

MASTERPIECE

APRIL 4-7, 2019



Thursday, April 4, Fitchburg State University

Friday, April 5, Gloucester Meetinghouse

Saturday, April 6, Wheaton College

Sunday, April 7, St. John's Episcopal Church, Georgetown Parish

SKYLARK 

MASTERPIECE

We kindly ask you to silence your cellular phones and offer your applause only where notated by a horizontal line

Aftonen

Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960)

Auf dem See

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Frühlingsfeier

Mendelssohn



Dieu! Qu'il la fait bon regarder!

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Berceuse: Il était une fois une fée qui avait un beau sceptre

Debussy

Trois beaux oiseaux du Paradis

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)



En chantant, les servantes s'élancent from *Figure Humaine*

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Tenebrae factae sunt

Poulenc



Wiegen-Lied from *Wie ein Kind*

Per Nørgård (b. 1932)



The Gallant Weaver

James MacMillan (b. 1959)



Transform the World with Beauty

Nell Shaw Cohen (b. 1988)

I. My First Camera

II. In an Artist's Studio

III. Transform the World with Beauty



Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) arr. Clytus Gottwald



SKYLARK ARTISTS

Soprano: Sophie Amelkin, Sarah Moyer, Janet Stone, Alissa Ruth Suver

Alto: Carrie Cheron, Doug Dodson, Carolyn Guard, Megan Roth

Tenor: Paul D'Arcy, Erik Gustafson, Nathan Hodgson, Robbie Jacobs

Bass: Matthew Goins, Christopher Jackson, Peter Walker, Dana Whiteside

Matthew Guard, Artistic Director

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Over seven years of finding our collective voice, imagining new ways to bring choral music to life has become a core part of Skylark's mission. Today's concert is a very specific manifestation of that journey: we are thrilled to present our first program inspired by connections between *visual art* and music.

When I first started to research this program, I wasn't sure exactly what form it would take. There are a handful of existing choral pieces that have concrete connections to visual art, but certainly not enough to fill a full concert. I was left, then, to think about other, more subtle, connections. Imagining what this program *could* be brought up some interesting questions: Were any choral composers also visual artists? What common aesthetic principles are shared between music and artwork from the *same era*? Are there connections between paintings and works of music on the *same subject*? What *new music* could be created to respond to artwork? What art might emerge from being prompted solely *by music*? Several months of research and reflection on these questions yielded today's concert program.

Our program begins with composer 'watercolors'. Beginning with Hugo Alfvén's *Afionen* ('Evening'), we share three pieces of music written by composers who were also gifted painters. Like the featured paintings (from the composers themselves) in the watercolor medium, these musical vignettes from the romantic period offer splashes of simple and pleasing colors that reflect the lovely poetic texts that serve as their subjects.

I am particularly pleased to share a set of 'impressions' – music of composers of the impressionist movement in music (Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel) paired with paintings of the Impressionist school by Claude Monet and Pierre-Auguste Renoir.

After reveling in the soft edges and gentle harmonies of the impressionist set, we will then explore more angular music and art with a short set on Cubism: two striking pieces by Francis Poulenc paired with masterpieces by Pablo Picasso.

"Wiegen-Lied" from *Wie ein Kind* was inspired by a very specific connection to artwork associated with the 'Art Brut' or 'Outsider Art' label: Danish composer Per Nørgård composed his music as a direct reaction to the bizarre poetry and spectacularly detailed drawings of Adolf Wölfl, a mentally ill Swiss man who spent the last thirty years of his life in a psychiatric hospital in Bern.

Scottish Composer James McMillan's *The Gallant Weaver* demonstrates a looser kind of inspiration from art and design – in interviews, McMillan has acknowledged the possibility that his flowing, interconnected and ornate musical lines may have been inspired by Celtic design and knot-work, illustrated in our program book by the spectacular illuminated manuscripts from the *Book of Kells*.

Perhaps the most exciting moment in the program will be sharing the world premiere performance of Nell Shaw Cohen's *Transform the World with Beauty*, inspired by artwork from Victorian Britain. After communicating with this gifted composer over the last year, I am deeply impressed by Ms. Cohen's thoughtfulness in conceiving and beautifully executing a work that is so thoroughly suited to our program.

In closing, we offer a 'Blank Canvas' – a stunning *a cappella* setting of Gustav Mahler's most famous art song. We include this perfect embodiment of the romantic ideal of the artist as a potential *inspiration for artwork*, both for concert attendees and visual arts students at our partner universities.

Previous Skylark concert attendees may notice that the program book itself is a bit more substantial than most of our programs – our vision was that it could look and function like a fashionable art magazine or a museum guidebook – a visual companion to the music you will hear today. As we share the music of the program, I encourage you to reflect on the artwork paired with each piece. We believe that experiencing both aesthetics at the same time – the visuals *and* the music – will greatly enhance your appreciation for each.

–Matthew Guard, Artistic Director

TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS & ARTWORK



Hugo Alfvén,
View from the Alfvén's Garden at Tällberg (1925)

Aftonen

Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960)

Original Swedish text by Carl Herman Säterberg; English translation by Norman Luboff

Skogen står tyst, himlen är klar.
Hör, huru tjugande vallhornet lullar.
Kvällsolns bloss sig stilla sänker,
Sänker sig ner uti den lugna, klara våg.
Ibland dälder gröna kullar
eko kring neiden far

*Still the woods, radiant the heav'ns.
Dim, distant horns fill the air with their echo.
Sunset, glowing, slowly disappearing,
It disappears beneath the sea.
Through the mountains, through the valleys
Lingering, the echoes sound*

Auf Dem See

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Und frische Nahrung, neues Blut
Saug' ich aus freier Welt;
Wie ist Natur so hold und gut,
Die mich am Busen hält!
Die Welle wieget unsern Kahn
Im Rudertakt hinauf,
Und Berge, wolkg himmelan,
Begegnen unserm Lauf.

Aug', mein Aug', was sinkst du nieder?
Goldne Träume, [kommt] ihr wieder?
Weg, du Traum! so Gold du bist;
Hier auch Lieb' und Leben ist.

Auf der Welle blinken
Tausend schwebende Sterne,
Weiche Nebel trinken
Rings die thürmende Ferne;
Morgenwind umflügelt
Die beschattete Bucht,
Und im See bespiegelt
Sich die reifende Frucht.

*And fresh sustenance, new blood
I soak up from the wide world;
How sweet and good is nature
Which holds me to her bosom!
The waves rock our little boat
In time with the oars,
And mountains, cloud-capped heavenwards,
Meet our circling course.*

*Eyes, my eyes, why are you cast down?
Golden dreams, do you come again?
Away, you dream, however golden;
Here too is love and life.*

*On the waves twinkle
A thousand hovering stars,
Soft mists swallow up
The surrounding towering distances;
Morning wind wings around
The shadowed bay,
And the lake mirrors
The ripening fruit.*

Felix Mendelssohn,
Montreux and Lake Geneva (1842)





Felix Mendelssohn,
Picture from Interlaken - unfinished (1847)

Frühlingsfeier

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Text by Ludwig Uhland

Süßer, goldner Frühlingstag!
Inniges Entzücken!
Wenn mir je ein Lied gelang,
Sollt' es heut' nicht glücken?

Doch warum in dieser Zeit
An die Arbeit treten?
Frühling ist ein hohes Fest:
Laßt mich ruhn und beten!

*Sweet, golden spring day!
Heartfelt delight!
If I were ever to attempt a song,
should I not succeed today?*

*Yet why at this time
should I think of work?
Spring is a high holiday:
let me rest and pray!*

Dieu! Qu'il la fait bon regarder!

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Text by Charles D'Orléans

Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder
la gracieuse bonne et belle;
pour les grans biens que sont en elle
chascun est prest de la louer.
Qui se pourrait d'elle lasser?
Toujours sa beauté renouvelle.
Par de ça, ne de là, la mer
ne scay dame ne damoiselle
qui soit en tous bien parfaits telle.
C'est un songe que d'y penser:
Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder.

*God, what a vision she is;
one imbued with grace, true and beautiful!
For all the virtues that are hers
everyone is quick to praise her.
Who could tire of her?
Her beauty constantly renews itself;
On neither side of the ocean
do I know any girl or woman
who is in all virtues so perfect;
it's a dream even to think of her;
God, what a vision she is.*



Pierre-Auguste Renoir,
The Thinker (1876-1877)



Pierre-Auguste Renoir,
Madame Henriot (1876)



Pierre-Auguste Renoir,
Bust of a Young Woman with Flowered Ear (1898)



Claude Monet,
Yellow Irises and Malva (1917)



Claude Monet,
The Rose Bush (1925-1926)



Claude Monet,
Lilac Irises (1917)

Claude Monet,
Irises in Monet's Garden (1900)



Il était une fois une fée qui avait un beau sceptre

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Text by René Peter

Il était une fois une fée
qui avait un beau sceptre blanc.
Il était une plaintive enfant
qui pleurait pour des fleurs fanées.

La fée en la voyant pleurer
détacha des fleurs de son sceptre
et les laissa doucement tomber ;
l'enfant les noua dans ses tresses
et lui dit : En as-tu encore ?

Il en tomba mille et mille autres
le long de ses yeux, le long de sa bouche,
des mauves, des jaunes et des rouges ;
l'enfant en couvrit ses épaules.
Il lui dit : En as-tu encore ?

Il en tomba tout autour d'elle,
autant de parures nouvelles,
des colliers clairs, des ceintures d'or,
d'autres couraient le long de ses jambes,
cachant ses pieds sous des guirlandes.
En as-tu ? En as-tu encore ?

La blanche fée enfin descendit ;
elle ôta des cheveux de la petite fille
les fleurs répandues les premiers
et qui étaient déjà flétries.

Mais l'enfant les lui prit des mains
et les jeta sur le chemin
avec de légers cris de colère.
Et la fée, la blanche fée dit :
Pourquoi jeter ces fleurs sur le chemin ?
Tandis qu'elles passent d'autres naissent :
c'est ton bonheur que tu laisses.

*Once upon a time there was a fairy
with a lovely white scepter.
There was a plaintive little girl
who wept over wilted flowers.*

*The fairy, seeing her cry,
plucked the flowers from her scepter
and let them gently fall;
the child tied them in her braids
and asked her, "Do you have any more?"*

*There fell scores and scores of flowers
along her eyes and her mouth,
some purple, some yellow and some red;
with them, the child covered her shoulders.
She asked, "Do you have any more?"*

*There fell some more all around her,
like new jewelry,
light necklaces, sashes of gold,
and others ran along her legs,
hiding her feet under the garlands.
"Do you have any? Do you have any more?"*

*The white fairy descended at last;
she rid the little girl's hair
of the first fallen flowers,
already wilted.*

*But the child took them from her hands
and threw them onto the path,
while letting out slight cries of anger.
And the fairy, the white fairy said,
"Why throw these flowers by the wayside?
While they fade, others are born.
It is your happiness you are leaving behind."*

Trois beaux oiseaux du Paradis

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Trois beaux oiseaux du Paradis
Mon ami z-il est à la guerre
Trois beaux oiseaux du Paradis
Ont passé par ici.

Le premier était plus bleu que le ciel,
(Mon ami z-il est à la guerre)
Le second était couleur de neige,
Le troisième rouge vermill.

Beaux oiselets du Paradis,
(Mon ami z-il est à la guerre)
Beaux oiselets du Paradis,
Qu'apportez par ici?

J'apporte un regard couleur d'azur
(Ton ami z-il est à la guerre)
Et moi, sur beau front couleur de neige,
Un baiser dois mettre, encore plus pur.

*Three beautiful birds of paradise
(My love is gone to the war)
Three beautiful birds of paradise
Have passed this way.*

*The first was bluer than the sky
(My love has gone to the war)
The second was the color of snow
The third was red as vermillion.*

*Beautiful little birds of paradise
(My love has gone to the war)
Beautiful little birds of paradise
What do you bring here?*

*I carry an azure glance
(Your love has gone to the war)
And I must leave on a snow-white brow
A kiss, even purer.*



Claude Monet,
The Magpie (1869)

Oiseau vermeil du Paradis,
(Mon ami z-il est à la guerre)
Oiseau vermeil du Paradis,
Que portez vous ainsi?

Un joli coeur tout cramoisi
Ton ami z-il est à la guerre
Ha! je sens mon coeur qui froidit...
Emportez le aussi.

*You red bird of paradise
(My love has gone to the war)
You red bird of paradise
What are you bringing me?*

*A loving heart, flushing crimson.
(Your love has gone to the war)
Ah, I feel my heart growing cold...
Take that with you as well.*



Pablo Picasso,
Guernica (1937)

En chantant, les servantes s'élancent

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Text by Paul Éluard

En chantant les servantes s'élancent
Pour rafraîchir la place où l'on tuait
Petites filles en poudre vite agenouillées
Leurs mains aux soupiraux de la fraîcheur
Sont bleues comme une expérience
Un grand matin joyeux.

Faites face à leurs mains les morts
Faites face à leurs yeux liquides
C'est la toilette des éphémères
La dernière toilette de la vie
Les pierres descendent disparaissent
Dans l'eau vaste essentielle.

La dernière toilette des heures
A peine un souvenir ému
Aux puits taris de la vertu
Aux longues absences encombrantes
Et l'on s'abandonne à la chair très tendre
Aux prestiges de la faiblesse.

*Singing, the maidens rush forward to tidy
up the place where blood has flowed,
and little girls in their powder, kneeling,
their hands held out towards fresher air
are colored like a new sensation
Of some great joyous day.*

*Face their hands, o ye dead,
And their eyes that are liquefying
This is the cleansing of mayflies,
The final cleansing of this mortal life
Down go the stones sinking, disappearing
in the primal waters.*

*For the final cleansing of the hours
No poignant memory remains
At those dry wells devoid of virtue
At long absences which we find awkward
Surrendering to the flesh so soft and tender
To the spell of human weakness.*

Tenebrae factae sunt

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Tenebrae factae sunt, dum crucifixissent Jesum Judaei:
et circa horam nonam exclamavit Jesus voce magna:
Deus meus, ut quid me dereliquisti?
Et inclinato capite, emisit spiritum.
Exclamans Jesus voce magna ait: Pater,
in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.
Et inclinato capite, emisit spiritum.

*Darkness fell when the Jews crucified Jesus:
and about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice:
My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
Jesus cried with a loud voice and said, Father,
into thy hands I commend my spirit.
And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*



Pablo Picasso,
Crucifixion (1930)



Adolf Wölfl,
Irren anstalt band hain (1910)



Adolf Wölfl,
Lea tantaria (year unknown)

Adolf Wölfl,
*The ring of the St. Adolf fire snake
in the Indian Ocean* (year unknown)



Wiegen-Lied

Per Nørgård (b. 1932)
Texts by Adolf Wölfl and Ole Sarvig

G'ganggali ging g'gang, g'gung g'gung! Giigara-Lina Wiyy Rosina.
G'ganggali ging g'gang, g'gung g'gung! Rittara-Gritta, d'Zittara witta.
G'ganggali ging g'gang, g'gung g'gung. Giigara-Lina, siig R a Fina.
G'ganggali ging g'gang, g'gung g'gung! Fung z'jung, chung d'Stung.

Kummer fast uns alle, keiner geht frei,
Beliebig fast uns der Kummer

*Grief strikes everyone, no one is free
In torture, grief strikes us down*



The Book of Kells (9th Century)

The Gallant Weaver

James MacMillan (b. 1959)

Text by Robert Burns

Where Cart rins rowin' to the sea,
By mony a flower and spreading tree,
There lives a lad, the lad for me,
He is a gallant Weaver.
O, I had woovers aught or nine,
They gied me rings and ribbons fine;
And I was fear'd my heart wad tine,
And I gied it to the Weaver.

My daddie sign'd my tocher-band,
To gie the lad that has the land,
But to my heart I'll add my hand,
And give it to the Weaver.
While birds rejoice in leafy bowers,
While bees delight in opening flowers,
While corn grows green in summer showers,
I love my gallant Weaver.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

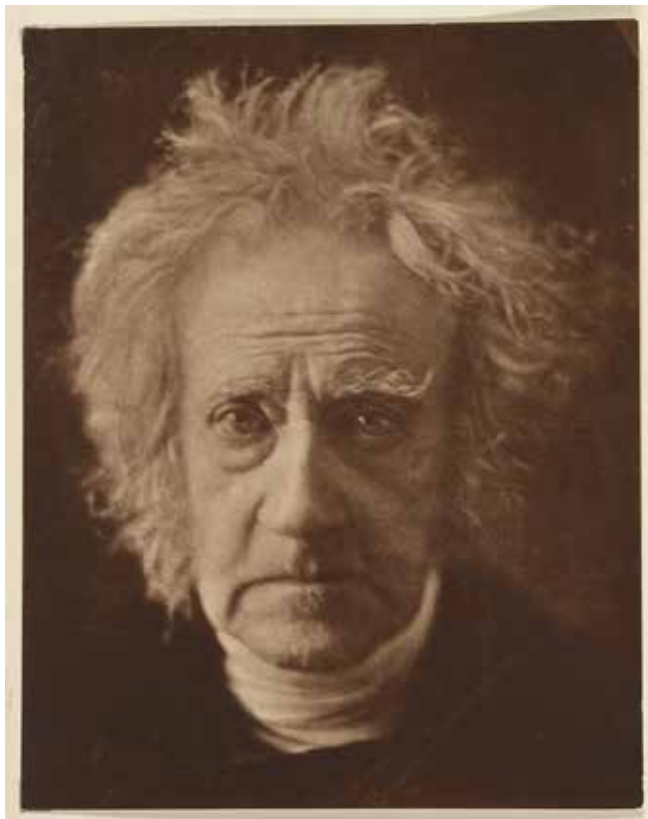
on the world premiere of **TRANSFORM THE WORLD WITH BEAUTY** by Nell Shaw Cohen (b. 1988)

“With the arrogance of youth, I determined to do no less than to transform the world with Beauty. If I have succeeded in some small way, if only in one small corner of the world, amongst the men and women I love, then I shall count myself blessed, and blessed, and blessed, and the work goes on.” – William Morris

Transform the World with Beauty, commissioned by Skylark, is inspired by the flowering of visual art and poetry in Victorian Britain during the 1840s-1870s. “My First Camera” celebrates avant-garde photographer, Julia Margaret Cameron. In my adaptation of an excerpt from Cameron’s autobiography, this pioneering artist describes the power of her creative impulse when she first took up the camera as a 48-year-old wife and mother. “In an Artist’s Studio” is a setting of a poem by Christina Rossetti. She offers an incisive, feminist critique of her brother, Pre-Raphaelite painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and his obsessive depictions of an idealized woman. The final, title movement is inspired by the work and ideas of William Morris. The botanical and mythological titles of Morris’ sensuous textiles and wallpaper designs are juxtaposed with lofty sentiments from his philosophical lectures and essays. These two strands of Morris’ world, disparate at first, come together into a hopeful vision of society “transformed” through the beauty of nature and art.

–Nell Shaw Cohen

Nell Shaw Cohen (b. 1988) evokes landscapes, visual art, and the lives of mavericks in lyrical works for the stage, concert hall, and digital media. Her current projects include commissions from Houston Grand Opera (HGOco) and Santa Fe’s Montage Music Society. Cohen’s operas and theatrical works have been given workshops at Fort Worth Opera, American Opera Projects, New Dramatists, and University of New Mexico, et al. She has been Artist-in-Residence at the Brush Creek Foundation, Helene Wurlitzer Foundation, and New York University Symphony. She studied at NYU and New England Conservatory. She lives in Brooklyn, NY. Visit www.nellshawcohen.com for more information.



Photography of Julia Margaret Cameron,
Christabel
Pomona, 1872
Sir John Herschel
Vivien and Merlin

My First Camera

Nell Shaw Cohen (b. 1988)

Text adapted by Nell Shaw Cohen from “Annals of my Glass House” (1874) by Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879)

My first camera
A gift from those I loved
My departed daughter and her husband
“It may amuse you, Mother.”

I handled my lens with tender ardour
It became a living thing
With memory and voice and creative vigour
Longing to arrest all beauty

I turned my coal-house into my dark room
I turned my fowl house into my glass house
The society of hens and chickens
Changed for poets, prophets, and painters

When I have them before my camera
My whole soul endeavors to record
The greatness of the inner man
As well as the outer man

The photograph becomes a prayer



Paintings by Dante Gabriel Rossetti,
Before the Battle (1858)
Kissed Mouth (1881)
The Annunciation (1849)

In an Artist's Studio

Nell Shaw Cohen (b. 1988)

Poem by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894); Written in 1856, published posthumously 1896

One face looks out from all his canvases,
 One selfsame figure sits or walks or leans:
 We found her hidden just behind those screens,
 That mirror gave back all her loveliness.
 A queen in opal or in ruby dress,
 A nameless girl in freshest summer-greens,
 A saint, an angel – every canvas means
 The same one meaning, neither more or less.
 He feeds upon her face by day and night,
 And she with true kind eyes looks back on him,
 Fair as the moon and joyful as the light:
 Not wan with waiting, not with sorrow dim;
 Not as she is, but was when hope shone bright;
 Not as she is, but as she fills his dream.

Transform the World with Beauty

Nell Shaw Cohen (b. 1988)

Text by Nell Shaw Cohen, based on the titles of textile and wallpaper designs,
and direct quotations from lectures and essays, by William Morris (1834–1896)

Flowerpot
Marigold
Daisy
Larkspur
Lotus
Seaweed
Blossom
Poppy

Have nothing in your houses
which you do not know to be useful
or believe to be beautiful

Beauty is a positive necessity of life

Daffodil
Rabbit
Tulip
Rose

Transform the world with beauty

Flowerpot
Marigold
Daisy
Larkspur
Lotus
Seaweed
Blossom
Poppy

Daffodil
Brother Rabbit
Garden Tulip
Rose
Artichoke
Sunflower
Sweet Briar
Trellis

Transform the world with beauty

Peacock and Dragon
Bird and Anemone
Strawberry Thief
Honeysuckle
Chrysanthemum

Beauty is a positive necessity of life

Art made by the people for the people

Transform the world with beauty



Wallpaper designs by William Morris,
Acanthus (1875)
Fruit (1865–66)
Strawberry Thief (1883)

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911); arranged by Clytus Gottwald

Text by Friedrich Rückert

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,
Mit der ich sonst viele Zeit verdorben,
Sie hat so lange nichts von mir vernommen,
Sie mag wohl glauben, ich sei gestorben!

Es ist mir auch gar nichts daran gelegen,
Ob sie mich für gestorben hält,
Ich kann auch gar nichts sagen dagegen,
Denn wirklich bin ich gestorben der Welt.

Ich bin gestorben dem Weltgetümmel,
Und ruh' in einem stillen Gebiet!
Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel,
In meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied!

*I am lost to the world
with which I used to waste so much time,
It has heard nothing from me for so long
that it may very well believe that I am dead!*

*It is of no consequence to me
Whether it thinks me dead;
I cannot deny it,
for I really am dead to the world.*

*I am dead to the world's tumult,
And I rest in a quiet realm!
I live alone in my heaven,
In my love, and in my song!*



ABOUT SKYLARK

GRAMMY-nominated **SKYLARK**, the “cream of the American crop” (*BBC Radio 3*), is a premier vocal ensemble of leading American vocal soloists, chamber musicians, and music educators. Skylark’s dramatic performances have been described as “gripping” (*The Times of London*), “exquisite...thrilling” (*Gramophone Magazine*), and “awe-inspiring” (*Boston Music Intelligencer*). Skylark strives to set the standard for innovative and engaging programs that re-define the choral experience for audiences and singers alike. Artistic Director Matthew Guard’s well-researched and creative programs have been described as “engrossing” (*WQXR New York*) and “original, stimulating, and beautiful” (*BBC Radio 3*). Since its founding in 2011 in Atlanta and Boston, Skylark has branched out to perform its dynamic programs in museums, concert halls, and churches across the United States. Skylark made its international debut in March 2018 at St. John’s Smith Square, London, as part of the UK choir Tenebrae’s Holy Week Festival. The Times of London declared that Skylark was “the highlight” of the festival that included some of the UK’s leading choirs, including The Tallis Scholars, Polyphony, Tenebrae, and the Gabrieli Consort. Skylark’s most recent three recordings all reached the top 10 of Billboard’s Traditional Classical Chart, earning praise for “imaginative” programming (*Limelight Australia*) and “singing of the highest standard for any area or any repertoire” (*Classics Today*). A not-for-profit entity with a passion for music education, Skylark performs educational outreach programs with high school and college students across the United States during its concert tours.

SKYLARK ORGANIZATION

Matthew Guard
Carolyn Guard
Sarah Moyer

Artistic Director
Executive Director
Ensemble Manager

Christopher Jackson
Cory Klose
Jessica Petrus
Enrico Lagasca

Educational Outreach
Marketing & Design
Skylark Spotlight Series
Social Media

ARTISTIC ADVISORY BOARD

Simon Carrington
Pamela Elrod
Vance George
Jameson Marvin
Geoffrey Silver

Professor Emeritus, Yale University; Co-Founder, The King’s Singers
Director of Choral Activities, Southern Methodist University
Conductor Emeritus, San Francisco Symphony Chorus
Director of Choral Activities, Harvard University (retired)
Co-Founder, New York Polyphony

ARTISTIC DIRECTION



Skylark Artistic Director **MATTHEW GUARD** is quickly earning a reputation as one of the most innovative and thoughtful programmers in American choral music. Praised for his “catalyzing leadership” (Q2/WQXR) and “musically creative and intellectually rich” programming (Opera Obsession), Matthew is passionate about communicating something unique in each concert and recording. He scours the world of available repertoire for each program, exhaustively researches each piece, and crafts concerts and printed programs that captivate audiences with their hidden connections and seamless artistry. In addition to his day-to-day leadership of Skylark and role as a conductor in concerts, Matthew is also an active arranger and editor of scores, as he rarely finds programming ideas that will truly sing without at least one piece specifically arranged or composed for the program.

SKYLARK ARTISTS



Soprano **SOPHIE AMELKIN** performs actively as a soloist and chamber musician throughout the United States. Recent performance highlights include soprano soloist in Paul John Rudoi’s *Sermon on the Mount* with Magnum Chorum, Faure’s *Requiem* with the St. John’s Music Series, Despina (*Così fan tutte*), St. Teresa of Avila (*Four Saints in Three Acts*), Bianca (*La Rondine*), and Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*). Sophie performs with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, VocalEssence Ensemble Singers, Brevitas, MPLS (imPulse), and Skål Chamber Collective. Sophie holds degrees from the University of North Carolina Wilmington (B.M.) and the University of Minnesota (M.M.)



Praised for having “the voice of an angel,” mezzo-soprano and contemporary vocalist **CARRIE CHERON** defies the definition of genre. She has performed as a soloist with and as an ensemble member of such groups as the Boston Baroque, the Handel + Haydn Society, the American Classical Orchestra, Arcadia Players, Yale Choral Artists, and Atlanta’s New Trinity Baroque. Carrie is also a nationally recognized, award-winning, performing singer/songwriter and has shared the stage with such acclaimed artists as Sweet Honey In The Rock, The Barra MacNeils, David Jacobs-Strain, Anais Mitchell, and Edie Carey. She is on the voice faculty at Berklee College of Music. www.carriecheron.com



PAUL D'ARCY is in demand nationally as a soloist and chamber musician. Recent solo appearances include Handel’s *Messiah* and Mozart’s *Requiem* with the Austin Symphony, as well as Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio*, and Mozart *Requiem Undead*. Concert work in NYC includes Musica Sacra, St. John the Divine, Trinity Wall Street, Musica Viva, American Classical Orchestra, and Orchestra of St. Luke’s. National ensembles include Seraphic Fire, San Diego Bach Collegium, True Concord, Ensemble Origo, and Spire. Discography includes Harmonia Mundi, Reference, Naxos, and PBS, including Conspirare’s 2015 Grammy winning CD. Paul also enjoys making barrel-aged cocktails, cooking, and traveling.



With a voice hailed as “vivid” (Wall Street Journal) and “unusually sparkling” (Kansas City Star), **DOUG DODSON** is making his mark on opera and concert stages throughout the United States. Notable recent engagements include The United Way in the American premiere of Tod Machover’s *Death and the Powers* with American Repertory Theater, Nireno in Handel’s *Giulio Cesare* with Boston Baroque, Cupid in Blow’s *Venus and Adonis* with the Oregon Bach Festival, and Ottone in Monteverdi’s *L’incoronazione di Poppea* with the Aldeburgh Music Festival’s prestigious Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme. Originally from Spearfish, SD, he holds degrees in both voice and anthropology.



Conductor, lyric baritone, pianist, and arranger **MATTHEW GOINZ** enjoys an active and international musical career. He has worked closely with numerous ensembles including extensive work with Cantus and the Grammy-nominated True Concord Voices & Orchestra. Recently, Matthew made his solo debut with the Baltimore Symphony under the baton of Marin Alsop. His choral arrangements have been heard by audiences from Minneapolis, MN to Busan, South Korea. He holds degrees in conducting and voice, makes his home in Silver Spring, MD with his wife, soprano Sophie Amelkin, and Lucy, the sweetest beagle, and thinks he's a pretty excellent cook.



Mezzo-soprano **CAROLYN GUARD** is a life-long Episcopal church musician, having begun her studies with the Royal School of Church Music at age 6. After attending the Eton Choral courses in the UK, Carolyn was a founding member of the Choral Fellow program in the Memorial Church at Harvard University. Carolyn has performed as a special guest artist with the Boston Camerata, and as a soloist at Durham Cathedral and St. Paul's Cathedral, London. Carolyn's decidedly nonmusical degrees are from Harvard University and Emory's Goizueta Business School. She lives in Atlanta with her husband, sons, and golden retriever.



Tenor **ERIK GUSTAFSON** is nationally active as an oratorio soloist and choral artist, and teaches voice at Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO. Erik has collaborated on two GRAMMY® Award-winning recordings with the Phoenix Chorale, and albums with Bach Collegium San Diego, Conspirare, True Concord, Spire Chamber Ensemble, and Sounding Light. He performs regularly with Seraphic Fire and Santa Fe Desert Chorale, and is a founder of Quadrivium. Past solo highlights include Bach's *St. John Passion* with Arizona Bach Festival, Handel's *Messiah* with Tucson Symphony Orchestra, and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with Oregon Bach Festival. Erik is a connoisseur of craft beer.



NATHAN HODGSON is a New York-based tenor specializing in early and chamber music. He sings with the Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and performs regularly with ensembles across the nation. Recent performances include appearances with Ensemble VIII in Austin, TX and with Bricolage Ensemble in a series of workshops and performances in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Before moving to New York, Nathan sang in the Dallas area with the Orpheus Chamber Singers, Dallas Bach Society, and Denton Bach Society. Nathan is an avid traveler but also loves spending time at home with his dog, Pippa.



CHRISTOPHER JACKSON serves as the Director of Choral Activities and Head of Voice at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA. He is in frequent demand as a guest conductor for Honor Choirs and festivals, and sings professionally with ensembles across the nation. Christopher has directed and co-founded numerous community and semi-professional groups, most recently Bricolage Project. A native of Stillwater, OK, Christopher enjoys cooking and philosophizing with his cats.



ROBBIE JACOBS studied Music at King's College Cambridge, where he was the Senior Choral Scholar under Stephen Cleobury, and holds a Master's in Choral Conducting from the Royal Academy of Music. He has sung with Tenebrae, The Sixteen, and The Chapel Royal of St. Peter ad Vincula at the Tower of London. As a conductor, he is the Co-Artistic Director of Reverie Choir, was the Acting Artistic Director of the London Youth Choir, has worked extensively with the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, and was the inaugural Conducting Scholar for Genesis Sixteen, under Harry Christophers and Eamonn Dougan. He is currently Director of Artistic Programming for the Boston Children's Chorus.



Soprano **SARAH MOYER**'s recent solo repertoire includes the American premieres of Nørgård's *Nova Genitura* and *Seadrift* with Lost Dog New Music Ensemble and a collection of Melani's works with Reed College Collegium, the world premieres of Theofanidis' *Four Levertov Settings*, Kallembach's *Easter Oratorio*, and Runestad's *The Hope of Loving* with Seraphic Fire, and Foss' *The Prairie* with Boston Modern Orchestra Project. As a choral artist, Sarah appears nationally Seraphic Fire, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, True Concord, The Thirteen, and Ensemble Origo. She enjoys spending time outdoors and expanding her refrigerator magnet collection. www.sopranosarahmoyer.com.



MEGAN ROTH, mezzo-soprano enjoys a varied career performing opera, oratorio, and art song. Recently she performed the role of Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Summer Garden Opera, Meg in Adamo's *Little Women* with MASSOpera, and Handel's *Messiah* with Rhode Island Civic Chorale. As a choral artist, she performs regularly with renowned national ensembles including Skylark Vocal Ensemble, Conspirare, True Concord, Yale Choral Artists, and The Thirteen. Megan is also the artistic director of Calliope's Call, a non-profit art song performance group. She enjoys reading, practicing yoga, and hiking with her husband Adam and their rambunctious Boston Terrier, Moxie.



Boston-based soprano **JANET STONE** was recently soloist in Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Britten's *The Company of Heaven*. She is a singer on staff and frequent soloist at Trinity Church, Copley Square and also sings with Handel + Haydn Society and Cappella Clausura, with whom she recently recorded *Exultet Terra: Choral Music of Hilary Tann*. Upcoming solo engagements include Fauré's *Requiem* and Bach's *Cantata 140: Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*. In her spare time, Janet continues her quest to be a professional cat-lady. You can follow her feline friend on Instagram @obiewancatnobi.



Nashville-based soprano **ALISSA RUTH SUVER** is thrilled to begin her second season with Skylark. Her love of choral music has been central to her musical life from an early age; she is the daughter of two music teachers, and can't remember a time when she wasn't in rehearsal! Although she is an Ohio native, her career has led her to sing nationwide with groups such as the Santa Fe Desert Chorale (NM), Vocal Arts Ensemble (OH), and Aire Born Recording Studio (IN). She loves running, hiking, and cooking in her spare time.



Described as a "rich-voiced" and "vivid" singer by a recent New York Times review, **PETER WALKER** performs with the Handel + Haydn Society, Three Notch'd Road, Texas Early Music Project, Clarion Society Choir, Staunton Music Festival, Early Music New York, Gotham Early Music, Apollo's Fire, Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Stamford Symphony, and Western Wind. Peter is a member of the choir of St. Luke in the Fields, and is a founding member of the medieval ensemble Marginalia. He holds degrees from Vassar College and McGill University, where he studied with Drew Minter and Sanford Sylvan.



DANA WHITESIDE's solo appearances include concert, opera and recital. A product of Longy School of Music, New England Conservatory and Tanglewood Music Center, he has received critical acclaim for his voice of "noble clarity throughout powerful and resonant" (The Washington Post). Recent highlights include *The Magic Flute* with Boston Baroque; the role of Count Carl Magnus in Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*; *Carmina Burana* at Mechanics Hall; Verdi's *Requiem*; and *Sea Symphony* at the Kennedy. Dana holds a degree in economics and parlays his skills and interest organizational development as President of the Board of Directors of Emmanuel Music.

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Even the best musical groups in America can only count on ticket sales to cover 50% of operating costs. We rely on your generous donations to help us with the balance of our operating budget. As a supporter, you ensure that we continue to:

- Provide career opportunities for the most talented ensemble singers in the U.S.
- Offer educational workshops and opportunities for young singers
- Expand the reach of Skylark's inspiring and engaging programming to audiences across the U.S. and the world

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Skylark's newest release, *Seven Words from the Cross*, was released in March 2018, was described by *Gramophone Magazine* as “passionate...eloquent...radiant...exquisite...ethereal...heartfelt...thrilling...stunning,” and charted at #2 on the Billboard Traditional Classical Chart. Conceived for Skylark's international debut Tenebrae's prestigious Holy Week Festival in London, this highly original album progresses through the scriptural seven last words of Christ on the Cross. This dramatic recording features uniquely American choral works and choral music from other regions of the world, pairing the music of William Billings and the Sacred Harp with the music of contemporary composers Anna Thorvaldsdottir and Jaakko Mäntyjärvi.



Skylark's first Christmas album, *Winter's Night*, released in December 2017 to international acclaim, with singing “of the highest standard for any area or any repertoire” (*Classics Today*). *Winter's Night* was chosen as one of the top new classical Christmas albums by *WFMT Chicago*, and charted at #7 on the Billboard Traditional Classical Chart, closely behind Yo-Yo Ma and Plácido Domingo. Praised by the BBC for its program, the recording features all seven of Distler's variations on the timeless Christmas hymn *Es ist ein Ros entsprungen*, interwoven with works that share a historical or compositional connection to Distler's, including music by Herbert Howells, Elizabeth Poston, John Tavener, and Peter Warlock, as well as three world premiere recordings.



Skylark's second commercial album, *Crossing Over*, was released in March 2016. Produced in collaboration with the GRAMMY® Award-winning team from Sono Luminus, *Crossing Over* debuted at #4 on the Billboard Traditional Classical Chart, reached #5 on the iTunes Classical Chart, and was the #1 New Release on Amazon Classical. In *Crossing Over*, Skylark shares texts and compositions that depict the dream state at the end of life. Featuring unique voices in choral composition from around the world, and including several world premiere recordings, *Crossing Over* takes audiences on a musical and emotional journey that taps deeply into the human spirit.



Skylark's debut album, *Forgotten Dreams* features inspiring, but seldom-heard, Romantic part-songs by Brahms, Debussy, Saint-Saëns, and Holst. Released in the spring of 2014, it introduced Skylark to the world of recorded music at its romantic best, performing music the group truly loves.

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