

31 Arizona years Repertory Singers

Dr. Jeffrey A. Jahn
Music Director In Memoriam

Nadeen Jahn
Interim Music Director

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Accompanist

Program Notes

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A Tribute Concert Honoring the Legacy of Dr. Jeffrey A. Jahn

How Can We Keep From Singing?

April 19, 2015

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How Can I Keep From Singing?	Warner (1820 - 1915) & Lowery (1826 – 1899) arr. Z. Randall Stroope

Tribute Video – *The Art of Jeffrey Jahn*

Directed and Produced by Daniel Buckley, Videographer
Daniel Buckley Productions LLC

Alleluia	Ralph Manuel (b. 1951)
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Song of Praise – Knut Nystedt (1915 – 2014), a native of Oslo, Norway, based most of his compositions for choir and soloists on Biblical and other religious themes. His works were greatly influenced by Palestrina and Gregorian chants, as well as Aaron Copland - with whom he studied. From 1946 to 1982 Nystedt was the organist at Torshov Church in Oslo, where he founded several choral groups. He also taught choral conducting at the University of Oslo from 1964 to 1985. He received numerous awards for his compositions and was knighted by King Olav in 1966.

Song of Praise, based on Psalm 148, is a jubilant accolade to God and all of creation. The driving rhythms, changing meters, major chords and tonal clusters underscore the unbridled joy of this song.

Laudate Pueri – (from *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*, K 339)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791) scarcely needs any introduction; he was one of the most prolific and significant composers of the Classical era. He was born in Salzburg, Austria into a musically gifted family - his father, Leopold, was a composer, musician and teacher, and his sister was a proficient keyboardist. A precocious child prodigy, Mozart began his musical life as a performer and composer at age five and wrote his first symphony when he was eight years old. In the years that followed, he traveled widely throughout Europe as a composer and performer where he was introduced to respected composers including J.S. Bach and Handel (whom he greatly admired). Mozart and Joseph Haydn also became fast friends and musical comrades. Although he became very successful and composed over 600 works (symphonies, operas, concertos, sonatas, string quartets, masses and choral music), many of which were popular in his time, Mozart and his wife Constanze often lived in poverty and debt, due to a lifestyle that was luxurious beyond their means. Nonetheless, his works were pinnacles of the genres in which he composed, and his musical style was a major influence for other composers, including Beethoven. The illness that caused Mozart's death at such a young age is mostly conjecture. Although he was gravely ill, he remained productive until he died, penning the opera *The Magic Flute* and other well-known compositions. *Laudate Pueri*, based on Psalm 113, asks the servants of God to praise Him, with declamatory vocal lines and an insistent rhythm throughout.

Laudate Pueri

Laudate nomen Domini

Sit nomen Domini benedictum ex hoc

Nunc et usque in saeculum

A solis usque ortis ad occasum

Laudabile nomen Domini

Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus

Et super caelus gloria ejus

Quis sicut nomen Deus noster,

Qui in altis habitat

Et humilia respicit in caelo et in terra?

Suscitans in terra inopem

Praise the Lord, O ye servants

Praise the name of the Lord

Blessed be the name of the Lord

From this time forth and forevermore.

From the rising of the sun to its setting

The Lord's name is to be praised

The Lord is above all peoples

And His glory above the heavens

Who is like the glory of our God,

Who dwells on high

Who humbly beholds the things in

heaven and earth?

Out of the dust he raised the poor

*Et de stercore erigens pauperem
Ut collocet eum cum principibus
Cum principibus populi sui,
Qui habitare fecit sterilem in domo
Matrem filiorum laetantem
Glory Patri et Filio
Et Spiritui Sancto
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

*So to lift the needy out of the dunghill
That he may set the people with the princes.
Even the princes of His people.
He makes the barren woman to keep house
And to be a joyful mother of children
Glory to the Father and to the Son
And the Holy Spirit
As it was in the beginning, is now and forever,
And in the Holy of Holies. Amen.*

Richte Mich, Gott, op.78, Nr. 2

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809 – 1847), born in Hamburg, Germany, was a prolific composer, pianist, organist and conductor during the early Romantic period. His family was Jewish, but he was raised as a Christian by his father who converted to Christianity. J.S. Bach was an important influence; Mendelssohn's works reflect the tonal clarity of the Baroque and Classical periods, and was ultimately instrumental in reviving interest in works by Bach and Handel. He began composing and performing in childhood – publishing his first piece at the age of thirteen. Mendelssohn was acquainted with Berlioz and Liszt, but found their compositions too experimental for his conservative musical tastes. He also knew Goethe and Schumann, and was a mentor to the famous Swedish soprano, Jenny Lind. Although he was well known as a German composer, Mendelssohn spent time in England, where his pieces were premiered and well received by the public, including Queen Victoria and Prince Albert - both of whom admired his music.

Richte Mich, Gott, with its lush Romantic era harmonies, is based on Psalm 43. It begins in a minor key, with the Psalmist feeling isolated from God and beset by enemies, but ends on a hopeful note, signaled by a change to a major key, with the Psalmist promising to trust in God.

*Richte mich, Gott, und führe mein Sache,
Wider das unheilige Volk; und errette mich
Von den valschen und bösen Leuten.
Denn du bist mein Gott meiner Stärke
Warum verstoessst du mich?
Warum lässest du mich so traurig geben
Wenn mein Feind mich drängt?
Sende dein Licht und deine Wahrheit,
Das sie mich leiten zu dem heilige Berge
Und zu deiner Wohnung,
Dass ich hineingebe zum Altar Gottes,
Zu dem Gott, der meine Freude und Wonne ist.
Und dir, Gott, auf der Harfe danke, mein Gott.
Was betrüebst du dich, meine Seele,
Und bist so Unribig in mir?
Harre auf Gott! Denn ich werde ihm noch danken.
Dass er meines Angesichts Huelfe, und Mein Gott ist.*

*Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause,
Against an ungodly people; deliver me
From those who are deceitful and unjust.
For you are my God, my strength
Why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk about mournfully
When my enemy so oppresses me?
Send out your light and your truth,
And lead me to your holy hill
And to your dwelling.
Then I will go to the altar of God,
The God of my gladness and joy.
And I will thank you with harp, my God.
Why are you so troubled, oh my soul,
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God! For then I will give him thanks.
You are my help and my God.*

The One Hundred Fiftieth Psalm – Howard Hanson (1896 – 1981), born in Nebraska, of Swedish heritage, was a Neo-Romantic composer, conductor, educator and advocate of the American classical music style. He directed the Eastman School of Music for 40 years, and established the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra. Earning a BA degree in music from Northwestern University in 1916, Hanson received numerous awards, and produced many recordings. His opera *Merry Mount*, at its premiere at the New York Metropolitan Opera, received 50 ovations – a record yet unbroken. *The 150th Psalm* enthusiastically urges us to praise the Lord from the mountaintops with all things musical and evocative – trumpets, cymbals, harp, stringed instruments and dance. The exaltation of the Psalm is underscored by insistent rhythms, including percussive vocal repetition by the basses. The singers loudly declare praises to God, sometimes in unison for emphasis, sometimes with interesting and clashing harmonies. And in the end, all is resolved with a reverent “Alleluia.”

Trois Chansons (Three Songs) – The French composer Claude-Achille Debussy (1862 – 1918) was one of the most prominent composers of the Impressionist Period – along with Maurice Ravel. He studied at the Paris Conservatory, and received a scholarship to the Academie des Beaux-Arts, where he was noted for composing atonal music with dissonant harmonies, much to the disapproval of his teachers. Although he was recognized for his talent, Debussy was not always popular with his musical contemporaries because of his argumentative nature and unpredictable personality. However, he studied with a number of musical notables of the time, including César Franck, and set several poems to music by the French poet, Paul Verlaine. Although he was influenced by Wagner and Liszt among others, Debussy insisted on continuing his experimental approach to composition, inspired by his kindred spirit, Erik Satie. We are singing *Songs I and II* from **Trois Chansons**. The somewhat dissonant, but simple harmonies in *Dieu! Qui la fait bon regarder*, emphasize the happiness of the poet as he beholds a woman who, to him is perfect and beautiful. *Quant j'ay ouy le tabourin*, features a solo line, sung in a minor key, depicting the ennui of a person who hears tambourines calling everyone ‘to go a-Maying,’ but does not really want to participate. The underlying vocal parts sing an iterative, and teasing, “La, la, la!” (“Ooh, la, la!”) throughout the piece.

I. Dieu! Qui la Fait bon Regarder!

*Dieu! Qui la fait bon regarder,
La gracieuse, bonne et belle,
Pour les grands biens que sont en elle;
Chascun est prest de la louer.
Qui se pourrait d'elle lasser?
Toujours sa beauté renouvelle.
Dieu! Qui la fait bon regarder,
La gracieuse, bonne et belle,
Par de ça, ne de la, la mer
Ne scay dame ne damoiselle*

*God, who made her so fair to look at,
So graceful, good and beautiful,
For all the virtues that are hers;
All are quick to praise her.
Who could tire of her?
Her beauty constantly renews itself.
God, who made her so fair to look at,
So graceful, good and beautiful,
On neither side of the ocean
Do I know any girl or woman*

*Qui soit en tout parfait telle.
C'est un songe que d'i penser;
Dieu! Qui la fait bon regarder,*

II. Quant J'ay Ouy le Tabourin

*Quant j'ay ouy le tabourin sonner,
Pour s'en aller au may,
En mon lit n'en ay fait affray
En disant: "il est trop matin,
En peu je me rendormiray."
Quant j'ay ouy le tabourin sonner,
Pour s'en aller au may,
Jeunes gens partent leur butin,
De non chaloir m'accointeray
A lui je me butineray
Trouve l'ay plus prouchain voisin.
Quant j'ay ouy le tabourin sonner,
Pour s'en aller au may,
En mon lit n'en ay fait affray
Ne levé mon chief du coissin.*

*Who is altogether so perfect.
It's a dream even to think of her;
God, who made her so fair to look at.*

*When I heard the tambourine sound,
Call us to go a-Maying,
I did not let it frighten me in my bed.
Saying, "It is too early,
I'll go back to sleep for a little while."
When I heard the tambourine sound,
Call us to go a-Maying,
Young men dividing their spoils,
I cloaked myself in nonchalance
Clinging to it
Finding the nearest neighbor.
When I heard the tambourine sound,
Call us to go a-Maying,
I did not let it frighten me in my bed.
I did not lift my head from my pillow.*

Les Chansons des Roses — Morten Johannes Lauridsen, (b. 1943) served as composer-in-residence from 1994 to 2001 for the Los Angeles Masterworks Chorale, taught composition at the University of Southern California for more than 40 years, and was named an "American Choral Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts in addition to receiving many other grants, prizes and commissions through the years. Lauridsen's choral pieces are widely performed by choral groups, including ARS. In this concert, we are singing two of the pieces from this 5-piece song cycle. The poetry was written by Reiner Marie Rilke (1875-1926), who wrote almost 400 poems in French in addition to the vast number of poems written in German. Lauridsen describes his selection of Rilke's poetry for his composition in his own words, "These exquisite poems are primarily light, joyous and playful, and the musical settings are designed to enhance....and capture their delicate beauty and sensuousness."

IV. La Rose Complète

*J'ai une telle conscience de ton être,
rose complète,
Que mon consentement te confond
Avec mon cœur en fête.
Je te respire comme si tu étais, rose,
Toute la vie.
Et je me sens l'ami parfait
D'une telle amie.*

IV. The Perfect Rose

*I have such an awareness of your being,
perfect rose,
That my will unites you
With my heart in celebration.
I breathe you in, rose, as if you were, rose,
All of life.
And I feel the perfect friend
Of a perfect friend.*

V. *Dirait-on*

*Abandon entouré d'abandon,
Trendresse touchant au tendresses,
C'est ton intérieur qui sans cesse,
Se caresse, dirait-on.
Se aresse en soi-même
Per son propre reflet éclairé,
Ainsi tu inventes la thème
Du Narcisse exaucé.*

V. *So they say*

*Abandon surrounding abandon,
Tenderness touching tenderness,
Your oneness endlessly
Caresses itself, so they say.
Self-caressing
Through its own clear reflection,
Thus you invent the theme
Of Narcissus fulfilled.*

Alouette – This piece, arranged by Robert Sund, is based upon a French-Canadian children's 'playsong' that has become an unofficial national song. 'Alouette' means 'lark' in French, and a bird whose insistent early morning song was not always appreciated by people who were awakened too early by its annoying call. Hence, the song was created as a joke, with the thought of plucking out the lark's feathers. Alouette was originally sung by French Canadians who transported trade goods via rowboats in exchange for furs across the many trade route waterways of Canada. They believed that singing in rhythm helped them row faster as their oars were dipped into the water in unison. Many of us are familiar with *Alouette* from our school days, because it was used to help schoolchildren learn the names of facial structures as we pointed to them and sang at the same time. In this arrangement, Sund "plays up" the song by using light harmonies and teasing dissonances that are set in an amusing way.

*Alouette, gentille Alouette,
Alouette, je te plumerai,
Je te plumerai la tete, et la bouche,
Et le nez, et les yeux...*

*Oh lark, gentle lark,
Lark, I will pluck
I will pluck your head, and your mouth,
And your nose, and your eyes...*

Isn't It Romantic – Composer Richard Rodgers (1902 – 1979), and lyricist Lorenz Hart (1895-1943), are well-known American partners for numerous musicals and films in the early to mid 20th Century. They met while studying at Columbia University, and from 1919 to 1943 they successfully collaborated on 28 stage musicals and more than 500 songs, known for a generally optimistic and often wistful mood during a time of great stress in American history. Among their best-known songs are *Blue Moon*, *My Funny Valentine* and *Manhattan*. *Isn't It Romantic* is an ode to romance, with Rodgers's dense jazz harmonies adding to the allure and enjoyment.

Night and Day – Cole Porter (1891 – 1964) was one of the most important composers for the Broadway musical stage. Although he was classically trained, Porter was particularly drawn to musical theater as his musical medium. Unlike many Broadway composers who worked with lyricists, Cole chose to write both the lyrics and music for his songs. Some of his best-known pieces include *Begin the Beguine*, *I've Got You Under My Skin*, and *My Heart Belongs to Daddy*. His musicals featured such famous stars as Ethel Merman, Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, Bob Hope, and Bing Crosby. *Night and Day*, his best-known song, uses close jazz harmonies and heartbeat-like rhythms to amplify the singer's expression of longing and yearning for love.

The era of slavery was a traumatic time in American history, with unimaginable suffering for untold numbers of people from African origin. Proving the resilience of their spirit, spirituals and gospel songs emerged out of this suffering as a way to cope with their life situation. This musical heritage, along with the later development of blues and jazz that emerged from this musical heritage, has become a permanent legacy of American musical and cultural expression.

I Want Jesus — The arranger, Jester Joseph Hairston (1901 – 2000), composer, songwriter and arranger, was one of the luminaries among African-American arrangers who brought prominence to traditional Negro spirituals. His most famous arrangement is **Amen**, sung in the movie **Lilies of the Field**. He obtained a degree from Tufts University in 1928, and studied at Julliard. The spiritual, **I Want Jesus**, uses a slow, ambling rhythm, with the sopranos wailing, “I want Jesus” over an ostinato “Walk with me,” and expanded, “Walk with me, oh Lord.” Hairston’s use of ninths in his harmonies further enhances the pleading quality of the piece.

Goin’ Up to Glory — André J. Thomas (b. 1952) is another luminary among African-American composers and arrangers. He is a professor of music at Florida State University, Tallahassee and obtained his doctorate in music from the University of Illinois. Thomas rejected a career as a concert pianist in favor of teaching and conducting, both of which offered greater opportunities of interacting with emerging and accomplished musicians. He knew Jester Hairston and was positively influenced by his work. **Goin’ Up to Glory** is based on a “holler/worksong.” Worksongs were important to slaves because they realized that singing helped them maintain a cadence, which made their drudgery a little easier. An interesting feature of this song is the piano accompaniment with its strong, pounding rhythms. The sung parts are quite different from the piano, which uses syncopation and close harmonies to accentuate the words.

Sure On This Shining Night — In this composition, Morten Lauridsen uses a poem by the Pulitzer-Prize-winning James Agee. The poem, ‘Sure On This Shining Night,’ comes from Agee’s book, **Permit Me Voyage**, and has been interpreted by scholars to represent the resolution of sorrow through the kindness and hope for humankind, found in the exquisiteness of both the earth’s natural beauty and heaven’s celestial splendor. Lauridsen’s quiet expression of joy in the opening phrases by the men is accentuated by soaring voices from the women. All voices eventually blend together with the composer’s trademark seconds and ninths harmonies that transport the listener to a higher musical plane of hushed wonder, where, “Sure on this shining night, all is healed, all is health, hearts all whole.”

How Can I Keep from Singing? — This piece was originally written as a Christian hymn by Robert Lowry, (1826 – 1899), a pastor and composer of religious tunes. The version we are singing is arranged by Z. Randall Stroope (b.1953), a prodigious composer who received his doctorate in choral conducting from Arizona State University and is currently the Associate Professor of Conducting and Director of Choral and Vocal Studies at Oklahoma State University. Morten Lauridsen, one of the other choral composers featured in this concert, is a close friend of Randall Stroope. Anna Bartlett Warner (1820 - 1915) wrote these verses as a declaration that, “Life goes on in endless song, above earth’s lamentation” and “sounds an

echo in my soul.” Stroope’s opening choral statement by the men reflects the poet’s earnest rhetorical question, “While Love is lord of heav’n and earth, How can I keep from singing?” The song reaches a harmonically lush, joyous climax, and the voices gently, and infinitely fade away as they echo one another by “singing, singing, singing, singing...” This song has a special meaning for all of us in ARS as we consider the legacy, and words of Dr. Jeffrey Jahn: “Life is a song that must be sung.” And, so, we will keep on singing...in endless song.

Alleluia — Ralph Manuel, born in 1951 in Oklahoma City, received a master’s degree in church music from the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife spent 24 years doing musical missionary work for the Baptist Church in Recife, Brazil. His *Alleluia* is a lovely lyrical song of exaltation to the Almighty, and if you listen closely, you can hear passages reminiscent of Randall Thompson’s composition by the same name.

Tribute Video – The Art of Jeffrey Jahn

Directed and produced by Daniel Buckley, Videographer

Daniel Buckley Productions LLC

Interviews:

Anthony Constantino — Anthony sang with ARS for two seasons between 2010-2012 during his last two years of high school. Dr. Jahn was the first conductor to commission Anthony for a new piece of music to be performed by ARS. *Beauty Has the Coldest Heart*, was one of his submissions for the Young Composers Project, which resulted in Anthony’s selection as a finalist to perform this and other compositions at Carnegie Hall. Anthony is currently pursuing a Bachelor’s degree in Classical Composition at Manhattan School of Music in New York City.

Kirsten Cook — Alto Kirsten Cook sang with the Arizona Repertory Singers for a year in the late ‘80’s, rejoined in 1993 and has sung with ARS continuously ever since. Kirsten served as president of the ARS Board of Directors for six years, has led the altos as section leader for many years, and has been featured as a soloist with the ensemble. Jeffrey was Kirsten’s vocal coach from 1998 until his passing.

Angela Hagen — Angela, an alto, joined ARS in 1991, serving many years on its board and as board president in 1999. She works in communications and marketing.

Nadeen Jahn — Nadeen, wife of the late Jeffrey Jahn, is also a musician and conductor. She is a soprano soloist in ARS, the soprano section leader, and currently the Interim Music Director for ARS.

Steve Keyl — Steve sang in ARS from Jeffrey’s fifth through ninth season as Music Director, and occasionally accompanied the group on organ and piano. He is currently the Director of Music at St. Alban’s Episcopal Church in Tucson.

ARS would like to specially acknowledge Dan Buckley for creating an uplifting portrait of Jeffrey Jahn as a musician, mentor, educator, composer, humorist...and generous-hearted friend to so many people.