

# NEW AMSTERDAM SINGERS

CLARA LONGSTRETH, Music Director

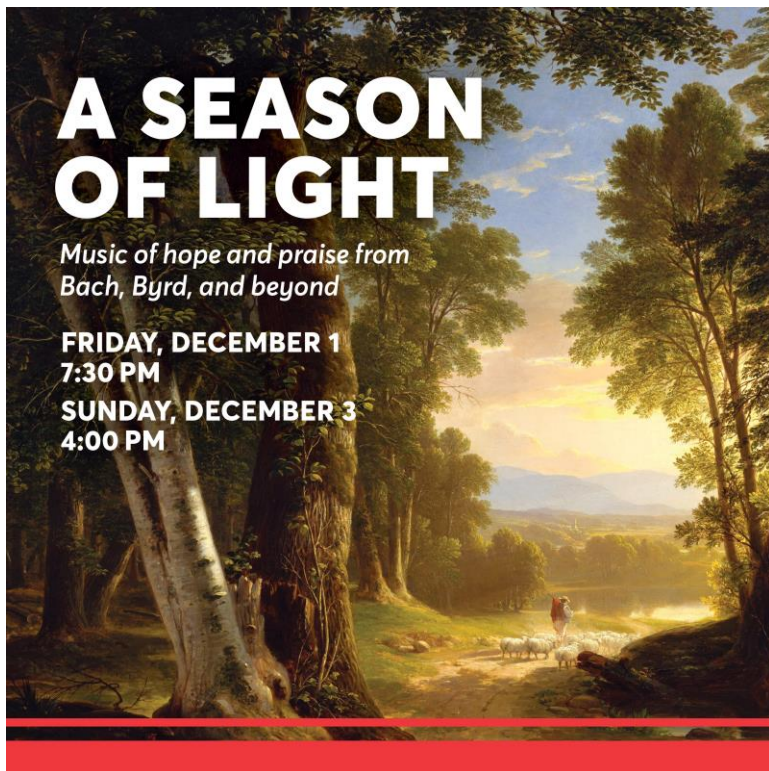
**2023-2024 Season**

## A SEASON OF LIGHT

*Music of hope and praise from  
Bach, Byrd, and beyond*

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1  
7:30 PM**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3  
4:00 PM**



Broadway Presbyterian Church  
114th Street and Broadway  
New York City

# NEW AMSTERDAM SINGERS

Clara Longstreth, *Music Director*

T.J. Barnes, *Assistant Conductor*

Nathaniel Granor, *Chamber Chorus Assistant Conductor*

Pen Ying Fang, *Piano, Chamber Organ*

Benjamin Wolff, *Violoncello*

## ***A Season of Light***

Lux Aeterna

Ēriks Ešenvalds  
(b. 1977)

Bitter for Sweet

John Chorbajian  
(1936-2011)

Elohim Hashivenu

Salamone Rossi  
(1570-ca. 1630)

T.J. Barnes, *Conductor*

Baruch Haba

Salamone Rossi  
(1570-ca. 1630)

Missa Brevis

Dietrich Buxtehude  
(1637-1707)

*Kyrie*

*Gloria*

Nate Mickelson, *Tenor*

Benjamin Wolff, *Violoncello*

Pen Ying Fang, *Chamber Organ*

Full Chorus

## INTERMISSION

Iustorum Animae William Byrd  
(1543-1623)

Civitas Sancti Tui William Byrd  
(1543-1623)

Veni, Sancte Spiritus Zanaida Robles  
(b. 1979)

Nathaniel Granor, *Conductor*  
Pen Ying Fang, *Piano*

Cantico delle Creature Petr Eben  
(1929-2007)

Chamber Chorus

Herr, wenn ich nur dich habe Heinrich Schütz  
(1585-1672)

Motet from *Musikalische Exequien*  
Benjamin Wolff, *Violoncello*  
Pen Ying Fang, *Chamber Organ*

Double Chorus

Lobet den Herrn Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

Benjamin Wolff, *Violoncello*  
Pen Ying Fang, *Chamber Organ*

Full Chorus

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

# A Season of Light

Today's concert includes music from the 16th through 20th centuries, with composers ranging from household names to virtually unknown. Most of the music is contrapuntal, and the mood of most selections is joyful. This music is rewarding to sing, and—by extension—to hear.

We begin with two composers whose lives could not be more different. One is extraordinarily popular and prolific, the other so unknown that his website is "under construction."

**Ēriks Ešenvalds** has a busy commission schedule, and performances of his music are heard on every continent. Ešenvalds' compositions have been premiered by over 50 ensembles around the world, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, The King's Singers, The Crossing, and the Yale Glee Club. To date, there are 10 recordings devoted exclusively to his work. NAS Chamber Chorus performed his work *Only In Sleep* in December 2019. *Lux Aeterna*, sung by Full Chorus today, was commissioned by the International Baltic Sea Choir Competition and has been widely performed and recorded.

*Lux aeterna luceat eis,  
Domine,  
Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,  
quia pius es.*

*Requiem aeternam dona eis,  
Domine,  
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.*

*May everlasting light shine upon them,  
O Lord,  
with Thy saints in eternity,  
for Thou art merciful.*

*Grant them eternal rest,  
O Lord,  
and may everlasting light shine upon  
them.*

**John Chorbajian** was an American composer whose life is mostly unknown today. He taught at several universities in the United States and received a grant from the Ford Foundation. He specialized in choral music, and his *Bitter for Sweet*, on a text

by the distinguished poet Christina Rossetti, is well-known in choral circles. The work, composed in 1970, is a lament for the end of summer, so it suits an early December program.

*Summer is gone with all its roses,  
Its sun and perfumes and sweet flowers,  
Its warm air and refreshing showers,  
And even Autumn closes.*

*Yea, Autumn's chilly self is going;  
And Winter comes, which is yet colder;  
Each day the hoar-frost waxes bolder;  
And the last buds cease blowing.*

— Christina Rossetti

Italian violinist and composer **Salamone Rossi** was a prominent figure in Baroque and Renaissance music. One of the few well-known Jewish composers at the time, he composed the only substantial collection of synagogue motets prior to the Classical era. *Elohim Hashivenu* is a liturgical selection, often sung during the morning services of the Three Festivals and High Holy Days, and translates as "O God, restore us." Detached entirely from cantorial phrasing, this contrapuntal piece was inspired primarily by the polyphonic works of his contemporaries, such as Claudio Monteverdi, with whom Rossi studied.

*Elohim, hashivenu;  
u'haer panecha,  
u'niivashe'a.*

*O God, restore us;  
and cause thy face to shine,  
and we shall be saved.*

*Elohim tsevaot, hashivenu;  
u'haer panecha,  
u'niivashe'a.*

*O God of hosts, restore us;  
and cause thy face to shine,  
and we shall be saved.*

*Adonai elohim tsevaot,  
hashivenu;*

*O Lord God of hosts,  
restore us;*

haer panecha  
u'niuvash'e'a.

cause thy face to shine,  
and we shall be saved.

— Psalm 80:3, 7, 19

*Baruch haba b'sheim Adonai*, or "Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord," is a six-voice setting in the style of a late Renaissance motet, incorporating imitative polyphony while also reserving moments of chordal homophony and echoed antiphony in a rich texture unlike any other choral Hebrew works of the 17th century. Both *Elohim Hashivenu* and *Baruch haba b'sheim Adonai* were released alongside Rossi's 1623 publication of Hebrew selections, *The Songs of Solomon*, a play on his first name, which would go on to stand as the earliest and only publication of Hebrew liturgical music for the next 200 years.

*Baruch haba b'sheim  
Adonai  
Beirachnuchem mi beit  
Adonai.  
Eil Adonai vayaeir lanu  
Isru chag ba'avotim ad  
karnot hamizbeiach.  
Eili atah u'odecha  
Elohai arom'mecha.  
Hodu l'Adonai ki tou  
Ki l'olam chasdo .*

*Blessed is the one who enters in the  
name of God  
We have blessed you in the house of  
God.  
God is God, and God illuminated us  
Bind the festival offering with cords  
even to the horns of the altar.  
You are my God, and I will praise you  
My God, I will extol you.  
Thank God, because God is goodness  
Because God is everlasting loving  
kindness.*

— Psalm 118:26-29

The German composer **Dietrich Buxtehude** lived between the times of Schütz and Bach, and was known chiefly for his organ music and cantatas. Bach is reported to have journeyed 200 miles on foot at age 20 to visit Buxtehude, probably to hear the old master play his organ music in the church at Lübeck. (Bach

probably did not hear the *Missa Brevis* that is on today's program.) The *Missa Brevis* is the only work in the *stile antico* by Buxtehude; the term *brevis* ("short") is used because the Lutheran church retained only the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* of the Catholic Mass. Much as one would find in the works of Renaissance masters such as Palestrina or di Lasso, Buxtehude's *Missa Brevis* features a skillful web of easy, seamless counterpoint, with only the briefest moments of chordal (homophonic) harmony.

The phrase *Rex coelestis* ("King of heaven") is set with pealing, descending scales in thirds, which sound appropriately celebratory. There are two instances of affecting chromatic writing: ascending half-note scales for *miserere nostri* ("have mercy on us"), and descending half-step scales in the *Amen*. This use of chromaticism, more typical of the Baroque than the Renaissance, is one sign that Buxtehude was indeed a 17th-century master.

## Kyrie

*Kyrie eleison.*  
*Christe eleison.*  
*Kyrie eleison.*

*Lord, have mercy.*  
*Christ, have mercy.*  
*Lord, have mercy.*

## Gloria

*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*  
*Et in terra pax*  
*hominibus bonæ voluntatis.*  
  
*Laudamus te; benedicimus te;*  
*adoramus te; glorificamus te.*  
*Gratias agimus tibi*  
*propter magnam*  
*gloriam tuam.*

*Glory be to God in the highest.*  
*And on earth peace*  
*to men of good will.*  
  
*We praise Thee; we bless Thee;*  
*we worship Thee; we glorify Thee.*  
*We give thanks to Thee*  
*for Thy great glory.*

*Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,*  
*Deus Pater omnipotens.*

*O Lord God, Heavenly King,*  
*God the Father Almighty.*

*Domine Fili unigenite*

*Jesu Christe.*

*Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,*

*Filius Patris.*

*Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nostri.*

*Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem  
nostram.*

*Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nostri.*

*Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,  
tu solus Dominus,  
tu solus Altissimus,  
Jesu Christe.*

*Cum Sancto Spiritu  
in gloria Dei Patris.  
Amen.*

*O Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only begotten Son.*

*Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father.*

*You who takes away the sins of the  
world, have mercy upon us.*

*You who takes away the sins of the  
world, receive our  
prayer.*

*You who sits at the right hand of the  
Father, have mercy upon us.*

*For thou only art holy,  
thou only art the Lord,  
thou only art the most high,  
Jesus Christ.*

*Together with the Holy Ghost  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen*

Our program now leaps back to the Reformation in England and to the composer called "Father of Music" by his contemporaries. In his long, productive life, **William Byrd** wrote music for the keyboard, for strings, and for the voice. In the realm of sacred music, Byrd was not only England's most inventive composer, he was also its bravest. William Byrd was a Catholic composer in a country ruled by the Church of England, in an age when intolerance was the norm. (An Act of Toleration was not passed until 1689, more than 50 years after Byrd's death.) Queen Elizabeth allowed Catholics to register as "recusants," and Byrd and his family did so. As recusants, Catholics were not obligated to attend the Reformed Church, but they were not allowed to hold public Catholic services either. When Byrd wrote liturgical music in Latin, such as his three Masses, it would have been for an illegal, underground rite. Despite Byrd's private faith, he held a Court post,



composing for the Reformed Church for 50 years, and was held in great esteem by Queen Elizabeth.

In the dedication to a volume of 63 motets, published in 1605, Byrd wrote, "As one meditates upon the sacred words and constantly and seriously considers them, the right notes, in some inexplicable manner, suggest themselves quite spontaneously." Today we sing two of Byrd's motets for five and six voices. *Iustorum animae* is remarkable for the serenity of its lines and the subtle harmonic emphasis on a phrase like "*tormentum mortis*" ("the torment of death"). This beautiful piece concludes with a dozen overlapping, falling scales on the words "*in pace*" ("in peace").

*Iustorum animae in manu  
Dei sunt,  
et non tanget illos tormentum  
mortis.  
Visi sunt oculis insipientium  
mori,  
illi autem sunt in pace.*

*The souls of the righteous are in the  
hand of God,  
and there shall no torment  
touch them.  
In the sight of the unwise they seemed  
to die;  
but they are in peace.*

— Wisdom 3:1-2a, 3b

*Civitas sancti tui* is unusual in that its five voices are not the usual two sopranos (plus one each of the other parts), but two basses. Thus, when Byrd reaches the poignant text "*Sion deserta facta est*" ("Zion has become deserted and forlorn"), he can achieve a remarkable contrast in color, with the phrase given once to higher voices and then to the lower voices down an octave, to stunning effect.

*Civitas sancti tui facta est  
desérta.  
Sion déserta facta est.  
Jerúsalem desoláta est.*

*Thy holy city, O Lord, has become a  
desert.  
Zion lies wasted and forlorn.  
Jerusalem now is desolate.*

— Isaiah 64: 9-10

**Dr. Zanaida Stewart Robles** is a fierce advocate for diversity and inclusion in music education and performance. Born, raised, and educated in Southern California, she is in demand as a vocalist, conductor, clinician, and adjudicator for competitions, festivals, and conferences related to choral and solo vocal music. *Veni sancte Spiritus* was composed in the spring of 2012, under the guidance of her composition teacher, Dr. Morten Lauridsen, at the University of Southern California. The work is based on an original love song called *End of Time*, written by Robles in 2001. The harmonic treatment and syncopation are derived from popular music styles (rock, pop, etc.), while the compound meter, intricate piano lines, and choral voicing anchor the piece firmly in the classical choral tradition.

*Veni, sancte spiritus,  
Et emite caelitus  
Lucis tuae radium.  
Veni, sancte spiritus.  
Lucis tuae radium.  
Veni, pater pauperum,  
Veni, dator munerum,  
Veni, lumen cordium.*

*Consolatur optimae,  
Dulcis hospes animae,  
Dulce refrigerium.  
Veni, Sancte Spiritus.  
In labore requies  
In aestu temperies,  
In fletu solatium,  
Veni, Sancte Spiritus.*

*Come, Holy Spirit.  
Send from heaven  
Thy rays of light.*

*O lux beatissima,  
Reple cordis intima  
Tuorum fidelium.*

*Come, Holy Spirit,  
Send from heaven  
Thy rays of light.  
Come, Holy Spirit,  
Thy rays of light.  
Come, father of the poor,  
come, giver of gifts,  
come, light of hearts.*

*Greatest comforter,  
sweet guest of the soul,  
sweet consolation.  
Come, Holy Spirit,  
In labor, rest,  
in heat, temperateness,  
in tears, solace.  
Come, Holy Spirit,*

*Come, Holy Spirit.  
Send from heaven  
Thy rays of light.*

*O most blessed light,  
fill the inmost heart  
of your faithful.*

*Sine tuo numine,  
Nihil est in nomine.  
Nihil est innoxium.*

*Without the nod of your head,  
there is nothing in man,  
nothing that is harmless.*

**Petr Eben** was the Czech Republic's most respected and internationally known composer. He spent his boyhood in Bohemia, the son of a Jewish father in a family that embraced Catholicism. In 1943, Eben, considered a Jew by virtue of his father's religion, was expelled from school and spent the next two years in the concentration camp at Buchenwald. Following the war, he studied at the Prague Academy of Music, eventually teaching at Charles University, where he was denied promotion because of his refusal to join the Communist Party. After the Velvet Revolution, he gained many important posts, including that of president of the Prague Spring Music Festival. He wrote orchestral works, chamber music, and a great deal of music for organ, for chorus, and for the voice.

In *Cantico delle Creature*, which was given its New York premiere in 1991 by NAS, Eben set an important example of early Italian poetry by St. Francis of Assisi, known in English as the "Canticle of the Sun." The poem is written in a 14<sup>th</sup> century Umbrian dialect of Italian, whose spelling is close to Latin but whose pronunciation is more like modern Italian.

After a short introduction, the piece embarks on a rondo (ABC, ABD), whose main theme is a lilting *allegro* in the style of a *tarantella*. The music later portrays the serene beauty of the moon and stars, the motion of the wind, and, finally, in the most dramatic section, "our sister death."

*Altissimo, onnipotente,  
bon Signore,  
Tue so' le laude, la gloria et  
l'honore et onne benedictione.*

*Most High, all powerful,  
good Lord,  
Yours are the praises, the glory,  
the honor, and all blessing.*

Laudato si', mi' Signore, cum  
tucte le tue creature,  
spetialmente laudato si',  
Messer lo frate sole, lo qual è  
iorno; et allumini noi per lui.  
Et ellu è bellu e radiante cum  
grande splendore.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora  
luna e le stelle:  
In celu l'hai formate clarite,  
pretiose e belle.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per  
frate vento  
Et per aere nubilo et sereno et  
onne tempo,  
Per lo qual' alle tue creature dai  
sustentamento.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora  
acqua, la quale è molto utile et  
humile et casta.

Laudato si', Signore, per frate  
focu, per lo qual' ennallumini  
la nocte;  
Et ello è bello et robustoso,  
iocundo et forte.

Laudato si', mi' Signore,  
per sora nostra matre  
terra,  
La quale produce diversi fructi  
con coloriti fiori et herba.

Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora  
nostra morte corporale,  
Da la quale null' homo vivente po  
skappare.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your  
creatures, especially through my lord  
brother Sun,  
Who brings the day; and You give light  
through him.  
And he is beautiful and radiant in all  
his splendor.

Praised be You, my Lord, through sister  
Moon and the stars,  
In heaven You formed them clear and  
precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through  
brother Wind,  
And through the air, cloudy and  
serene, and every weather  
Through which You give sustenance to  
Your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through sister  
Water, which is very useful and  
humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through  
brother Fire, through whom you light  
the night  
And he is beautiful and robust,  
playful and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through sister  
mother Earth, who sustains us and  
governs us  
And produces varied fruits with  
colored flowers and herbs.

Praised be You, my Lord, through our  
sister bodily Death,  
From whom no living man can  
escape.

*Laudate et benedicite mi'  
Signore et reingratiare, servitelo  
cum grande humilitate,  
Altissimo.*

*Praise and bless my Lord and give  
Him thanks and serve Him  
with great humility,  
Most High.*

— St. Francis of Assisi

**Heinrich Schütz** is certainly the greatest German composer of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The musicologist Paul Henry Lang calls him “one of the outstanding creative geniuses in musical history.”

His *Musikalische Exequien* is a great and timeless work that demonstrates Schütz's firm faith in the goodness of God in the face of pestilence, the sorrows and deprivations accompanying the ongoing Thirty Years' War, and his personal bereavement at the death of his young wife. It was written on commission for the funeral of Prince Heinrich, the ruler of the Saxon principality of Reuss.

Prince Heinrich was a patron of the arts, an accomplished musician in his own right, and a close friend of Schütz's. In planning his own funeral a year before his death, he ordered a coffin inscribed with biblical verses, and directed that they (a Kyrie and a Gloria) be used at his German funereal mass. Upon the prince's death, his widow asked Schütz to write the “musical obsequies.”

The complete *Musikalische Exequien* is a long work, and today we are singing the middle section, a double chorus motet in the Venetian style that Schütz had mastered in his youth as a student of Gabrieli. The eloquent, yearning repetitions of “*So bist du, doch, Gott*” (“You, God, are always”) and the exuberant, rhythmic “*Allezeit meines Herzens Trost*” (“The comfort of my heart”) express Schütz's deep faith.

*Herr, wenn ich nur dich habe,  
So frage ich nichts nach Himmel  
und Erden,*

*Lord, if only I have you,  
I ask nothing of heaven  
and earth,*

Wenn mir gleich Leib und Seele  
verschmacht,  
So bist du, doch, Gott,  
Allezeit meines Herzens Trost  
und mein Teil.

Even if body and soul  
pine away,  
You, God, are always  
The comfort of my heart,  
and my portion.

— Psalm 73:25-26

We close our concert with **Johann Sebastian Bach's** festive motet, *Lobet den Herrn*. Bach's six great motets are among the greatest of his choral works. They reveal his fluid polyphonic style, his clear musical structure, and his joyful faith. He treats vocal lines as instrumental lines, expecting as much virtuosic agility from his singers as he did from his players.

Psalm 117, which provides the text, has no dark passages; instead, Bach provides contrast by setting the words "*denn Seine Gnade und Wahrheit*" ("for his grace and truth") in a contemplative style, between the effervescent counterpoint of the opening sections of the motet and the jig-like Alleluia with which it ends. In the first section, rising arpeggio fanfares depict praise and honor. The second fugue subject is a turning motif, which Bach often used to describe multitudes or crowd scenes. In the next section, held notes, sometimes nine slow beats long, depict eternity ("*Ewigkeit*").

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden  
Und preiset ihn, alle Völker.  
Denn seine Gnade und Wahrheit  
Waltet über uns in Ewigkeit.  
Alleluia.

Praise the Lord, all ye nations  
And praise him, all ye people.  
For his grace and truth  
Reign over us evermore.  
Alleluia.

— Psalm 117

Program Notes © 2023 Clara Longstreth

# **New Amsterdam Singers**

## **Soprano**

Orren Alperstein  
Robin D. Beckhard\*  
Martha Beckwith  
Laura Cohen\*\*  
Dana Crowell\*\*  
Susan Daum  
Naomi Draper  
Janet Field  
Rebecca Harris  
Laura Klein  
Abigail Kniffin  
Dana Kramer  
Alyssa Lafosse  
Jaime Leifer\*\*  
Michelle Neary\*  
Tracey Ober  
Andrea Olejar\*\*  
Judith Pott\*  
Clara Schuhmacher\*\*  
Elizabeth Stein  
Elspeth Strang  
Jennifer Trahan

## **Alto**

Liz Basile\*  
Cindy Brome  
Isabel Colman  
Rebecca Dee\*\*  
Jenny Delson  
Stephanie Golob  
Sally Hoskins\*

Nora Isacoff  
Daniela Kempf  
Hannah Kerwin  
Betty Kulleseid  
Naya Mukherji  
Elisa Peimer  
Charlotte Rocker\*\*  
Ellen Stark\*  
Vera Sziklai  
Briel Waxman  
Donna Zalichin

## **Tenor**

Paul Blanchard  
Eli Enenbach  
Nathaniel Granor\*\*  
Thomas Haller  
Jason Lowenhar  
Robert Marlowe  
Nate Mickelson  
Paul Parsekian\*  
John Pinegar  
Adam Poole  
Benj Prud'homme  
Tim Sachs\*\*  
Hsin Wang

## **Bass**

Richard Abel  
Bendix Anderson\*  
T.J. Barnes  
Michael Berger  
James Crowell  
Walter Daum  
Jethro Eisenstein  
Steven Hanna  
Philip Holmgren\*\*  
Steve Holtje\*  
Michael Landy\*  
John Leuenhagen  
Jeff McNerney  
Robert Palmer  
Raymond Wells  
Rafael Yuste

\*Chamber Chorus

\*\*Chamber Chorus  
Only

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## About the Artists

**New Amsterdam Singers**, now in its 56<sup>th</sup> 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 16th century through contemporary pieces, including many it has commissioned. In addition to works by Carol Barnett, Lisa Bielawa, and Ben Moore commissioned for the group's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, recent world premieres include compositions by Matthew Harris, Paul Alan Levi, Elizabeth Lim, Robert Paterson, and Ronald Perera. Our most recent commission, *The World of Dreams* by Dale Trumbore, was presented in March 2023. American and New York City premieres in the previous decade included works by Robert Paterson, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Matthew Harris, Abbie Betinis, Steven Stucky, Kirke Mechem, Steven 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, under the direction of Clara Longstreth, the first time the work was heard in New York City in over 60 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 has appeared twice with Anonymous 4 in Richard Einhorn's *Voices of Light* - in 1999 at Avery Fisher Hall with Concordia Orchestra under Marin Alsop, and in 2006 at the Winter Garden of the World Financial Center with Ensemble Sospeso under David Hattner, for broadcast on WYNC's *New Sounds*.

NAS has also appeared 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 Międzyzdroje, Poland; the Festival of the Algarve in

Portugal; Les Chorégies d'Orange in France; and the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod in Wales. The chorus has performed in Turkey, Scandinavia, Croatia, Spain, Argentina and Uruguay, South Africa, Greece, Iceland, Denmark, and, most recently, in Bulgaria in 2019. In 2010 NAS was pleased to receive permission from the State and Treasury Departments to tour Cuba on a cultural visa.

**Clara Longstreth, Conductor**, is the founder and Music Director of New Amsterdam Singers, and has led the group for its past 55 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." And in June, 2018, Times critic Anthony Tommasini wrote, "You think von Karajan's 35-year reign at the Berlin Philharmonic and Eugene Ormandy's 44-year association with the Philadelphia Orchestra were impressive runs? Well, at a concert on Wednesday night [May 30, 2018], Clara Longstreth concluded her 50th season as music director of the...New Amsterdam Singers.... Ms. Longstreth conducted with undiminished energy and focus."

Ms. Longstreth studied conducting with G. Wallace Woodworth at Harvard University and with Richard Westernburg at The Juilliard School, from which she received her master's degree. She also studied with Amy Kaiser and Semyon Bychkov at 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 the chorus on 17 international tours.

**T.J. Barnes, Assistant Conductor**, a native of Buffalo, NY, is a NYC-based conductor, educator, performer, pianist, and arranger. He is the Director of Music at Flushing High School, where he revived and developed programs in Chorus, Piano, Guitar, and Music Appreciation.

T.J. holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and a graduate certificate in K-12 Music Education from the Aaron Copland School of Music at CUNY Queens College.

Performance credits include Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* at Queens College and Joe Hardy in *Damn Yankees* at the Kupferberg Center of the Arts. He also served as Music Director of the Queens College iTones, a coeducational a cappella group, writing numerous pop SATB arrangements, including their award-winning set at the 2019 ICCA Northeast Regional Semifinal Championships.

T.J. is a recipient of the first Maurice Peress Memorial Award in conducting and the American Choral Directors Association's 2019 Next Direction Collegiate Leadership Award.

**Nathaniel Granor, Chamber Chorus Assistant Conductor**, has been a member of NAS since 2013. He is also the Music Director of The Lost Keys, a NYC-based contemporary a cappella group that is releasing a new album in January. Nathaniel is a graduate of Yale University, where he directed several ensembles including the Yale Spizzwinks(?) and the Davenport Pops Orchestra. By day, he works as a freelance consultant in technology and education.

**Pen Ying Fang, Accompanist**, has performed widely in the New York and Philadelphia metropolitan areas, building an extensive repertoire of solo and chamber music. Currently, she serves as a coach and accompanist at Westminster Choir College, where she has worked with many prominent artists and renowned voice programs such as the CoOPERative summer program and the Florence Voice Seminar in Italy. As an accompanist, Pen Ying has also performed and toured with several choirs from the New York area, in which capacity *The New York Times* has praised her performances as "vivid" and "deft." In 2018 she was honored to be a featured performer in a Philip Glass opera workshop in North Adams, MA.

Pen Ying is a native of Taiwan, where she began studying piano at age five. There she attended an experimental music-focused grade school until moving to the United States. Here she studied with Paul Hoffmann and Barbara Gonzalez-Palmer, earning Bachelor and Master of Music degrees in Piano at Rutgers University.

**Stefanie Izzo, Manager**, is a classically trained soprano, educator, nonprofit administrator, and longtime resident of Queens, NY. She received a Master of Arts in vocal performance from the Aaron Copland School of Music at CUNY Queens College and a Bachelor of Music from NYU. Stefanie has been hailed as possessing a "gorgeously rich and full sound" for her work in opera and musical theater, in roles such as Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Anne Truelove in *The Rake's Progress*, Maria in *West Side Story* and Mozart heroines Pamina, Susanna, and Despina.

In addition to operatic repertoire, Stefanie devotes a significant amount of her performance time to art song, particularly that of female composers, and maintains an active concert schedule in the NYC area. She is a frequent collaborator with living composers, and is a co-founder of the chamber ensemble The

Astoria Music Project. Stefanie is the Manager of Education Partnerships at the Metropolitan Opera.

**Benjamin Wolff, Violoncello**, has performed with ensembles such as Early Music New York, Sinfonia New York, Concert Royal, the American Classical Orchestra, and the Paul Taylor Dance Company. For eighteen years he was Associate Professor of Music at Hofstra University and a member of the Hofstra String Quartet.

Ben co-founded the Foothills Chamber Music Festival in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, leading the festival as cellist and co-Artistic Director as it presented a series of performances, lectures and symposia at the Reynolda House Museum of American Art and the Southeast Center for Contemporary Art.

He is the creator of Galileo's Muse, a program that dramatizes a unique intersection of music and science. It tells the story of how one of history's most famous scientists turned to music to solve the mystery of how objects fall. Galileo's Muse has been presented at institutions such as Harvard University, Rice University, and NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

Since 2017, Ben has been a columnist for Forbes Leadership, writing about what corporate America can learn from the arts.

# Contributors

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Visit [www.nasingers.org](http://www.nasingers.org) for the latest chorus news, recordings, and videos. You can also see the many commissions and premieres that New Amsterdam Singers has been proud to present (click on "our Music").

### ***Upcoming Concerts***

*Arctic Explorations*, March 9 & 10, 2024, Theatre at St. Jean  
*Threads of Joy*, May 17 & 19, 2024, Broadway Presbyterian Church

### ***Sing With Us!***

Music Director Clara Longstreth invites singers with choral experience and sight-reading ability in all voice parts to audition for New Amsterdam Singers. We rehearse Tuesday evenings at Broadway Presbyterian Church. Email [info@nasingers.org](mailto:info@nasingers.org) to arrange an audition.

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