tenor soloist

For I am under the same accusation with my Savior

For H is a Spirit

Jason Hill, bass soloist

For the instruments are by their rhimes

Hallelujah from the heart of God

Raymond Nagem, organ

Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal

Trad., arr. Alice Parker (b. 1925)

Rachel Georges, soprano soloist

Bryan Zaros, conductor

Unclouded Day

Rev. J. K. Alwood (1828–1909)

arr. Shawn Kirchner (b. 1970)

*Please turn off all phones and other devices during the performance.
The use of cameras (including smart phones) and recording devices
during the performance is prohibited.*

PROGRAM NOTES, TEXTS, AND TRANSLATIONS

The Estonian composer **Arvo Pärt** has been the most performed living composer in the world for the past seven years, according to his publisher. This is remarkable, given his austere beautiful style, sometimes called “holy minimalism.” He has also won many awards, including a Grammy in 2014 for best recorded choral performance.

Pärt began studying at a music school at age nine but left to fulfill his military service, playing oboe and percussion in the army band. Later he entered the Tallinn Conservatory, graduating in 1963. He first wrote in a neoclassical style, then embraced serialism for a short while. These serial works were banned by the Soviet government but were also a creative dead end for him. Pärt’s reaction to the murder in 2006 of Russian investigative journalist Anna Politkovskaya was to announce that all works of his performed in 2006-2007 would be in her honor.

For many years, Pärt did not compose at all, instead studying Gregorian chant and medieval and Renaissance music. He experienced a spiritual awakening, converting from the Lutheran faith to the Russian Orthodox Church. Pärt emigrated to Vienna, then Germany, and finally returned to Estonia. The year 1977 marked the time when he found his voice in a new style, influenced by the sound of bells, which he called Tintinnabuli. Here one finds very simple harmony, with triads, some single notes, some drones, and little change in tempo. One early work in this style was his *Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten* (a composer he much admired).

Pärt’s popularity in the West dates from the 1980s. The conductor Paul Hillier wrote his biography of Pärt in 1997 after conducting many of his works. NAS has sung several of Pärt’s works, including his *Magnificat* and *Which Was the Son of*. Today’s work, from 2001, is *Nunc dimittis*. From a single bass note, Pärt gradually builds up a minor triad. Voices enter and depart seamlessly, with an occasional melody emerging. There is one climax on the word “lumen” (light) in which the voices divide into eight parts.

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine,
secundum verbum tuum in pace, quia
viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum,
quod parasti ante faciem omnium
populorum, lumen ad revelationem
gentium et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.

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 lighten the Gentiles, and the glory
of thy people Israel.

Benjamin Britten was born in England in 1913 on November 22, the name day of St. Cecilia, patron saint of music. After a boyhood in which he composed prolifically, he attended the Royal College of Music, which he found frustratingly parochial and conservative. In his early twenties, Britten found useful employment writing music for plays and for documentary films made by the General Post Office. In the poet and film scriptwriter W.H. Auden, he found a collaborator with whom he undertook many early projects. Auden wrote of

Britten, “What immediately struck me was his extraordinary musical sensitivity in relation to the English language.... Here at last was a composer who could set the language without undue distortion.”

Britten was a prolific composer, at ease with music for instruments (chamber and orchestral works), solo voice, opera, and chorus. He wrote the opera *Gloriana* in 1953 on the subject of Queen Elizabeth I and her relationship with the Earl of Essex. The choral dances from the opera are sung by the Queen’s subjects, paying tribute to their Queen. We sing two of the six dances.

2. Concord

Concord, Concord is here
Our days to bless
And this our land to endue with plenty, peace, and happiness.
Concord, Concord and Time
Concord and Time
Each needeth each:
The ripest fruit hangs where
Not one, but only two can reach.

3. Time and Concord

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

Britten’s *Five Flower Songs* were written in 1950 for friends (and philanthropists) on their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. *Green Broom* is the last of the set, and uses an anonymous folk text. One voice at a time carries the melody, while the rest of the chorus provides a guitar-like accompaniment. From a hesitating start, the verses grow more and more bold, as the boy who cuts broom weds his fine “lady in bloom.”

There was an old man liv’d out in the wood,
And his trade was a-cutting of broom, green broom.

He had but one son without thought without good
Who lay in his bed till 'twas noon, bright noon.

The old man awoke one morning and spoke.
He swore he would fire the room, that room,
If his John would not rise and open his eyes,
And away to the wood to cut broom, green broom.

So Johnny arose and slipp'd on his clothes
And away to the wood to cut broom, green broom.
He sharpen'd his knives and for once he contrives
To cut a great bundle of broom, green broom.

When Johnny pass'd under a lady's fine house,
Pass'd under a lady's fine room, fine room,
She call'd to her maid: "Go fetch me," she said,
"Go fetch me the boy that sells broom, green broom!"

When Johnny came into the Lady's fine house,
And stood in the lady's fine room, fine room, fine room,
"Young Johnny," she said, "Will you give up your trade
And marry a lady in bloom, full bloom?"

Johnny gave his consent, and to church they both went,
And he wedded the Lady in bloom, full bloom;
At market and fair, all folks do declare,
There's none like the Boy that sold broom, green broom!

The Chamber Chorus concludes its group with two selections from a 2005 set called *Three Spirituals* by **Robert S. Cohen**. New Jersey resident Cohen has written in many forms but has had special success with works for singers, in oratorios or musical comedy. His *Alzheimer's Stories*, a commission from the Susquehanna Valley Chorale, was written in 2009 and has had performances across the United States and Europe. His *Suburb the Musical* won an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and has been performed in dozens of theaters. In today's piece, the poem *I see* by Maria Seigenthaler speaks in the voice of an infant. *Do You Believe?* is a comedic spoof on the idea of belief, with a jazz or doo-wop flavor.

1. "I See"

I saw
I saw the light
Before I knew to call it light
I saw the light
At the moment I was born
And I cried for the darkness

For the soft smooth darkness
The darkness that had been my only home.

Then I felt the cold
Before I knew to call it cold
I felt the cold
And I wailed out for the warm
The warm and the closeness
Of the soft smooth darkness
And the rhythm of the comfort I had known.

Then I felt the love
Before I knew to call it love
I felt the love
As she touched and held and fed me.
Then I welcomed in the light
For the love was in the light
Where I came to see that I was not alone
In the light I saw that I am not alone.

2. “Do You Believe?”

Do you believe in the brawn of the brawny tree?
Do you believe in the power of the powerful sea?
In the midey midey bite of the idy bidy flea?
Do you believe?

Do you believe there is justice in the jungle wild?
Do you believe there is bedlam in the meadow mild?
That there's a little bit a evil even in the sweetest child?
Do you believe?

Do you believe a piranha can be a pussy cat?
Do you believe a pampered poodle can be a sewer rat?
That the sluggish of slugs can be an acrobat?
Hey, you there!
Do you dare believe the star that shines like a beacon every night blinked out
years upon years and years ago.
And that the wisest of wisest men just may not know the one true answer that
you alone know.

OR

Do you believe in the knowers and the truth they spout?
Do you believe in the insiders and revere their clout?
Do you believe they know what every little thing is all about?
Or do you dare to put your faith in doubt?
What...do you believe?

Ben Moore is an artist of multiple talents, a painter with an MFA from Parsons School of Design, and a composer whose works have received praise from the press and commissions from producers and singers. He has written musical theater pieces, chamber music, cabaret songs, and choral music. His three operas have been performed at Glimmerglass and at Palm Beach Opera. The list of renowned singers who have sung, commissioned, or recorded his songs is extensive: Deborah Voigt, Susan Graham, Nathan Gunn, Frederica von Stade, Audra McDonald, and Robert White. Moore also received a commission from the Marilyn Horne Foundation. Upcoming performances of his operas include *Enemies, a Love Story* at Kennedy Opera in November 2018, and *Odyssey* at Seattle Opera in March 2019.

NAS has sung two Moore works before this 50th Anniversary commission: *Dear Theo*, a moving portrait of Vincent van Gogh through letters to his brother, Theo, and the *Lake Isle of Innisfree*, which we took on tour to Iceland and Denmark in 2017. Ben Moore has written his own notes on his new piece:

My fascination with Virginia Woolf began not from reading one of her books or essays but from seeing a PBS Masterpiece Theatre broadcast in 1991 featuring Eileen Atkins. Atkins played Woolf in an adaptation of the extended essay “A Room of One’s Own,” which was based on a series of lectures Woolf delivered to female students at Cambridge University. I was bowled over by the clear, self-assured insights into literature and women’s rights that Woolf articulated. “A Room of One’s Own” seemed revelatory to me even in 1991, yet was penned in the 1920s. Subsequently I discovered the extraordinary range of literary styles Woolf had mastered, from tightly argued nonfiction to intimate novels and experimental stream-of-consciousness works.

For all its variety, certain philosophical issues in Woolf’s work recur over and over: conundrums of life that have preoccupied writers across time and cultures but which Woolf distills in deeply perceptive ways. For *The Wave Rises* I chose excerpts from her writings on the themes of life, beauty and death, including the last paragraph from her novel *The Waves*. For me, these passages, if not solving life’s puzzles, succeed in presenting them in the most personal and meaningful ways. Woolf’s struggles inform our own lives and her experience helps us to feel less isolated.

Sometimes I’m asked how I go about choosing text to set to music. For me, the first consideration is how deeply and immediately the text touches me emotionally. Because of Woolf’s multiple mental breakdowns and ultimate suicide, one might be inclined to view her as a nihilist. Yet I have been moved by her fierce determination to live life to its fullest. In 2016 I traveled to England and walked through the rooms of Woolf’s homes south of London. That experience further deepened my feeling of connection to her life and work. In *The Wave Rises* I’ve juxtaposed passages that express her anguish and joy in the face of life’s sorrows and distractions, her experience of the world’s

fleeting beauty and her proud defiance of death itself.

Most serious vocal works set poetry, but works setting prose are not unheard of. Examples include Libby Larsen's song cycle *Try Me Good King* and my own "Dear Theo" (performed by NAS in past seasons), based on passages from Van Gogh's letters. I found Woolf's prose quite amenable to the process of musicalization with its graceful logic, poetic imagery and mellifluous rhythms of speech. In each musical section of *The Wave Rises* I tried to employ melodies and harmonic progressions that might illuminate Woolf's journey.

On Life

So the days pass and I ask myself sometimes whether one is not hypnotized, as a child by a silver globe, by life; and whether this is living. It's very quick, bright, exciting. But superficial perhaps. I should like to take the globe in my hands and feel it quietly, round, smooth, heavy, and so hold it, day after day.

(In a diary entry for November 28, 1928)

I want to appear a success even to myself. Yet I don't get to the bottom of it. It's having no children, living away from friends, failing to write well, spending too much on food, growing old. I think too much of whys and wherefores; too much of myself. I don't like time to flap round me. Well then, work.

(Diary, October, 1919)

But when the self speaks to the self, who is speaking? The entombed soul, the spirit driven in, in to the central catacomb; the self that took the veil and left the world – a coward perhaps, yet somehow beautiful, as it flits with its lantern restlessly up and down the dark corridors.

(From the collection "Monday or Tuesday," in "An Unwritten Novel," 1921)

Now is life very solid or very shifting? I am haunted by the two contradictions. This has gone on for ever; will last for ever; goes down to the bottom of the world – this moment I stand on. Also it is transitory, flying, diaphanous. I shall pass like a cloud on the waves. Perhaps it may be that though we change, one flying after another, so quick, so quick, yet we are somehow successive and continuous we human beings, and show the light through. But what is the light?

(From A Writer's Diary, Friday, January 4, 1929)

On Beauty

...it was nothing of course but a fancy – that the lilac was shaking its flowers over the garden walls, and the brimstone butterflies were scudding hither and thither, and the dust of the pollen was in the air. A wind blew, from what quarter I know not, but it lifted the half-grown leaves so that there was a flash of silver grey in the air. It was the time between the lights when colours undergo their intensification and purples and golds burn in window-panes like the beat of an excitable heart; when for some reason the beauty of the world revealed and yet soon to perish...the beauty of the world which is so soon to perish, has two edges, one of laughter, one of anguish, cutting the heart asunder.

(From "A Room of One's Own," 1929)

On Death

And in me too the wave rises. It swells; it arches its back. I am aware once more of a new desire, something rising beneath me like the proud horse whose rider first spurs and then pulls him back. What enemy do we now perceive advancing against us, you whom I ride now, as we stand pawing this stretch of pavement? It is death. *Death is the enemy*. It is death against whom I ride with my spear couched and my hair flying back like a young man's, like Percival's, when he galloped in India. I strike spurs into my horse. *Against you I will fling myself, unvanquished and unyielding, O Death!*

The waves broke on the shore.

(From "The Waves," 1931)

We return to Benjamin Britten and his iconic work for chorus, soloists, and organ, *Rejoice in the Lamb*, written in 1943. In *The Britten Companion*, Antony Milner discusses Britten's approach when writing for amateur singers – which applies perfectly to *Rejoice in the Lamb*:

"He employed basically uncomplicated material in ways that led the performers out of traditional habits into new awareness of the musical possibilities of the English language, thus persuading them to accept styles and treatment that they would previously have rejected."

Britten found especially colorful language in the poetry of Christopher Smart. The eighteenth-century poet Smart was a religious mystic who was confined to an asylum for seven years. While there, he wrote an extended poem, *Jubilate Agno*. The poem was not published until 1939, when fragments of the manuscript were rediscovered. Britten chose to set some of the most startling and brilliant of Smart's images of Old Testament figures, animals, and instruments praising God.

Rejoice in the Lamb opens with an unusual extended pedal tone for all voices in unison on middle C. This hushed, expectant opening leads to an exuberant section of uneven meters (5/8, 7/8, etc.) and changing keys. The third section is a "Hallelujah" in dotted rhythm which seems inspired by Henry Purcell. A soprano solo next praises the grace of the cat; the sinuous organ accompaniment depicts the animal's "elegant quickness." A contralto solo marked *leggiere* praises the mouse's courage and fidelity; a tenor solo praises the language of flowers in long-breathed lines. The seventh section is the emotional core of the work, a passionate chorus to the words, "For I am under the same accusation with my Savior. For they said, he is besides himself." This lament leads to a short mystical bass solo and then a dance-like (*vivace*) final movement in which the organ holds a 53-measure sustained pedal tone on the note F, while the harmonies change above it. The dance slows and is replaced by a mood of hushed ecstasy leading to a reprise of the "Hallelujah."

Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues;

Give the glory to the Lord,

And the Lamb.

Nations, and languages,
And every Creature,
In which is the breath of Life.
Let man and beast appear before him,
And magnify his name together.

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter,
Bind a leopard to the altar
And consecrate his spear to the Lord.

Let Ishmail dedicate a tyger,
And give praise for the liberty
In which the Lord has let him at large.

Let Balaam appear with an ass,
And bless the Lord his people
And his creatures for a reward eternal.

Let Daniel come forth with a lion,
And praise God with all his might
Through faith in Christ Jesus.

Let Ithamar minister with a chamois,
And bless the name of Him,
That cloatheth the naked.

Let Jakim with the satyr
Bless God in the dance,
Dance, dance, dance.

Let David bless with the bear
The beginning of victory to the Lord,
To the Lord the perfection of excellence.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnifical and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

For I will consider my Cat Jeoffry.
For he is the servant of the living God,
Duly and daily serving him.
For at the first glance
Of the glory of God in the East

He worships in his way.
For this is done by wreathing his body
Seven times round with elegant quickness.
For he knows that God is his saviour.
For God has bless'd him
In the variety of his movements.
For there is nothing sweeter
Than his peace when at rest.

For I am possessed of a cat,
Surpassing in beauty,
From whom I take occasion
To bless Almighty God.

**For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.**

For this is a true case—
Cat takes female mouse,
Male mouse will not depart,
but stands threat'ning and daring.
If you will let her go,
I will engage you,
As prodigious a creature as you are.

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For the Mouse is of
An hospitable disposition.

For the flowers are great blessings.

For the flowers have their angels,
Even the words of God's creation.
For the flower glorifies God
And the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For the flowers are peculiarly
The poetry of Christ.

**For I am under the same accusation
With my Savior,**

For they said,
He is besides himself.
For the officers of the peace
Are at variance with me,
And the watchman smites me
With his staff.

For Silly fellow!
Is against me,
And belongeth neither to me
Nor to my family.
For I am in twelve HARSHIPS,
But he that was born of a virgin
Shall deliver me out of all.

For H is a spirit

And therefore he is God.
For K is king
And therefore he is God.
For L is love
And therefore he is God.
For M is musick
And therefore he is God.

For the instruments are by their rhimes.

For the Shawm rhimes are lawn fawn moon boon and the like.
For the harp rhimes are sing ring string and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are bell well toll soul and the like.
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth suit mute and the like.
For the Bassoon rhimes are pass class and the like.
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place beat heat and the like.
For the Clarinet rhimes are clean seen and the like.
For the trumpet rhimes are sound bound soar more and the like.

For the TRUMPET of God is a blessed intelligence
And so are all the instruments in HEAVEN.
For GOD the Father Almighty plays upon the HARP
Of stupendous magnitude and melody.
For at that time malignity ceases
And the devils themselves are at peace.
For this time is perceptible to man
By a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.

Hallelujah from the heart of God,

And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnifical and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Alice Parker is a legend in her own time: a composer, conductor, and teacher honored for a lifetime of creativity in all aspects of music. For twenty years she was the main arranger for the Robert Shaw Chorale. The list of works she composed or arranged comes to 500 titles, including hundreds of commissions. In 1985 she founded Melodious Accord, a 16-voice professional chorus which recorded 14 albums. Still active, she lives in Massachusetts. *Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal* is a traditional hymn on a tune named *Invitation*. Parker's joyful arrangement includes the refrain "Hallelujah," set in a simpler style than Britten's mystical Hallelujah, but not without its own rhythmic puzzles.

Hark, I hear the harps eternal
Ringing on the farther shore,
As I near those swollen waters,
With their deep and solemn roar.

Refrain:

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah, praise the lamb!
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Glory to the great I AM!

And my soul, though stained with sorrow,
Fading as the light of day,
Passes swiftly o'er those waters,
To the city far away.

Souls have cross'd before me, saintly,
To that land of perfect rest;
And I hear them singing faintly
In the mansions of the blest.

Another American composer known for skillful arrangements is **Shawn Kirchner**, who lives in Los Angeles and enjoys a long-time collaboration with the Master Chorale there. He has received many commissions, including one from the Brethren Sanctuary Choir for its 2010 tour to Hungary, for *Unclouded Day*, our final piece. Kirchner, born 45 years after Alice Parker, arranged the work as the first movement of *Heavenly Home: Three American Songs*.

The words and music of *Unclouded Day* were written by the Rev. J.K. Alwood (1828–1909), a circuit rider, carpenter, and minister. Born in Ohio, he moved to Michigan in 1879. His well-known hymn, also called a gospel hymn, appears in 41 hymnals, including the *African-American Heritage Hymnal*, an example of the cross-fertilization between the white gospel tradition and the black gospel tradition. In Kirchner's notes on his arrangement, he mentions combining traditional bluegrass with counterpoint and fugue in the eight-part piece.

O they tell me of a home far beyond the skies,
They tell me of a home far away,
And they tell me of a home
Where no storm-clouds rise:
O they tell me of an unclouded day

Chorus:

O the land of cloudless days
O the land of an unclouded sky,
O they tell me of a home
Where no storm-clouds rise:
O they tell me of an unclouded day.

O they tell me of a home
Where my friends have gone,
They tell me of a land far away,
Where the tree of life in eternal bloom
Sheds its fragrance through the unclouded day.

They tell me of a King in His beauty there
They tell me that mine eyes shall behold
Where He sits on a throne
That is bright as the sun
In the city that is made of gold!

Notes © Clara Longstreth 2018

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NAS Online

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Jason Hill*
Philip Holmgren**
Steve Holtje*
Michael Landy*
John Leuenhagen
Michael Milton
David Ortiz*
Robert Palmer
Michael Zimmerman

*Chamber chorus

**Chamber chorus only

About the Artists

NEW AMSTERDAM SINGERS, now in its 50th year, is known for the breadth and variety of its repertoire. Specializing in a *cappella* and double chorus works, the chorus sings music ranging from the sixteenth century through contemporary pieces, including many it has commissioned. In addition to the works by Carol Barnett, Lisa Bielawa, and Ben Moore commissioned for the group's 50th anniversary, recent world premieres include compositions by Matthew Harris, Paul Alan Levi, Elizabeth Lim, Robert Paterson, and Ronald Perera. American and New York City premieres in the current decade have included works by Robert Paterson, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Matthew Harris, Abbie Betinis, Steven Stucky, Kirke Mechem, Stephen Sametz, Kitty Brazelton, Clare Maclean, Alex Weiser, Sheena Phillips, and Judith Shatin. In 2016 NAS performed Frank Martin's oratorio *Golgotha* with professional orchestra and soloists as guests of Trinity Church Wall Street. This concert, under the direction of Clara Longstreth, marked the first time the work was heard in New York City in over sixty years.

NAS has performed with the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein, at Alice Tully Hall as a guest of Clarion Concerts, and with the American-Russian Youth Orchestra under Leon Botstein at Tanglewood and Carnegie Hall. NAS appeared with Anonymous Four and the Concordia Orchestra in Richard Einhorn's *Voices of Light* at Avery Fisher Hall, under Marin Alsop, in 1999, and in 2006 NAS performed *Voices of Light* at the Winter Garden of the World Financial Center, with Anonymous Four and Ensemble Sospeso under David Hattner, for broadcast on WNYC's *New Sounds*.

NAS appears internationally under Ms. Longstreth's direction. The chorus has sung at the Irakleion Festival in Greece; the Granada Festival in Spain; the International Choral Festival at Miedzyzdroje, Poland; the Festival of the Algarve in Portugal; Les Chorégies d'Orange in France; and the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod in Wales. Recent tours have found the chorus appearing in Turkey, Scandinavia, Croatia, Spain, Russia and the Baltics, Argentina and Uruguay, South Africa, Greece, and most recently Iceland and Denmark in 2017. In 2010 NAS was pleased to receive permission from the State and Treasury Departments to tour Cuba on a cultural visa.

CLARA LONGSTRETH is the founder and Music Director of New Amsterdam Singers and has led the group for all fifty of its seasons. Under her direction, NAS has become known as one of the premier avocational choruses in New York City. Of Ms. Longstreth's programs, Allan Kozinn wrote in *The New York Times*: "When a director takes up the challenge of building a cohesive program around a broad theme, we are reminded that programming can be an art."

Ms. Longstreth studied conducting with G. Wallace Woodworth at Harvard University and with Richard Westenburg at the Juilliard School, from which she received her Master's Degree. She has also studied with Amy Kaiser and Semyon Bychkov at the Mannes College of Music, and with Helmuth Rilling at the Oregon Bach Festival. Ms. Longstreth has been a frequent adjudicator at choral conferences, and was selected to present a lecture-

demonstration on “Adventures in Programming” at the Eastern Division Convention of the American Choral Directors Association. In 2009 she received an Alumnae Recognition Award from Radcliffe College for her founding and longtime direction of New Amsterdam Singers. Ms. Longstreth has also served on the faculty of Rutgers University, and as a guest conductor of the Limón Dance Company, the Mannes College Orchestra, and the popular Messiah Sing-In performances at Avery Fisher Hall. She has led New Amsterdam Singers on fifteen international tours.

BRYAN ZAROS is a native New Yorker who received a Bachelor of Music in Sacred Music from Westminster Choir College and a Master of Music in Conducting from the University of Michigan. He is currently a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting at the Manhattan School of Music. Bryan began his professional musical training as a member of the Metropolitan Opera Children’s Chorus and as a boy chorister at The Church of the Transfiguration NYC. At sixteen he was appointed the Assistant Choirmaster at Transfiguration while also serving as the Assistant Choirmaster at St. Bartholomew’s Park Avenue; leading them on their tour of English cathedrals and conducting services at Salisbury, Portsmouth, Southwark and Canterbury Cathedrals. He has conducted concerts at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center and at American Choral Directors Association Conferences, as well as choirs and orchestras in England, Italy, Switzerland, Canada, Sweden, Argentina, Greece, Slovenia and Romania. He is a recipient of conducting awards including an American Prize award in Conducting. Most recently, Bryan served as the Director of Choral Activities at Avon Old Farms School in Avon, Connecticut; as the Conductor of the Archdiocesan Choir and Orchestra at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph in Hartford; and as a conductor of choirs at the University of Hartford. Bryan began his tenure as the Associate Choirmaster at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in August 2016 and made his conducting debut with the Cathedral’s Choirs at Westminster Abbey, London.

RAYMOND NAGEM is Associate Director of Music and Organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City and a member of the organ faculty at Manhattan School of Music, where he teaches organ literature, service playing, and improvisation. Dr. Nagem completed his D.M.A. at the Juilliard School in May 2016, where he was a student of Paul Jacobs, and taught the undergraduate course in organ literature at Juilliard from 2012 to 2015. Dr. Nagem, a native of Medford, Massachusetts, attended the Boston Archdiocesan Choir School and began organ lessons there with John Dunn. He earned his B.A. from Yale University in 2009 as a double major in Music and Psychology, and studied the organ with Thomas Murray; he earned his M.A. in 2011 from Juilliard. He has worked since 2010 at St. John the Divine, where he has primary responsibility for service playing and choral accompaniment and works regularly with the cathedral’s several choral ensembles. In addition to these duties, he performs frequently in recital both in New York and across the country. Highlights for the 2017–2018 season include a guest appearance with

the Cincinnati Fusion Ensemble under the direction of Mack Wilberg, a performance of Zoltán Kodály's *Laudes Organi* at St. John the Divine, and a solo recital in April featuring Karg-Elert's magnificent and rarely played Organ Symphony. His album *Divine Splendor*, recorded at St. John the Divine, is available on the Pro Organo label.

PEN YING FANG studied with Paul Hoffmann and Barbara Gonzalez-Palmer, earning a B.M. and M.M. in Piano, at Rutgers University. Ms. Fang has accompanied many prominent artists in master classes, including Keith Underwood, Evelyn Glennie, Brian Macintosh, and Christopher Arneson. In 2007 she played at the Florence Voice Seminar in Florence, Italy. Currently she serves as a staff accompanist at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, and teaches piano students in the central New Jersey area.

NAS CDs

NAS's 40th Anniversary two-CD set compiles twenty-four concert performances dating from our Merkin Concert Hall debut in May 1983, almost two-and-a-half hours of music for just \$20. Composers represented include Bach, Schein, Schütz, Haydn, Schubert, Dvořák, Brahms, Byrd, Copland, Joplin, Poulenc, Frank Martin, Britten, Paul Alan Levi, Matthew Harris, Ronald Perera, and Irving Fine. NAS also has available our second commercial CD, *Island of Hope*, featuring twentieth-century American choral music. It includes works by Leonard Bernstein, Ricky Ian Gordon, Paul Alan Levi, Ronald Perera, and Randall Thompson. Our first CD, *American Journey*, also focuses on American composers, among them Samuel Barber, Matthew Harris, Charles Ives, and Halsey Stevens. Both appear on the Albany Records label and are available for \$15 each at our concerts. CDs of various NAS concert performances are also available.

NAS CDs can also be obtained by mail from New Amsterdam Singers, P.O. Box 373, New York, NY 10025. Please add \$3 for shipping and handling on mail orders.

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