



# RESURGENCE

*songs of rebirth and renewal*

**Sunday May 15, 2022 at 5 pm**

University Lutheran Church, Cambridge

May 22 performance was cancelled due to Covid  
but **RESCHEDULED** for **Sunday June 5 at 5 pm**  
First Lutheran Church of Boston, 299 Berkeley Street

Walter Chapin, Director

Katheryn Currie, Asst. Director

**COVID-19 Restrictions Will Apply**

visit [www.orianaconsort.org](http://www.orianaconsort.org) for tickets & details

# *Resurgence*

## *songs of rebirth and renewal*

2022 is a tense year. The scourge of Covid has now been with us for twenty-eight long months. We watch anxiously as Ukraine valiantly confronts inhuman brutality that is inflicted upon its land and its people. We are apprehensive over our country's greatest social schism since the Civil War, which is accompanied by ominous signs that the democratic principles upon which our 234-year-old republic is based may be upon the point of disintegration. We wonder when (and if, and how) the current worldwide series of frequent natural disasters is ever going to abate. We are aghast at the multitude of lives, both young and old, that have been lost at the hands of individuals who are free to move about while brandishing weapons of war. And when our legislatures are implored to resolve any of the above problems, they respond not with competence, but with impotence.

This is a lot to worry about. Many of us, perhaps most, are striving, in ways great and small, to turn these nemeses around. Why do we do so? Perhaps because there is something about the human spirit that never stops seeking for that which is good.

But how do we know that is true? Because music exists — and it is through music that the human spirit reveals itself.

And this happens all over the world, on all continents and in all countries. And it finds expression in every human language.

In these concerts Oriana offers a tiny view of that vast musical expanse, by presenting choral music from four different continents and in eight different languages — English, Italian, German, Latin, Ukrainian, Hebrew, Mandarin, and isiXhosa. All of this very different music has essentially the same message: the human spirit, when inspired, has an infinite capacity for overcoming adversity.

—Walter Chapin

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***Please ensure that NO device you may be carrying will make a sound!***

***Please take no photos or videos during the performance!***

***If weather permits, a reception for audience and performers, with CONTACTLESS refreshments, will be held OUTSIDE, just out the front door of the church. Please join us!***

# The Program

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## I

- Valentin Sylvestrov b. 1937  
Молитва за Україну *Prayer for Ukraine*  
lyrics anonymous
- Claudio Monteverdi 1567 - 1643  
O Primavera *O Spring*  
poem by Giovanni Battista Guarini 1538 - 1612
- Xingjimin Pan b. 1986  
Poem I  
poem by the composer
- Charlotte Bray b. 1982  
Winter is Past  
poem from the Song of Solomon
- 

## II

- Edward Elgar/John Cameron 1857 - 1934 / b. 1944  
Lux aeterna *Eternal light*  
Elgar's *Nimrod* (ninth movement of the *Enigma Variations*, 1899),  
in a choral arrangement by John Cameron  
text from the Requiem Mass
- Abbie Betinis b. 1980  
Carmina mei Cordis *Songs of my Heart*
- Angele Dei *Angel of God*  
poem attributed to Reginald of Canterbury (11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> centuries)  
**Adrienne Fuller, soprano**
- Aeterna lux, divinitas *Eternal light, divinity*  
prayers from *Liturgia Horarum* (*Liturgy of the Hours*, i.e. the *Latin Breviary*)  
**Gary Gengo, alto**
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*Please enjoy a fifteen-minute intermission!*

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### III

*directed by Katheryn Currie*

Elliot Z. Levine b. 1949

Al Ha-Nissim *For the Miracles*  
Levine's arrangement of this Hebrew folksong

Kelvyn Koning b. 1994

Melt  
text from Psalm 97, with reference to various other books of the Bible

#### **Premiere performance**

Michael Barrett b. 1983

Ralf Schmitt b. 1988

Indodana *The Son of the Lord God*  
Barrett's and Schmitt's arrangement of this South African folksong

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### IV

Johann Sebastian Bach 1685 - 1750

Christ lag in Todes Banden *Christ lay in the bonds of death*  
Cantata BWV 4, 1707

- 1 Sinfonia
- 2 Versus 1—Chorus: Christ lag in Todes Banden
- 3 Versus 2—Duet: Den Tod niemand zwingen  
**Melanie Armstrong, soprano; Katheryn Currie, alto**
- 4 Versus 3—Aria: Jesus Christus, Gottes Sohn  
**J. William Budding, tenor**
- 5 Versus 4—Chorus: Es war ein wunderlicher Krieg
- 6 Versus 5—Aria: Hier ist das rechte Osterlamm  
**Dean Blackette, bass**
- 7 Versus 6—Duet: So feiern wir das hohe Fest  
**Rachel Stigers, soprano; J. William Budding, tenor**
- 8 Versus 7—Chorale: Wir essen und leben wohl

#### **Ensemble of Baroque-era instruments**

May 15: Julia Connor, violin 1 Subaiou Carter, violin 2  
June 5: Danilo Bonina, violin 1 Nelli Jabotinsky, violin 2

Ken Allen, viola 1 Zoe Chau, viola 2  
Rebecca Shaw, cello Anne Trout, contrabass  
Ruth McKay, chamber organ

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*We welcome you to the post-concert reception! Please join us!*



ORIANA CONSORT  
— Choral music from seven centuries —

Olivia Adams • Laura Amweg • Melanie Armstrong  
Dean Blackette • Sarah Bowling • J. William Budding  
Katheryn Currie • Bradley Delaney • Adrienne Fuller  
Gary Gengo • Andrea Hart • Ashley Mac • James Meyers  
Dennis O'Brien • Leah Okumura • Christopher Pitt  
Margaret Ronna • Irl Smith • Rachel Stigers  
Lauren Syer • James Tresner • Nic Tuttle

Walter Chapin *Founder and Director*  
Katheryn Currie *Assistant Director*

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The Oriana Consort embraces the premise that choral music, ever since its origin in Western Europe during the fifteenth century, has been uniquely capable of expressing intense emotions that arise from the depths of the human spirit. This kind of expression may involve words, but it does not happen through words alone. It is only through the medium of vocal polyphony that it happens: multiple voice parts, singing musical structures which are dissimilar, but which are unified through the arts of harmony, meter, and rhythm, and which are motivated by a common artistic impulse.

The Consort gradually evolved from several suburban amateur choral groups that Walter Chapin had directed in the 1970s and 1980s on Boston's South Shore. In 1994 the group adopted the name "Oriana Consort," moved its focus from the South Shore to Cambridge, and began to increase its membership — thus 1994 can be regarded as the Oriana Consort's founding year.

From about 2002 to 2008 the group further evolved toward its present form: an *a cappella* chorale of between twenty and thirty singers, auditioned to very high standards, who rehearse and perform primarily without accompaniment, tuning only to their own voices. The group's size is intimate enough for motets and madrigals, such as Claudio Monteverdi's *O Primavera* (which you will hear in these concerts), yet large enough to perform

demanding choral works such as Dominick Argento's *Seasons*, Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, Aaron Copland's *In The Beginning*, Eric Whitacre's *Sainte-Chapelle* (all of which Oriana has done in recent seasons), and the Elgar/Cameron *Lux aeterna* and J. S. Bach's *Cantata BW4, Christ lag in Todes Banden* (which you will also hear in these concerts) .

The name "Oriana Consort" is actually a misnomer, for the group is not really a *consort*, but a *chorale*. In its founding year of 1994 it was an eight-voice ensemble that actually *was* a consort — in the Renaissance sense of voices combined with Renaissance-era instruments — and the name stuck. The name is taken from *The Triumphes of Oriana*, a 1601 collection of madrigals by the English composer Thomas Morley and his colleagues. Morley specified that every madrigal in the collection was to sing the praises of an idolized woman by the name of "Oriana" — which was almost certainly a veiled reference to Queen Elizabeth I, and Morley may well have intended this group of madrigals to be a gift in her honor. Every now and then Oriana performs one or two madrigals from this collection.

Oriana's members gather once a week from many points in the greater Boston area to sing together and prepare programs to be presented in concert — a process requiring intense concentration and dedication. In normal times (i.e. not counting the unwelcome hiatus between the spring of 2020 and the fall of 2021) Oriana prepares two or three programs each year, and presents each program in Cambridge, Boston, and surrounding communities. The group's eclectic repertory is drawn from the 15th through the 21st centuries — for these are the seven centuries during which the tradition of polyphonic choral music flourished, which arose first in western Europe and later spread throughout all of Europe and the Americas. (Hence the motto under our logo on the preceding page: *Choral music from seven centuries*.) Music of the Baroque or the early Classical era, accompanied by instrumentalists from greater Boston's outstanding early music community, usually forms a part of one of Oriana's programs during every season.

Oriana has also performed on invitation: the group has participated four times in the Candlelight Concert Series of Old Ship Church in Hingham; twice in the "3rd Sundays @ 3" concert series sponsored by the Waltham Philharmonic Orchestra; in the Vanderkay Summer Concert Series of Blue Hill, Maine; in the concert series at The Center for Arts in Natick; in the Vox Humana series of Jamaica Plain; and in the Lux Aeterna multi-chorus concert held in Boston in January of 2005 to benefit survivors of the tsunami in Southeast Asia.

In March of 2007 the Consort was one of four Boston-area choirs to participate in a master class presented by Peter Phillips, director of the world-renowned Tallis Scholars.

Oriana was the opera chorus for “Italian Night at the Opera”, the gala concert presented in May of 2011 by the Waltham Philharmonic.

In the most recent five summers of the odd-numbered years (excepting 2021), Oriana performed as part of the Fringe Concert Series of the Boston Early Music Festival.

In late July and early August of 2013 The Oriana Consort undertook a four-concert tour to Germany, performing in Frankfurt am Main, Dietzenbach, and Leipzig. In the chancel of the Thomaskirche in Leipzig — where J. S. Bach was Kantor from 1723 to 1750 — the Consort surrounded Bach’s tomb to sing him two of his motets, and provided the choir music for a Sunday service there, singing music of Bach, Mendelssohn, Barber, and Bernstein.

Oriana has presented the premieres of four notable choral works:

In 2012 the group commissioned *Ani Adonai (I, the Lord)*, a setting of words of Isaiah by the Boston-area composer Adam Jacob Simon, and premiered this work in December of the same year.

In the spring of 2014 the group presented the East Coast premiere of *The Waking*, a setting of a Theodore Roethke poem by Abbie Betinis, a noted young composer from the Upper Midwest (more of whose works we are performing in the present concerts).

In December of 2015 Oriana presented the Massachusetts premiere of *The Longest Nights*, a setting of seven winter poems (by seven different poets) by Timothy C. Takach, another composer from the Upper Midwest. Oriana, together with one choir in each of forty-one other states of the USA, had the honor of participating in the joint commissioning of this work.

Also in December 2015, Oriana presented what was very likely the local premiere (and quite possibly the American premiere) of *Welcher Glanz erhellt den Dampf (What brilliance lights the mist)*, an Advent cantata written in 1717 by the prolific, gifted, yet little-known German composer Cristoph Graupner, a contemporary of J. S. Bach. We claimed that our performance of this work was “very likely the local premiere,” since a thorough search revealed absolutely no indication that any edition of this cantata had ever been published, either for performance or for scholarly study; nor that any public transcription of the composer’s manuscript score had ever been made. Since the facsimile of the composer’s 1717 manuscript of the score and parts of this cantata looked so

very interesting, Oriana's director undertook to transcribe it from that manuscript facsimile so that the group might perform it. We do think it likely that we were the first choral group in a very long time to have brought life to this lively and inventive cantata.

And in the present concerts Oriana is proud to present yet another premiere: that of *Melt*, a sacred choral work composed especially for Oriana by the young and talented Kelvyn Koning, who is very active in the Boston area as a singer, conductor, composer, and occasional Oriana member.

During the hiatus that began in mid-March of 2020, Oriana experimented with virtual performance of choral music: Our virtual choir version of Stephen Paulus' *The Road Home* (engineered by Oriana's resident technical guru Nic Tuttle) received over 1,000 views on YouTube. Our YouTube version of Tomás Luis de Victoria's *Missa O magnum mysterium*, which we had recorded in our "Fringe" concert of the Boston Early Music Festival in June of 2019, was directed by Assistant Directors Katheryn Currie and Valerie Thomforde.

**Walter Chapin**, the Oriana Consort's founder and Director, has degrees from Harvard and the New England Conservatory, and did graduate study at Boston University. He has directed amateur choral groups in the Boston suburbs, and has taught conducting and directed choruses at Boston University and at the high school level. In his other-than-musical life he is a retired-but-still-active computer information systems designer and developer, and a husband, father, grandfather, and carpenter.

Assistant Director **Katheryn Currie** is a graduate of Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, where she sang with the Madrigal Singers, renowned for their performances of Renaissance music in touring the USA and Europe. Katheryn has a Master's Degree in Vocal Studies from the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, and currently directs the children's choir at the Belmont-Watertown United Methodist Church.





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Valentin Sylvestrov

b. 1937

Молитва за Україну *Prayer for Ukraine*

lyrics anonymous

Claudio Monteverdi

1567 - 1643

O Primavera *O Spring*

poem by Giovanni Battista Guarini 1538 - 1612

Xingjimin Pan

b. 1986

Poem I

poem by the composer

Charlotte Bray

b. 1982

Winter is Past

poem from the Song of Solomon

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Valentin Silvestrov is not widely known outside his native Ukraine. Yet his compositional output is prodigious, as it includes nine symphonies, chamber music, works for piano, songs for solo voice, and choral music.

Before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Silvestrov was under pressure to make his music conform to the political precepts of the state — a task that seems to have made him uncomfortable. After the fall of USSR, he rejected the style in which he had previously been composing, one result of which was that he began to write choral music in the tradition of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. One example is *Prayer for Ukraine*, which he wrote in 2014, at the time that the Russian Federation annexed the Ukrainian territory of Crimea.

Although this brief piece contains some beautiful melodic touches, its style is nevertheless very simple, as its harmonic patterns recall conventions of the nineteenth century. What is unique about the piece is that Silvestrov uses the choir in such a way as to suggest the sonority of a vast Orthodox cathedral: throughout the piece, subsections of the voices are continually made to depart from the melody and to sustain tones that deliberately echo portions of the melody that were just sung, so as to give the effect of reverberation in a vast interior space. The singing of this simple and heartfelt prayer with the use of this striking musical effect suggests that those who are uttering the prayer have a boundless love for their native land and people.

Боже, Україну храни. Дай нам сили, віри й надії... Отче наш.

Bozhe, Ukrayinu khrary. Daj nam syly, viry j nadiyi... Otche nash.

Lord, protect Ukraine. Give us power, faith and hope... Our Father.

—author and translator anonymous

The music of Claudio Monteverdi represents one of the major bridges from the musical world of the Renaissance to that of the Baroque. In his nine books of madrigals, the first of which he brought out when he was but twenty years of age, and the ninth of which was published posthumously after his 76-year lifetime, one can trace the fact that Monteverdi used the madrigal, over all these years, more and more as a means of presenting *drama* — a development that led, quite naturally, to the rise of opera, a genre in which Monteverdi was the first composer of major importance.

*O Primavera* is from *Il terzo libro de madrigali* — Monteverdi's third book of madrigals — which appeared in 1592, when the composer was twenty-five. It is a setting of a poem by his contemporary Giovanni Battista Guarini, in which the narrator contrasts the beauty of springtime with the sadness brought on by the loss of his youthful hopes. The fact that Monteverdi was able to convey this contrast *purely by musical means* gives us an insight into his genius: springtime's beauty is represented in flowing passages in rapid rhythms, while the somber thoughts of the narrator's depression are represented by long sustained notes that sink their way down the scale.

O primavera, gioventù dell'anno,  
bella madre dei fiori,  
d'erbe novelle, e di novelli amori:  
tu ben lasso ritorni,  
ma senza i cari giorni de le speranze mie;  
tu ben sei quella ch'eri pur  
dianzi si vezzosa e bella.

Ma non son io quel che già un tempo fui,  
si caro a gli occhi altrui.

O spring, youth of the year,  
beautiful mother of flowers,  
of new grasses, and of new loves:  
you are indeed returning, alas,  
but without the dear days of my hopes;  
you indeed are the one who was pure,  
recently so charming and beautiful.

But I am not what I was just a time ago,  
so dear to the eyes of others.

—Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538-1612)

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Xingjimin Pan grew up in the People's Republic of China and earned his PhD in composition at the University of Utah. In 2016, while he was a graduate student there, he wrote:

Last year I received a commission to compose a choral piece for a top Chinese university for its 110th anniversary celebration, and somehow it was pretty successful, so more choral music commissions from China came, and are still coming after that. I never expected this, but I think I have now been dragged into the choral music business. And this might be my main focus these years. I am trying to bring new timbres and new ways of musical

expression into choral music, especially China's new choral music.

Pan's *Poem I*, which he composed in 2015, simply overflows with "new timbres and new ways of musical expression." Not only in the music, but also in the poem itself — written by the composer — we can detect the presence of a persona of great strength and individuality.

Yue guo yun duo, yue guo shi jian	Beyond the clouds, beyond time
Yue guo ni suo neng kong zhi de yi qie	Beyond all that you can control
Yue guo di ji, yue guo hai yang	Beyond the earth, beyond the ocean
Zai fei xiang yu chen zhong zhi jian	In the midst of flying and heaviness
Yu shi, wo you le yong qi	And now, I have the courage
Xiang xin lin su shuo na ge	To pour out from my heart
Ni jiang wei zhi dong rong de mi mi:	The secret that will move you:
Dang ji jing	When the silence
Dai ti xuan hua	Replaces the clamor
Wo	I
Jiu jiang chong sheng	Will be renewed

—Xingjimin Pan  
translation from the Mandarin by Xingjimin Pan

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Charlotte Bray, born in the UK 1982, studied cello and composition at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, and earned an MMus in composition with Distinction at the Royal College of Music. She subsequently studied with a number of renowned composers, including Oliver Knussen, of the UK, and Cambridge's own John Harbison. In 2008 she was at the Tanglewood Music Centre; in 2013, at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire. She has been commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and the London Sinfonietta.

In 2014, in memory of some friends, Bray wrote a set of three pieces for unaccompanied choir entitled *Come Away*, setting three texts drawn from the Song of Solomon. In these concerts Oriana is presenting the first of the set, *Winter is Past*, whose words are perhaps the best known of these three immortal biblical verses.

Just as Monteverdi's madrigals use musical devices to express the ideas and emotions behind the words, so does Bray's choral music in *Come Away*. But, while the two composers share this basic principle, their music is, after all,

separated by four and a quarter centuries; so, not surprisingly, the musical devices are not the same. When Bray wishes to emphasize new ideas that the words express, she does this by *constantly shifting the musical mode* — that is, the characteristic sound of a musical scale that arises from the sequence of whole and half steps upon which the scale is built.

The first sentence of *Winter is Past* is built upon the seven tones of the C major scale, but with its seventh degree flatted (B-flat). At the words “For lo,” however, two more tones of that scale shift to their flatted forms (E-flat and A-flat), thus changing the mode of the C major scale, and resulting in a noticeable change of harmonic texture. At “The fig tree” the mode returns to its original form (using only the B-flat); but a moment later the attention-getting words “a good smell” are given noticeable emphasis by the introduction of B-natural instead of B-flat. This shift toward the sharpened side continues an instant later, when the important word “Arise” is set to the tone F-sharp. The mode then drifts back to its former form, with the final “come away” returning to C major with both B and the A flatted, as heard previously.

The passion felt by the narrator of one of the world’s great love poems is strongly matched by Charlotte Bray’s fertile musical imagination.

My beloved spake, and said unto me,  
Rise up, my love, my fair one,  
and come away.

For, lo, the winter is past,  
the rain is over and gone:  
the flowers appear on the earth;  
the time of the singing of birds is come,  
and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

The fig tree putteth forth her green figs,  
and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.

Arise, my love, my fair one,  
and come away.

—from the Song of Solomon, in the King James translation



## Edward Elgar/John Cameron

1857 - 1934 / b. 1944

Lux aeterna

*Eternal light*

Elgar's *Nimrod* (ninth movement of the *Enigma Variations*, 1899),  
 in a choral arrangement by John Cameron  
 text from the Requiem Mass

## Abbie Betinis

b. 1980

Carmina mei Cordis

*Songs of my Heart*

Angele Dei

*Angel of God (prayer to a guardian angel)*

poem attributed to Reginald of Canterbury (11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> centuries)

**Adrienne Fuller, soprano**

Aeterna lux, divinitas

*Eternal light, divinity*

prayers from *Liturgia Horarum* (*Liturgy of the Hours, i.e. the Latin Breviary*)

**Gary Gengo, alto**

Edward Elgar's *Enigma Variations* was first performed in 1899. The ninth variation, entitled *Nimrod*, is perhaps the best known of the fourteen variations that comprise this notable orchestral work. "Nimrod" was a character in the Book of Genesis known as "a mighty hunter before the Lord." When Elgar composed this piece he had a particular "hunter" in mind: August Johannes Jaeger, an Anglo-German who was Elgar's friend, music publisher, and adviser in musical matters. "Jaeger" is the German word for "hunter."

During the twentieth century Elgar's *Nimrod* variation became immensely popular, as its use in various film music scores at the end of the century attests. While there seems to be nothing in the concept of "hunter" that suggests that the orchestral music of *Nimrod* could be transcribed for choral voices as a sung requiem, that very idea seems to have occurred to the British composer John Cameron — who did exactly that, in 1996, almost a century after Elgar composed the music.

John Cameron, perhaps not widely known outside the UK, is a most prolific composer, arranger, and conductor; his eclectic musical activity spans the genres of classical, jazz, rock, soul, folk, and hip-hop!

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

May everlasting light shine upon them, Lord,  
 with your saints in eternity,  
 for you are merciful.

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine,  
 et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Grant them eternal rest, Lord,  
 and may perpetual light shine upon them.

—from the Requiem Mass

Abbie Betinis, active as a composer in the Upper Midwest, is well known to the Oriana Consort. As noted on page 7 of this booklet, in 2014 Oriana presented the East Coast premiere of *The Waking*, a work of hers for unaccompanied choir, and we have performed many of her other works over the past two decades. Her younger sister Laura, a superlative alto singer, was for many seasons a member of Oriana.

Of *Angele Dei*, Betinis writes:

This musical invocation, inspired by my love for the choral music of Poulenc and Messiaen, perhaps also reflects my own deep desire for spiritual peace.

Angele Dei, qui custos es mei,	Angel of God, you who are my guardian,
Me tibi commissum pietate superna:	Whose piety from on high commits me to you:
Hac nocte illumina,	Shine [upon me] this night,
Custodi, rege, et gubernata.	Guard, rule, and guide.
Amen.	Amen.

—attributed to the monk Reginald of Canterbury (11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries)

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Of *Aeterna lux, divinitas* Betinis writes:

Because the text hails the unity of the Trinity, the piece modulates between two primary modalities, which then combine to form a third. They unify into a canon which spirals on, encircling and unifying all voice parts in its course. The Alleluia refrain and the playful soprano 'swoops' are my own additions to this traditional Catholic text.

Aeterna lux, divinitas, in unitate Trinitas, te confitemur debiles, te deprecamur supplices. Alleluia!	Eternal light, divinity, Trinity in unity, we humbly acknowledge you, we humbly pray to you. Alleluia!
Christum rogamus et Patrem, Christi Patrisque Spiritum, unum potens per omnia, fove precantes, Trinita. Alleluia!	We beseech Christ and the Father, the spirit of Christ and the Father, one powerful through all, cherish those who pray, Trinity. Alleluia!
Qui finis et exordium, rerumque fons et omnium, tu solus es solacium, tu certa spes credentium. Alleluia!	You who are the end and the beginning, and the fount of all things, you alone are comfort, you are the sure hope of believers. Alleluia!

O veritas, o caritas,  
O finis et felicitas,  
sperare fac et credere,  
amare fac et consequi.  
Alleluia!

O truth, O love,  
O ending and happiness,  
make us hope and believe,  
make us love and follow.  
Alleluia!

Qui cuncta solus efficit,  
cunctisque solus sufficit,  
tu sola lux es omnibus,  
et premium sperantibus.  
Alleluia!

You who alone made everything,  
and who alone are sufficient,  
you alone are the light for everyone,  
and a prize to those who hope.  
Alleluia!

—from the Liturgy of the Hours

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*Please enjoy a fifteen-minute intermission!*

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III

*directed by Kathryn Currie*

Elliot Z. Levine b. 1949  
Al Ha-Nissim *For the Miracles*  
Levine's arrangement of this Hebrew folksong

Kelvyn Koning b. 1994  
Melt  
text from Psalm 97, with reference to various other books of the Bible  
**Premiere performance**

Michael Barrett b. 1983  
Ralf Schmitt b. 1988  
Indodana *The Son of the Lord God*  
Barrett's and Schmitt's arrangement of this South African folksong

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Elliot Z. Levine, a founding member of the Western Wind Ensemble in 1969, is a graduate of Queens College of CUNY, and earned an MMus in composition at the Manhattan School of Music.

Western Wind is an eclectic six-voice *a cappella* group: its repertory includes folk music, Renaissance motets, Fifties rock'n'roll, medieval carols, and Duke Ellington.

His inventive and energetic setting of the Hebrew folk tune *Al Ha-Nissim* dates from the early 1990's. This song tells the story of the Hebrews' divine deliverance from their oppression, a formative event in the tumultuous history of this people.

Al ha-nissim v'al hapurkan  
v'al hagvurot v'al hat'shuot  
sheasita laavotenu  
laavotenu bayamim hahem  
baz'man haze.

Beemey matiyahu  
matiyahu ben yochanan  
kohen gadol Hashmonai unavav  
kesheamdah malkhut yavan  
al am'kha Yisrael  
le hashkicham tora tekha  
ulha'aviram mechu keretzo necha.

For the miracles and for the deliverance,  
and for the mighty acts, and for the acts  
of salvation that You performed for our  
ancestors in those days, at this time of  
year; In the days of Mattathias the son  
of Yochanan, the high priest, the  
Hasmonean and his sons, when the Greek  
Empire sought to force Your people Israel  
to abandon Your Torah and to deviate from  
Your chosen laws and practices, You in  
Your great mercy stood with them in  
their hour of distress.

—translation by Rabbi Gerald C. Skolnik

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Kelvyn Koning, who is active in the Boston area as a singer, student, conductor, composer, and occasional Oriana member, composed *Melt* for the Oriana Consort in the summer of 2019. The first performance of this piece was intended for our concerts in the spring of 2020 — but, as we all know, that turned out not to be possible. After a delay of two years, it is Oriana's pleasure to give this work its premiere at last!

Of *Melt*, the composer writes:

This piece, inspired by all the uses of the word “melt” in the Bible, begins with a proclamation about who God is, then immediately goes into a dense texture of different words and rhythms, blurring the lines of who God is according to human perception. Psalm 97 serves as a through-line of text while other words interfere. Gradually, the texture melts away until all voices are singing the same words, in harmony, then becoming homorhythmic, and finally ending in unison. This represents how our perception of God melts away in the reality of who They are. The use of “They/Them” pronouns in reference to God are to leave Their gender non-specified and furthermore ambiguous as to singular or plural, signifying God as a conglomerate of Their creation.

The word “melt” is primarily used in the Bible when referencing God's power, judgment, and justice, along with humility, reverence, fear, pain, and the changing of human hearts associated with these character traits. (This word is also used in reference to nature and purification.) All of these portrayals of



God are man-made and shed some light on the modern church's perspective of God, as seen in scripture.

He lifts His voice, the earth melts!  
The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad!  
Let the distant shores rejoice!  
The hearts of the people melted in fear  
and became like water, melted snow.

Melting away in all directions, melting away,  
melting in fear because of you,  
melting in fear because of us.  
In their peril their courage melted away.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of their throne.  
Our brothers have made their hearts melt in fear.

As wax melts before the fire,  
the elements will melt in the heat.  
Fire goes before them  
and consumes their foes on every side.  
You will be melted in a furnace.

Their lightning lights up the world;  
the earth sees and trembles  
like a slug that melts as it moves along.

Hearts melt;  
He sends his word and it melts them.  
My heart has turned to wax before the Lord of all the earth.

The mountains melt beneath them.  
The heavens proclaim their righteousness,  
and all peoples will see their glory.

Light shines on the righteous, and joy on the upright in heart.  
Rejoice in the Lord, you who are righteous,  
and praise Their holy name!

—text adapted by the composer from Psalm 97, the books of Exodus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Samuel, Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Nahum, and the words of the apostle Peter

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Michael Barrett and Ralf Schmitt, who collaborated in bringing out this arrangement of the South African folk tune *Indodana*, are both active in the choral music community of that country. Barrett is a choral conductor and lecturer at the University of Pretoria. His arrangements of traditional African music have been performed throughout South Africa and abroad.

Schmitt is a specialist in African choral music, and is passionate about the preservation of traditional South African folk music. He directs the 60-voice Mzansi Youth Choir, which is based in Johannesburg and which since its founding in 2003 has become a musical home for talented though underprivileged young people. This choir has toured North and South America, Japan, the UK, and Europe.

*Indodana* is a folk tune in isiXhosa, a language which is spoken by about eighteen percent of the South African population, and which is one of the official languages of the Republic of South Africa.

The lyrics of *Indodana* seem sad if they are simply read, for they express weeping and deep sorrow over the Crucifixion. Yet when these words are sung by choral voices to the tune's mesmerizing powerful harmonies, the emotional effect is one of great strength — a strength that seems to flow equally from every individual singer of the choir, giving the listener the impression of a great river of emotion. Strength can emerge from adversity!

**Women:**

Ngob'umthatile umtwana wakho,  
uhlale nathi.

The Lord has taken his son,  
who lived among us.

Hololo hehele.

*(represents crying)*

Indodana ka nkulunkulu  
bayi'bethelela.

The son of the Lord God  
was crucified.

Hololo hehele.

O Baba Jehovah.

O Father Jehovah.

**Men:**

Zjem zjem zha

*(expressive sounds; no definite meaning)*

Baba...

Father...

Ho Baba Jehovah.

O Father Jehovah.

— Barrett's and Schmitt's translation from the isiXhosa



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# IV

Johann Sebastian Bach

1685 - 1750

Christ lag in Todes Banden  
Cantata BWV 4, 1707

*Christ lay in the bonds of death*

- 1 Sinfonia
- 2 Versus 1—Chorus: Christ lag in Todes Banden
- 3 Versus 2—Duet: Den Tod niemand zwingen
- 4 Versus 3—Aria: Jesus Christus, Gottes Sohn
- 5 Versus 4—Chorus: Es war ein wunderlicher Krieg
- 6 Versus 5—Aria: Hier ist das rechte Osterlamm
- 7 Versus 6—Duet: So feiern wir das hohe Fest
- 8 Versus 7—Chorale: Wir essen und leben wohl

**Ensemble of Baroque-era instruments**

May 15: Julia Connor, violin 1 Subaiou Carter, violin 2  
June 5: Danilo Bonina, violin 1 Nelli Jabotinsky, violin

Ken Allen, viola 1 Zoe Chau, viola 2  
Rebecca Shaw, cello Anne Trout, contrabass  
Ruth McKay, chamber organ

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Johann Sebastian Bach wrote the cantata *Christ lag in Todes Banden* in 1707, very probably to demonstrate his talents as a composer when applying for the post of Kantor at the Blasius Church in the small town of Mühlhausen, in the Thuringia region of Germany, for these two events happened at the same time.

The eight verses that form the text of this cantata, written a century and a half earlier by Martin Luther, proclaim that just as the suffering of Jesus led to his ascension into heaven in glory, so does the death of any person lead not to permanent sorrow, but to a happy reunion with the Lord.

This is a perfect example of the *chorale cantata*, a genre popular with Lutheran composers and audiences in the eighteenth century. The melody of the chorale *Christ lag in Todes Banden* would have been as familiar to Lutheran congregants as, for example, *Abide With Me* would be to American Protestant congregants today. The chorale melody — distinguished by the dip of a half step on the second note, followed by a return to the original note and a climb to a note several steps higher — forms a distinctive motive that can be heard again and again throughout the music. It appears not only in all of the seven

sung verses, but at the very beginning in the *Sinfonia*, sounded by the instruments alone. *Listen for this chorale melody!* You'll hear it often!

Versus 1—Chorus

Christ lag in Todes Banden,  
Für unsre Sünd gegeben;  
Er ist wieder erstanden  
Und hat uns bracht das Leben.  
Des wir sollen fröhlich sein,  
Gott loben und ihm dankbar sein,  
Und singen Halleluja!  
Hallelujah!

Christ lay in the bonds of death,  
Given for our sins;  
He has risen again  
And has brought life to us.  
For this we ought to be joyful,  
To praise God and be thankful to him,  
And to sing Hallelujah!  
Hallelujah!

Versus 2—Duet

Den Tod niemand zwingen kunnt  
Bei allen Menschenkindern.  
Das macht' alles unsre Sünd;  
Kein Unschuld war zu finden.  
Davon kam der Tod so bald  
Und nahm über uns Gewalt,  
Hielt uns in seinem Reich gefangen.  
Halleluja!

No one could overcome death  
With all children of humankind.  
Our sin did all of that;  
No innocence was to be found.  
Therefore came death quickly  
And took power over us,  
Held us imprisoned in his kingdom.  
Hallelujah!

**Melanie Armstrong, soprano**  
**Katheryn Currie, alto**

Versus 3—Aria

Jesus Christus, Gottes Sohn,  
An unser Statt ist kommen,  
Und hat die Sünde weggetan,  
Damit dem Tod genommen  
All sein Recht und sein Gewalt;  
Da bleibet nichts denn Tods Gestalt;  
Den Stach'l hat er verloren.  
Halleluja!

Jesus Christ, of God the Son,  
To our place has come,  
And has done away with sin,  
And thereby has taken from death  
All its claims and its violence;  
Of death remains nothing but its form;  
It has lost the sting.  
Hallelujah!

**J. William Budding, tenor**

Versus 4—Chorus

Es war ein wunderlicher Krieg,  
Da Tod und Leben rungen;  
Das Leben behielt den Sieg;  
Es hat den Tod verschlungen.  
Die Schrift hat verkündigt das,  
Wie ein Tod den andern fraß:  
Ein Spott aus dem Tod ist worden.  
Halleluja!

It was a wonderful war  
In which death and life wrestled;  
Life obtained the victory;  
It devoured death.  
The Scriptures proclaimed  
How one death ate the other:  
Out of death has come a mockery.  
Hallelujah!

### Versus 5—Aria

Hier ist das rechte Osterlamm;  
Davon Gott hat geboten,  
Das ist hoch an des Kreuzes Stamm  
In heißer Lieb gebraten,  
Das Blut zeichnet unsre Tür;  
Das hält der Glaub dem Tode für;  
Der Würger kann uns nicht mehr schaden.  
Halleluja!

Here is the true Lamb of Easter;  
God offered of it,  
High on the stem of the cross  
It burned in love's heat.  
The blood signifies our door;  
Faith holds it up to death;  
The shrike can harm us no more.  
Hallelujah!

**Dean Blackette, bass**

### Versus 6—Duet

So feiern wir das hohe Fest  
Mit Herzensfreud und Wonne  
Das uns der Herre scheinen läßt.  
Er ist selber die Sonne  
Der durch seiner Gnade Glanz  
Erleuchtet unsre Herzen ganz.  
Der Sünden Nacht ist verschwunden!  
Halleluja!

Thus do we celebrate the high feast  
With heartfelt joy and delight  
That the Lord lets shine upon us.  
He himself is the sun  
Who through his shining grace  
Enlightens our hearts totally.  
Night of sins has vanished!  
Hallelujah!

**Rachel Stigers, soprano  
J. William Budding, tenor**

### Versus 7—Chorale

Wir essen und leben wohl  
In rechten Osterfladen;  
Der alte Sauerteig nicht soll  
Sein bei dem Wort Gnaden,  
Christus will die Koste sein  
Und speisen die Seel allein.  
Der Glaub will keins andern leben.  
Halleluja!

We eat and live well  
With the proper cakes of Easter;  
Old sourdough should not  
Be for the word "grace".  
Christ wants to be the fare  
And alone feed the soul.  
Faith does not wish to live otherwise.  
Hallelujah!

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***Weather permitting, please join us OUTSIDE for conversation and CONTACTLESS refreshments immediately after the performance!***

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The Oriana Consort gratefully acknowledges the gifts of the generous people listed on the following two pages — *without whose support these concerts would not be possible.*

Those listed on the following two pages have very kindly made tax-deductible gifts to Oriana during the past two years or so. In acknowledgement, their names are appearing in all of our program booklets for at least one full year after the gift was made. Gifts made with a special ascription are acknowledged separately, as Special Gifts.

Typically concert admissions provide about 50% of Oriana's revenue; gifts provide the remaining 50%. Although we are equally grateful for every gift, the amounts of gifts to Oriana do vary, so in order to suggest their relative magnitudes we have borrowed names and symbols that were used during the Renaissance to designate durations of musical notes: *Maxima, Longa, Breve, and Semibreve.*

Oriana's singers and all those listed on the following two pages form a community whose bond is a shared love of choral music. **If hearing Oriana's music has been an experience of value to you, and if you have never (or not very recently) made a gift to Oriana, *we hope you will consider participating in this community* by presenting Oriana with a tax-deductible gift!**

To make a gift, please either email [director@orianaconsort.org](mailto:director@orianaconsort.org), or visit [www.orianaconsort.org](http://www.orianaconsort.org), click "Contribute", and donate securely with PayPal. Your gift will be acknowledged in our program booklets for one full year. ***Our thanks in advance!***

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Photos by James Tresner





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— Choral music from seven centuries —

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***See the GBC member chorus listings on the following page.***

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Oriana in rehearsal, March 17, 2019

photo by Caroline Kinney