

NEW AMSTERDAM SINGERS

CLARA LONGSTRETH, Music Director

2022-2023 Season



*Broadway Presbyterian Church
114th Street and Broadway
New York City*

NEW AMSTERDAM SINGERS

Clara Longstreth, *Music Director*

José Juan Marzal Fernandez, *Assistant Conductor*

Nathaniel Granor, *Chamber Chorus Assistant Conductor*

Pen Ying Fang, *Pianist*

I Have Had Singing

Song From the Road

Craig Hella Johnson

(b. 1962)

I Have Had Singing

Steven Sametz

(b. 1954)

José Juan Marzal Fernandez, *Conductor*

Everyone's Voice

Mark Kilstofte

(b. 1958)

New York premiere

Full Chorus

Wait on the Lord

Rosephanye Powell

(b. 1962)

Songs of Springtime

E.J. Moeran

(1894-1950)

Spring, the Sweet Spring

Love is a Sickness

Sigh no more, Ladies

Good Wine

Clara Longstreth and Nathaniel Granor, *Conductors*

The Campers at Kitty Hawk

Michael Dellaira

(b. 1949)

Chamber Chorus

INTERMISSION

O Cool Is the Valley Now

Thomas Beveridge

(b. 1938)

Me! Come! My Dazzled Face!

Andrew Rindfleisch

(b. 1963)

Women's Voices

The Ballad of Little Musgrave
and Lady Barnard

Benjamin Britten

(1913-1976)

José Juan Marzal Fernandez, *Conductor*

Men's Voices

Design for October

Irving Fine

(1914-1962)

From The Choral New Yorker

Mark Rehnstrom, *Bass*

Father William

From Alice in Wonderland

A Real Slow Drag

Scott Joplin

(1867-1917)

Asha Lindsey, Soprano

Elisa Peimer (5/19), Isabel Colman (5/21), Mezzo-Soprano

We're Goin' Around

Paul Parsekian, Tenor

Two excerpts from Treemonisha

Full Chorus

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.

I Have Had Singing

Today's program is focused on English language poetry found in compositions that span almost a century. In the first group, singing is the theme, and that broad idea is used both metaphorically and realistically. ("Sing your ships into their harbors," and, "The singing will never be done.")

We begin with a piece jointly commissioned by a consortium of ten choruses, to benefit the programs of the group "Chorus America." The composer, **Craig Hella Johnson**, is best known as a conductor. He has conducted the Victoria Bach Festival and directed the Vocal Arts Ensemble in Cincinnati, and is the Artistic Director and founder of the award-winning group Conspirare. Johnson chose the poet Michael Dennis Browne to write a text for the commission, and writes this of *Song From the Road*:

*We are each on our own journey, traveling this road of life,
and yet we find ourselves traveling together. This piece for
you is intended as a quiet call to return home to discover
yourself and to rediscover our home with each other.*

*Long on this journey,
Long in these shadows,
Far from the only home;
Low all our hoping,
Deep the undoing,
Just this forsaken road*

*Voices we dream of,
Echoes remember,
We all together there;
Heaven was once
Our song to be singing,
Hearts' every word
In wonder and joy.*

*I am how your heart discovers
All the hopes that sleep in you
I am every silence calling
I am Fountain
I am Meadow
I am every secret door*

*Sing your ships into their harbors
Sing them bring them heal them home
Murmur every holy river
I am Harvest
I am Blossom
I am leaves around your soul*

*Come from the shadows, into the gleaming,
Dawn of the day in us;
Open our lives to everything growing —
How shall we say this grace?
World we are watching, world we are,
Keep us in life with you.
How do we answer? How do we know?
Love bring us closer. Mercy us home.*

*I am how your heart discovers
All the hopes that sleep in you
I am every silence calling
I am Fountain
I am Meadow
I am every secret door*

*Sing your ships into their harbors
Sing them bring them heal them home
Murmur every holy river
I am Harvest
I am Blossom
I am leaves around your soul.*

— Michael Dennis Browne

Stephen Sametz is another composer-conductor. His music is widely performed and recorded, and he has conducted and

written for the Princeton Singers and Lehigh University choral groups. For his *I Have Had Singing*, Sametz paraphrases the words of an 80-year-old horseman from Ronald Blythe's study, *Akenfield, Portrait of an English Village*. Blythe recounts tales from the lives of people he met in the north of England — pigmen, gravediggers, fruit pickers, and the like — vanishing breeds in the face of progress. He was startled by the harshness and beauty of their lives. Sametz wrote *I Have Had Singing* in 1993, and NAS last performed it in 2007.

The singing.

There was so much singing then,

and this was my pleasure too.

Oh, We all sang, Oh, the boys in the fields,

the chapels were full of singing,

always singing, always singing, always singing;

Here I lie.

I have had pleasure enough,

I have had singing, I have had singing.

— Ronald Blythe

We now turn to a composer whose works we have sung in five previous programs, starting in 2009. They included his *Missa L'Homme on the Range* and, most recently, *This Amazing Day* in 2016. **Mark Kilstofte** is a winner of the Rome Prize, ASCAP's Rudolf Nissim Award, several Copland House Awards, and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His choral works have been featured by the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, the New York Virtuoso Singers, Petri Sångare, and the Dale Warland Singers.

In his notes in the score of *Everyone Sang*, Kilstofte writes:

Siegfried Sassoon, a contemporary of (and mentor to) Wilfred Owen, is best remembered for his poems about World War I.

At first glance, his poem Everyone Sang seems to celebrate the transformative power of communal song — indeed, it

could be interpreted simply as a paean to choral singing — but in light of Sassoon's wartime experiences, the wordless song mentioned therein most likely arises from the trenches: that is, in the midst of hostilities, rather than after they have ceased. As I was completing this piece in late February our world suddenly descended into another senseless war. And, so, this most human of responses (singing) takes on even greater meaning and touches a chord deep within us all.

The singing will never be done. Slava Ukraini!

*Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark-green fields; on – on – and out of sight.*

*Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted;
And beauty came like the setting sun:
My heart was shaken with tears; and horror
Drifted away ... O, but Everyone
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the singing will never be done.*

— Siegfried Sassoon

In the last few years, NAS has sung five works of **Rosephanye Powell**. Most of those have been lively, many influenced by spirituals. *Wait on the Lord* was composed in 1997 on Psalm 27 and Isaiah 40. You will hear Powell's trademark syncopation and jaunty counterpoint.

Powell's works have been premiered at halls around the country, including Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. She has been commissioned by professional choral ensembles including Cantus and Chanticleer. Recent highlights include a four-movement work called *Gospel Trinity* for narrator, chorus, piano, and orchestra, which had its New York premiere at Lincoln Center by Distinguished Concerts Singers International, and another work for the Sofia Chamber Choir in Bulgaria.

While serving as Professor of Voice at Auburn University, Powell also travels the country presenting lectures and giving workshops. Her many awards include the "Living Legend Award" presented by California State University African Diaspora Sacred Music Festival in Los Angeles.

Wait on the Lord, be strong and of good courage.

Wait on the Lord, I say, on the Lord.

They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength,

They shall mount up with wings as eagles.

They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

— Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:31

We now turn to a composer new to New Amsterdam Singers, **E.J. Moeran**. Moeran was born in England but lived for many years in Ireland. During World War I Moeran enlisted, serving first as a motorcycle dispatch rider, then as a second lieutenant. After serving in France, he was sent to Ireland to counter Republican unrest. There, Moeran spent much time collecting Irish folksongs.

After the war, Moeran studied composition seriously, and between 1920 and 1925 produced an extensive body of works. He became friends with the composer Peter Warlock and lived for some time with him in a center where artistic culture (and heavy drinking) affected him very much. He ceased composing until 1929, when he began to renew his life. He composed *Songs of Springtime*, a cycle of seven songs on Elizabethan poems, in 1930. The Chamber Chorus sings four of the seven songs today. The 2020 online edition of Groves Music notes:

Moeran occupied a minor place in the music of his time, but his meticulously polished and ready technique is unsurpassed among his British contemporaries.... Moeran's legacy may also be seen in his folksong-like themes, which are all original, but capture the essence of the English and

Irish countryside and landscape that was his love and inspiration.

The poems of his cycle, by Herrick and Shakespeare, among others, deal with nature and love, and include one rollicking drinking song. The melodies may seem folk-like, but the harmony is far from standard. Delightfully quirky is the point!

Spring, the Sweet Spring

*Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-wit-ta-woo!*

*The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-wit-ta-woo!*

*The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-wit-ta-woo!
Spring, the sweet Spring!*

— Thomas Nashe

Love is a Sickness

*Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that with most cutting grows,
Most barren with best using.*

Why so?

*More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries,
Heigh ho!*

*Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
And Jove hath made it of a kind*

Not well, not full nor fasting.
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies,
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries,
Heigh ho!

— Samuel Daniel

Sigh no more, Ladies

*Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more.
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into hey nonny, nonny.*

*Sing no more ditties, sing no moe
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into hey nonny, nonny.*

— William Shakespeare

Good Wine

*Now that the Spring hath filled our veins
With kind and active fire,
And made green liveries for the plains,
And every grove a quire:*

*Sing we a song of merry glee,
And Bacchus fill the bowl.
Then here's to thee; and thou to me
And every thirsty soul.*

Nor Care nor Sorrow e'er paid debt,
Nor never shall do mine;
I have no cradle going yet,
Not I, by this good wine.

No wife at home to send for me
No hogs are in my ground,
No suit in law to pay a fee,
Then round, old Jockey, round.

Shear sheep that have them, cry we still,
But see that no man 'scape
To drink of the sherry,
That makes us so merry,
And plump as the lusty grape.

— William Browne

In turning from the work of a British composer of the early twentieth century to **Michael Dellaira's** *The Campers at Kitty Hawk*, we enter a new world of sound. In 1998, Dellaira composed a large-scale choral trilogy on texts from John Dos Passos' novel trilogy, *USA*. The first novel (*The 42nd Parallel*) included a sketch of Rudolf Valentino, the second (*1919*) a sketch of Isadora Duncan. The third in the series (*The Big Money*) included a portrait of the Wright Brothers.

Dellaira writes that he saw the *USA* trilogy as representing three strands of American culture: high art, popular culture, and, as in the Wright Brothers, the promise of American progress — a blend of science, utility, and risk.

So, to echo the ingenuity of the inventors of flight, Dellaira wrote a complex, fast-moving, perhaps risky, piece for unaccompanied chorus. The singers tell the story of the first flight, the narrative punctuated by fragments of text, in a chant-like, syncopated, high energy romp.

On December seventeenth nineteen hundred and three Bishop Wright of the United Brethren received a telegram from his boys Wilbur and Orville,

who'd gotten it into their heads to spend their vacation in a little camp out on the dunes of the North Carolina coast with a homemade glider they'd knocked together themselves. The telegram read: SUCCESS FOUR FLIGHTS THURSDAY MORNING AGAINST TWENTY ONE MILE WIND STARTED FROM LEVEL ENGINE POWER ALONE AVERAGE SPEED THROUGH AIR THIRTY ONE MILES FIFTY SEVEN SECONDS INFORM PRESS HOME CHRISTMAS.

The figures were a little wrong but the fact remains a couple of young bicycle mechanics from Dayton Ohio had designed and flown for the first time ever a practical airplane.

In those days flying machines were the big laugh of all the cracker-barrel philosophers. They were practical mechanics; when they needed anything they built it themselves.

They hit on Kitty Hawk on the great dunes and sandy banks that stretch south to Hatteras seaward. Overhead the gulls and swooping terns, fishhawks and cranes flapping across the salt marshes.

They were alone there and figured out the loose sand was as soft as anything they could find to fall in, taking off again and again from Kill Devil Hill they learned to fly.

Aeronautics became the sport of the day, congratulated by the czar, crown prince, the King of Italy, King Edward for universal peace.

Taking off again and again they learned to fly. In the rush of new names the Brothers Wright passed from the headlines: Bleriot, Farman, Curtiss, Ferber, Esnault, Peltrie, Delagrangé can blur the memory of the chilly December day two shivering bicycle mechanics first felt their homemade contraption soar into the air, above the dunes of Kitty Hawk.

"I released the wire that held the machine to the track. The machine started forward into the wind. Wilbur ran at the side holding the wing. The machine started slowly facing twenty seven mile wind, it lifted from the track. Wilbur was able to stay with it until it lifted from the track after a forty foot run. The course of the flight up and down was erratic, the first flight in the history of the world. The machine carried a man by his own power into the air in full flight forward without reduction of speed landed at a point as high as that from which it started."

When these points had been firmly established we packed our goods and returned home, knowing that the age of the flying machine had come at last.

— John Dos Passos

Two very different pieces scored for women's voices will be performed next. **Thomas Beveridge**, a composer-conductor and one-time student of Nadia Boulanger, wrote *O Cool Is the Valley Now*, on a lovely poem by James Joyce from his *Chamber Music*, while a student at Harvard.

*O cool is the valley now
And there, love, will we go,
For many a choir is singing now
Where love did sometime go.
And hear you not the thrushes calling,
Calling us away?
O cool and pleasant is the valley
And there, love, will we stay.*

— James Joyce

The composer **Andrew Rindfleisch** is also a pianist, conductor, educator, and record producer with an interest in jazz and improvisation. He has written for orchestra, brass ensemble, string and woodwind chamber ensembles, and chorus. Rindfleisch has won over 40 awards and prizes for his music, including the Aaron Copland Award and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He has founded contemporary music ensembles, and over the past 20 years has conducted or produced 500 works by living composers. Rindfleisch writes this about his setting of Emily Dickinson's *Me! Come! My Dazzled Face!*:

This extroverted composition, with racing imitation and occasional pointillistic textures, attempts to capture the adventure and near-manic joy of the poem's substance: that is, the breath-taking excitement and ecstatic realization of

being recognized and welcomed into heaven by the saints themselves.

*Me! Come! My dazzled face
In such a shining place!*

*Me! Hear! My foreign ear
The sounds of welcome near!*

*The saints shall meet
Our bashful feet.*

*My holiday shall be
That they remember me;*

*My paradise, the fame
That they pronounce my name!*

— *Emily Dickinson*

The composer **Benjamin Britten** was born in England on November 22, 1913, the same day as the Feast of St. Cecilia, patron saint of music. After a boyhood in which he composed prolifically, he attended the Royal College of Music, which he found frustratingly parochial and conservative. In his 20s, Britten wrote plays and documentary films and collaborated often with the poet W.H. Auden. New Amsterdam Singers has sung many works of Britten, including *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, *Ceremony of Carols*, *Flower Songs*, and, most recently, *Rejoice in the Lamb*.

The Ballad of Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard was written in 1943. The story of how it came to be written is at least as interesting as the piece itself. Here is Britten's program note for a performance the year after the premiere (at the Aldeburgh Festival):

During the 1939-1945 war, Richard Wood, the singer and an old friend of mine, was a prisoner-of-war for several years in Oflag VIIb, in Eichstätt, Germany. In this camp he started choirs and orchestras among the prisoners; hearing of it, I

wrote [this piece] for him and his friends and somehow, through devious means, his sister, Anne Wood, managed to get a copy to him (page by page in microfilm). This arrived in time to be performed in a festival which the prisoners had organized for February 1944—and it was given four times.

The English folk ballad dates from the seventeenth century. There are many versions, but the anonymous text used by Britten came from the *Oxford Book of Ballads*. The story, scored for men's chorus and piano, tells of a nobleman who discovers his wife in an adulterous affair. It does not end well, but the plot allows the composer to write a mini opera in nine minutes.

*As it fell on one holy-day,
As many be in the year,
When young men and maids together did go
Their matins and mass to hear,*

*Little Musgrave came to the church door
The priest was at private mass
But he had more mind of the fair women
Than he had of Our Lady's grace.*

*The one of them was clad in green,
Another was clad in pall,
And then came in my Lord Barnard's wife,
The fairest amongst them all,*

*Quoth she, "I've loved thee,
Little Musgrave, Full long and many a day."
"So have I lov'd you, my fair ladye,
Yet never a word durst I say."*

*"But I have a bower at Bucklesfordberry,
Full daintily it is dight;
If thou'lt wend thither, though Little Musgrave,
Thou's lig in my arms all night."*

*With that beheard a little tiny page,
By his lady's coach as he ran.*

Says, "Although I am my lady's footpage,
Yet I am Lord Barnard's man!"

Then he's cast off his hose and cast off his shoon,
Set down his feet and ran,
And where the bridges were broken down
He bent his bow and swam.

"Awake! Awake! Thou Lord Barnard,
As thou art a man of life!
Little Musgrave is at Bucklesfordberry
Along with thine own wedded wife!"

He called up his merrymen all:
"Come saddle me my steed;
This night must I to Bucklesfordb'ry,
F'r I never had greater need."

But some they whistled, and some they sang,
And some they thus could say,
Whenever Lord Barnard's horn it blew, it blew:
"Away, Musgrave, away, away, away!"

"Methinks I hear the threstlecock,
Methinks I hear the jay;
Methinks I hear Lord Barnard's horn,
Away, Musgrave, away!"

"Lie still, lie still, thou Little Musgrave,
and huggle me from the cold;
'Tis nothing but a shepherd's boy
A-driving his sheep to the fold."

By this, Lord Barnard came to his door
And lighted a stone upon;
And he's pull'd out three silver keys,
And open'd the doors each one.

He lifted up the coverlet,
He lifted up the sheet:

"Arise, arise, thou Little Musgrave,
And put thy clothès on;

*It shall ne'er be said in my country
I've killed a naked man.*

*"I have two swords in one scabbard,
They are both sharp and clear;
Take you the best, and I the worst,
We'll end the matter here."*

*The first stroke Little Musgrave struck
He hurt Lord Barnard sore;
The next stroke that Lord Barnard struck,
Little Musgrave ne'er struck more.*

*"Woe worth you, woe worth, my merry men all!
You were ne'er born for my good!
Why did you not offer to stay my hand
When you saw me wax so wood?"*

*"For I've slain also the fairest ladye
That ever wore woman's weed,
Soe I have slain the fairest ladye
that ever did woman's deed.*

*"A grave, a grave," Lord Barnard cried,
"To put these lovers in!
But lay my lady on the upper hand,
For she comes of the nobler kin."*

— Anonymous

Irving Fine — teacher, conductor, respected and widely-programmed composer of chamber, orchestral, and choral music — was educated at Harvard and later taught there and at Brandeis University. He studied composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, and won many awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship. Fine was a contemporary of Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland, but died in 1962 at age 48.

For *The Choral New Yorker*, written in 1944, Fine chose poems that had been published in *The New Yorker* in the 1920s and 1930s. Jake Falstaff's evocation of autumn, *Design for October*, uses

rhymes whose sounds are musical themselves: "stir the fawn," "black on the lawn," "crying geese of the dawn." While Falstaff does not specifically link the end of summer to the end of life, his repetitive insistence on the end has an incantatory power: "Summer is gone! Summer is ended. It is done. It is gone. It is ended." Fine writes *largo e lamentoso* as instructions for this appealingly bleak lament.

*Then I heard a voice saying
Summer is gone!
Summer is ended.
It is done. It is gone. It is ended.
No more at morning
Will you stir the fawn,
Or see the blackbirds,
Black on the lawn.
No more at morning
Will you hear the crying
Geese of the dawn.
Then in my window,
Grave was I.
Gravely I watched
The summer die
And the last of the crying
Geese go by.*

— Jake Falstaff

Fine used a completely different "voice" for his *Alice in Wonderland* set, composed just before *The Choral New Yorker*. *Father William* is a witty musical setting of Lewis Carroll's absurd and wonderful poem, marked by rhythmic dexterity (especially for the pianist) and harmonic surprises.

*"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white.
And yet you incessantly stand on your head.
Do you think at your age it is right?"*

*"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I feared it would injure the brain
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."*

*"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet.
Yet, you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak,
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"*

*"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw
Has lasted the rest of my life."*

— Lewis Carroll

Scott Joplin, the Black pianist and father of ragtime, published fifty-three pieces for piano, ten songs, and one opera. At the turn of the 20th century, his piano music was hugely successful with publishers and audiences both in America and Europe. His opera, *Treemonisha*, however, was a source of heartache for Joplin. He was unable to find a publisher for it, and in 1911 brought out a piano-vocal score at his own expense. His years of struggle to produce *Treemonisha* resulted in a single performance in Harlem in 1915.

With no scenery, lighting, costumes, or orchestra, this was more of an audition presented in hopes of attracting backers than a premiere. Joplin was crushed by the indifference of the audience, and the failure of the opera contributed to his mental decline and his death in 1917. The opera's true premiere took place in Atlanta in 1972 under the direction of Robert Shaw, with an orchestral arrangement by the composer T.J. Anderson. The performance was a joint production of the music department of Morehouse College and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. In 1976 Joplin was posthumously awarded the Pulitzer Prize for music for *Treemonisha*. This time the success

was complete. The *Performing Arts Encyclopedia* of the Library of Congress notes that Joplin's libretto:

tells the tale of the adopted daughter of former slaves Ned and Monisha; because the baby was found under a tree, she is named Treemonisha.... The theme of the work — the importance of an education for both men and women — is powerfully set against music that borrows all of the elements of European opera and merges them with the unique rhythms of ragtime.

Not all of the choruses were in ragtime, but several of the best were, and the connection to dance is obvious. The rag evidently derived from the quadrille, the country dance, the rondo, and the military march. The terms rag, cakewalk, two-step, and slow drag were applied to music in duple meter to which a variety of dance steps could be performed. *We're Goin' Around* is one such dance, and Joplin even wrote some choreography into the score (although we will not be performing it here!). Ultimately, Treemonisha's adventures drive home Joplin's message that education will set you free. At the end of the opera, she is elected leader of the town, and everyone celebrates with *A Real Slow Drag*.

A Real Slow Drag

Salute your partner, do the drag, drag, drag.

Stop and move backward, do the drag.

All of you stop.

Look to your right and do the drag, drag, drag.

To your left, to your left, that's the way.

Marching onward, marching onward,

Marching to that lovely tune;

Marching onward, marching onward,

Happy as a bird in June.

Sliding onward, sliding onward,

Listen to that rag.

Hop and skip, now do that slow, do that slow drag.

*Dance slowly, prance slowly,
While you hear that pretty rag.
Dance slowly, prance slowly,
Now you do the real "Slow Drag."
Walk slowly, talk lowly,
Listen to that rag,
Hop and skip, now do that slow, do that slow drag.*

*Move along, don't stop, don't stop dancing,
Drag along, stop,
Move along, don't stop, don't stop dancing,
Drag along, doing the real slow drag.*

*Dance slowly, prance slowly,
While you hear that pretty rag.
Dance slowly, prance slowly,
Now you do the real "Slow Drag."
Walk slowly, talk lowly,
Listen to that rag.
Hop and skip, now do that slow, do that slow drag, slow.*

— Scott Joplin

We're Goin' Around

*Dere was a man befo' de war,
— O, we're goin' around.
Said he didn't like his moth-'n-law
— O, we're goin' around.
I know we'll have a jolly good time,
— O, we're goin' around.
Because de weather's very fine,
— O, we're goin' around.

All join hands an' circle once mo',
— O, we're goin' around.
Don't go fast, an' don't go slow,
— O, we're goin' around.
Let yo' steps be light an' neat.
— O, we're goin' around.*

*Be careful how you shake yo' feet,
— O, we're goin' around.*

*Swing dat lady,
— Goin' around.*

*Swing dat lady,
— Goin' around.*

*Swing her gently,
— Goin' around,
Keep on goin' around, 'round.*

*Swing dat gent'mun,
— Goin' around.*

*Swing dat gent'mun,
— Goin' around.*

*Swing, swing, goin' around,
Keep on a-goin' around, keep a-goin' round.*

*Gals all smilin',
— Goin' around.*

*Gals all smilin',
— Goin' around.*

*Smilin' sweetly,
— Goin' around,
Keep on goin' around, 'round.*

*Boys all smilin',
— Goin' around.*

*Boys all smilin',
— Goin' around.*

*Swing, swing, goin' around,
Keep on a-goin' around, 'round, 'round, 'round.*

— Scott Joplin

Program Notes © 2023 Clara Longstreth

New Amsterdam Singers

Soprano

Orren Alperstein
Sophie Arroyo
Robin Beckhard*
Martha Beckwith
Colleen Blain
Jayanthi Bunyan**
Laura Cohen**
Dana Crowell**
Susan Daum
Naomi Draper
Lillie Dremeaux
Janet Field
Laura Klein
Abigail Kniffin
Jaime Leifer**
Asha Lindsey
Michelle Neary*
Andrea Olejar*
Judith Pott*
Elizabeth Stein
Elspeth Strang
Miki Takebe
Jennifer Trahan

Alto

Cynthia Brome
Isabel Colman
Rebecca Dee**
Jenny Delson
Stephanie Golob
Sally Hoskins**
Hannah Kerwin
Eleanor Kulleseid
Elisa Peimer

Ellen Stark*
Vera Sziklai
Donna Zalichin

Tenor

José Juan Marzal Fernandez
Nathaniel Granor**
Thomas Haller
Robert J. Marlowe
Nate Mickelson
Paul Parsekian*
John W. Pinegar
Benjamin Prud'homme*
Timothy H. Sachs**
William Simpson
Hsin S. Wang
Scott Wilson

Bass

Bendix Anderson*
Michael Berger
Ross Bradshaw*
Walter Daum
Eli Enenbach**
Steven Hanna
Philip Holmgren**
Steve Holtje*
Michael Landy*
John Leuenhagen
Robert Palmer
Mark Rehnstrom
Caleb Small

*Chamber Chorus

**Chamber Chorus Only

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Clara Longstreth, *Music Director*

José Juan Marzal Fernandez, *Assistant Conductor*

Pen Ying Fang, *Accompanist*

Patricia Ann Neely, *Manager*

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New Amsterdam Singers

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www.nasingers.org

About the Artists

New Amsterdam Singers, now in its fifty-fifth 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 fiftieth 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 sixty years.

NAS has performed with the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein, at Alice Tully Hall as a guest of Clarion Concerts, and with the American-Russian Youth Orchestra under Leon Botstein at Tanglewood and Carnegie Hall. NAS appeared with Anonymous 4 and the Concordia Orchestra in Richard Einhorn's *Voices of Light* at Avery Fisher Hall, under Marin Alsop, in 1999; in 2006 NAS performed *Voices of Light* at the Winter Garden of the World Financial Center with Anonymous 4 and Ensemble Sospeso, under David Hattner, for broadcast on WNYC's *New Sounds*.

NAS has 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. On recent tours the chorus appeared 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 Westenburg 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.

José Juan Marzal Fernandez, Assistant Conductor, was born in Puebla, Mexico, where he began studying music at the age of five and performed in children's choirs, including the Children's Choir of BUAP. At the age of 10, he began his studies in violin in the studio of Julio Saldaña Torres in the Música Esperanza Young Academy. In 2013, at the age of 17, Mr. Marzal became the Artistic Conductor of the Saint Cecilia Chamber Choir in Puebla, becoming the youngest conductor in the ensemble's 30-year history.

After receiving a bachelor's degree in music from the Universidad de las Américas Puebla in Mexico, Mr. Marzal was accepted into the choral conducting program at Manhattan School of Music in New York City, where he studied with Kent Tritle and graduated with honors in 2021. He is currently part of the artistic team at St. John the Divine in New York City.

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 she 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 Ms. Fang was

honored to be a featured performer in a Philip Glass opera workshop in North Adams, MA.

Ms. Fang 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 a BM and MM in Piano at Rutgers University.

Patricia Ann Neely, Manager, is a professional musician, arts administrator, and educator. A graduate of LaGuardia High School of Music and Art and the Performing Arts and Vassar College, she also holds an MFA in Historical Performance from Sarah Lawrence College. Ms. Neely has worked as Director of Events and Concert Management at Mannes College of Music, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and Bard Graduate Center; and as Senior Director of Programs at Harlem School of the Arts.

Ms. Neely is a specialist in early music and has been a featured performer with many early music ensembles, playing viola da gamba, violone, vielle, and baroque bass. She is currently the managing director and a member of Abendmusik, New York's Period Instrument String Band.

Ms. Neely's teaching credits include the Amherst Early Music Festival and Workshop, the Viola da Gamba Society of America Conclave, Brearley School, Vassar College, Wagner College, and The Mannes College of Music. She is a member of the Board of Early Music America (EMA) and chaired the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Task Force from 2019-2021. She is also on the Board of the Viola da Gamba Society of America (VDGSA) where she currently chairs the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee.

Mark Johnson Rehnstrom, Bass, made his Carnegie Hall debut singing the bass solos in Handel's *Messiah* with Musica Sacra. He has sung the solos in Beethoven's *9th Symphony* with the San

Francisco Symphony, the Detroit Symphony, the Nashville Symphony and the Vermont Symphony.

He sang the role of Demetrius in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* with the Milwaukee Symphony and the role of Froh in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* with the Arizona Opera and the Dallas Opera. Most memorably, he performed the role of Lennie in Carlisle Floyd's opera, *Of Mice and Men*, with the Cleveland Opera. He has appeared in Australia, Italy, and the United States playing the role of the Evil Astrologer In New York's Ensemble for Early Music's production of *Daniel and the Lions*. Mark made his Broadway debut as a member of the on-stage chorus in *Coram Boy*.

Mark appears frequently with many of the major professional choruses in the New York City area. He is also an avid song composer.

Asha Lindsey, Soprano, is a native of New York City's Washington Heights neighborhood. She graduated from The New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, MA. She received her Magister Diplom in Oper Gesang (Opera Studies) from Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst at the Max Reinhardt Seminar in Vienna, Austria. While studying there, her Opera and Musical Theater career took off. After a decade of performing throughout Europe, Asha returned to New York and is excited to continue her musical journey.

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▲ In memory of Spencer
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Thanks to Robin Beckhard, Cynthia Brome, Lillie Dremeaux, Stephanie Golob, Andy James, Mike Landy, John Leuenhagen, Jaime Leifer, Rob Marlowe, Michelle Neary, Patricia Neely, and Donna Zalichin for assistance in program production.

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Visit 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").

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 auditions@nasingers.org to arrange an audition.

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