



THE 18TH STREET SINGERS PRESENT

# Winter's Night

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 27TH @ 7PM**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 28TH @ 4PM**

Washington, D.C. & Virtual (Jan. 27th only)

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\* Denotes section leader

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# *Winter's Night...*

Entering into a winter's night can be peaceful or frightening. One night, the dark is cold and isolating. The next, you take comfort in the stillness and calm, or find communion with nature or those who stoke a fire.

On this winter's night, we hear the Northern Lights dance and savor the warmth we find together. And we confront the dangers that seem closer in the darkness.

It might seem that life is dormant and hibernating, but we're making something new together tonight. We are thrilled to perform the North American premiere of a newly-composed mass by Icelandic composer Magnús Ragnarsson.

# *Winter's Night*

## **1. Wintertide**

Norwegian folksong arr. Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978)

Text by Charles Anthony Silvestri (b. 1965)

## **2. In the Bleak Midwinter**

Rebecca Dale (b. 1985)

Text by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

*Conducted by James Athey*

*Solo by Ashley Quarcoo*

## **3. Northern Lights**

Ēriks Ešenvālds (b. 1977)

Text by Charles Francis Hall (1821-1871) and Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930)

*Conducted by Sidney Clarke-Lequerique*

*Solo by Owen Fitzgerald*

## **4. Messa**

Magnús Ragnarsson (b. 1975)

*Solos by Mary Pelson, Alexandra Morton, Kim Harris, Johnny Beasley,  
and Kyle Cochran*

*Please hold your applause until the end of the Mass, which is in five parts:*

I. Kyrie

II. Gloria

III. Credo

IV. Sanctus

V. Agnus Dei

## **Fifteen-Minute Intermission**



**5. Rauði Riddarinn (“The Red Rider”)** Hreiðar Ingi Þorsteinsson (b. 1978)  
Text by Davíð Stefánsson (1895-1964)

**6. Where All Roses Go** Michael McGlynn (b. 1964)  
Text by Francis Ledwidge (1887-1917)  
*Conducted by Yannick Morgan*  
*Solos by Adam Grogg and Ryan McCarty*

**7. Våren (“Spring”)** Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) arr. Thomas Beck (b. 1978)  
Text by A.O. Vinje (1818-1870) and Heidi Kirmße (b. 1925)  
*Solo by Lily Roberts*

**8. Tyhoyi Nochi (“A Quiet Night”)** Natalia Tsupryk (b. 1995)  
Text by Serhiy Zhadan (b. 1974) and Volodymyr Zelensky (b. 1978)

**9. Blessed are the Peacemakers** Piers Connor Kennedy (b. 1991)  
Text by G.A. Studdert Kennedy (1883-1929)

**10. Lux Æterna Domine (“Everlasting Light, Lord”)** Patti Drennan (b. 1952)

**11. Shenandoah** Traditional, arr. Marshall Bartholomew (1885-1978)  
and Fenno Heath (1926-2008)

**12. My Heart be Brave** Marques L.A. Garrett (b. 1984)  
Text by James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)

# *Wintertide*

*Poem by lyricist Charles Anthony Silvestri*

Stillness comes when snow is falling  
Cov'ring all in solemn white;  
Lines of gray from hearth-fires rising  
Gath'ring all in restful night

Spirit dwells in deep reflection  
Autumn cares to lay aside  
Finding signs of new direction  
In the still of Wintertide

While outside the cold wind blowing  
Swirling, restless raw and rime  
Here inside a wave is growing  
Biding, silent, all in time

After Winter's meditation  
Gates of nature burst apart;  
Comes the Springtime's inspiration  
Flowing from the ready heart.

## *In the Bleak Midwinter*

While this carol tells a Christmas story, actual “midwinter” – halfway between the winter and spring solstices – comes at this time of year, when we’ve make it past the shortest days.

The Church of England commissioned this new setting of Christina Rossetti’s poem in 2021, and composer Rebecca Dale brought new, even slightly-disorienting harmonies to a story that moves from desolation and bleakness to warmth and joy.

**Conducted by James Athey**  
**Solo by Ashley Quarcoo**

# ***Northern Lights***

*Solo, from the writings of explorer, diplomat, and refugee advocate Fridtjof Nansen :*

Cik naksnīnas pret ziemeli  
redzēj' kāvus karojam,  
Ē, redzēj' kāvus karojam;  
Karo kāvi pie debesu,  
vedīs karus mūs' zemē;  
Ē, vedīs karus mūs' zemē

How many nights  
against the North wind  
I saw the Northern Lights fighting;  
Fighting in the sky,  
the Northern Lights  
Bring wars to our land

*Choir, from the writings of Arctic explorer Charles Francis Hall:*

It was night, and I had gone on deck several times.  
Iceberg was silent; I too was silent.  
It was true dark and cold,  
At nine o'clock I was below in my cabin,  
When the captain hailed me with the words:  
"Come above, Hall, at once! The world is on fire!"  
I knew his meaning, and, quick as thought,  
I rushed to the companion stairs.  
In a moment I reached the deck,  
And as the cabin door swung open,  
A dazzling light, overpowering light burst upon my startled senses!  
Oh, the whole sky was one glowing mass of colored flames, so mighty, so brave!  
Like a pathway of light the northern lights seemed to draw us into the sky.  
Yes, it was harp-music, wild storming in the darkness;  
The strings trembled and sparkled in the glow of the flames  
Like a shower of fiery darts.  
A fiery crown of auroral light cast a warm glow across the arctic ice.  
Again at times it was like softly playing, gently rocking silvery waves  
On which dreams travel, into unknown worlds.

**Conducted by Sidney Clarke-Lequerique**  
**Solo by Owen Fitzgerald**

# Messa

We are thrilled to welcome composer Magnús Ragnarsson and all of you to the North American premiere of this work. Ragnarsson writes: *"I got the idea when I was watching a movie with my children. I wanted the upper voices to start with a rhythmical ostinato and then have the basses enter after approximately twenty bars with a three notes theme. I had carried this idea for many years and then when the COVID epidemic hit I finally had time to do something with this. I spent a lot of time searching for a text that could fit this rhythmical choir piece. I did not intend this to be a religious work. I needed to find a three syllable word that the basses could repeat. I was literally walking up a mountain near Reykjavík with my family in April 2020 when the word struck me: HOSANNA. When I came back down from the mountain I had fitted the Sanctus text from the Latin Mass to my musical ideas.*

*The first movement, "Kyrie," is a serious prayer and the most Icelandic of them all. "Gloria" is the most joyous one and rather rhythmic. "Credo" has the most text and the form is quite free. It starts as a Gregorian chant, gets very dramatic, then romantic and ends in a jazzy way. "Agnus Dei" was the most difficult one to compose. Even though it seems simple I wanted it to be peaceful and beautiful and that is very challenging to write."*

## **Please hold your applause until the end of the mass.**

I. Kyrie Eleison ("Lord, have mercy")

II. Gloria ("Glory to God in the highest")

Gloria in excelsis ("Glory in the highest")

Domine Deus ("Lord God")

Quoniam tu solus sanctus ("For you alone are holy")

III. Credo ("Creed")

Credo in unum Deum ("I believe in the one God")

Deum de Deo ("God from God")

Crucifixus ("Who was crucified for our sake")

IV. Sanctus ("Holy, holy, holy")

V. Agnus Dei ("Lamb of God")

**Solos by Mary Pelson, Alexandra Morton, Kim Harris,  
Johnny Beasley, and Kyle Cochran**

# ***Rauði Riddarinn (“The Red Rider”)***

*Davíð Stefánsson frá Fagraskógi, Icelandic poet, wrote this poem to evoke folklore in 1929.*

Svo einmana verður enginn  
að ekki sé von á gesti,  
riddara í rauðum klæðum  
sem ríður bleikum hesti.

Riddari' í rauðum klæðum  
með rjúkandi sigð í höndum,  
hleypir, svo hófana dynur  
heyrst í öllum löndum.

Af jóreyk mannheimar myrkvast  
og moldin sópast að skjánum.  
Riddarin brýst inn í bæinn,  
og blóðið drýpur af ljánum.

Riddari' í rauðum klæðum  
með rjúkandi sigð í höndum,  
hleypir, svo hófana dynur  
heyrst í öllum löndum.

No one is ever so lonely,  
That they can't expect a guest,  
A rider in red clothing  
who rides a pale horse.

A rider in red clothing,  
smoldering scythe in hand,  
galloping, the rumbling of hooves  
is spread throughout the lands.

A cloud of dust darkens the world of man,  
and grime covers the window.  
The rider raids the home,  
blood drips from the scythe.

A rider in red clothing,  
smoldering scythe in hand,  
galloping, the rumbling of hooves  
is spread throughout the lands.

## ***Where All Roses Go***

*This piece is based on Irish poet Francis Ledwidge's “Lament for Thomas MacDonagh.” Most of his poetry was published in 1917, after Ledwidge at been killed at Ypres, Belgium.*

He shall not hear the bitter cry  
In the wild sky, where he is lain,  
Nor voices of the sweeter birds,  
Above the wailing of the rain.

Nor shall he know when loud March blows  
Thro' slanting snows her fanfare shrill,  
Blowing to flame the golden cup  
Of many an upset daffodil.

Soon the swallows will be flying south,  
The winds wheel north to gather in the snow.  
Even the roses split on youth's red mouth  
Will soon blow down the road all roses go.

But when the Dark Cow leaves the moor,  
And pastures poor with greedy weeds,  
Perhaps he'll hear her low at morn,  
Lifting her horn in pleasant meads.

Soon the swallows will be flying south,  
The winds wheel north to gather in the snow.  
Even the roses split on youth's red mouth  
Will soon blow down the road all roses go.

**Conducted by Yannick Morgan  
Solos by Adam Grogg and Ryan McCarty**



# Våren (“Spring”)

*A.O. Vinje was a romantic poet and journalist who chronicled the beauty of the Norwegian countryside and rural dialect as the country was gaining partial independence from Sweden.*

Enno ein gong fekk eg vetren at sjå  
for våren at røma;  
Heggen med tre som der blomar var på  
eg atter såg bløma.

Yes, once again winter's face would I see  
to Spring's glory waning,  
whitethorn outspreading its clusters so free  
in beauty enchaining.

Enno ein gong fekk eg isen at sjå  
frå landet at fljota,  
Snjoen at bråna og fossen i å  
at fyssa og brjota.

Once more behold from the earth day by day  
the ice disappearing,  
snow melting fast and in thunder and spray  
the river, careering.

Graset det grøne eg enno ein Gong  
fekk skoda med blomar;  
Enno eg hørde at vårfuglen song  
mot sol og mot sumar.

Emerald meadows, your flow'rets I'll spy  
and hail each new comer;  
listen again to the lark in the sky  
who warbles of summer.

Ein gong eg sjølv i den vårlege eim,  
som mettar mitt auga,  
Ein gong eg der vil meg finna ein heim  
og symjande lauga.

Once more I'm drawn to the Spring-gladdened vale  
that stilleth my longing;  
there I find sunlight and rest without fail,  
and raptures come thronging.

Alt det som våren imøte meg bar,  
og Blomen eg plukkad',  
Federnes åndir eg trudde det var,  
som dansad' og sukkad'.

All unto which here the Spring giveth birth,  
each flow'r I have riven,  
seems to me now I am parting from the earth  
a spirit from Heaven.

Derfor eg fann millom bjørkar og bar  
i våren ei gåta;  
derfor det ljod i den fløyta og skar,  
meg tyktest at gråta.

Therefore I hear all around from the ground  
mysterious singing,  
music from reeds that of old I made sound,  
like sighs faintly ringing.

**Solo by Lily Roberts**

# Tyhoyi Nochi (“A Quiet Night”)

*From “The History of Snow,” by Serhiy Zhadan (translated by Oksana Maksymchuk)*

Тихої ночі співаємо  
Доки мовчіть середмістя  
Ми кладемо зерна зітхання  
В чорноземі дихання

It is us who sing in the quiet of the night  
when the inner town is silent  
burying the seeds of our sighs  
in the breath of black earth

*From President Volodymyr Zelensky's speech on the Day of Victory over Nazism in WWII (May 9, 2022):*

Тихої ночі співаємо. Доки мовчіть середмістя Ми кладемо зерна зітхання. В чорноземі дихання.

Our land was sown with bullets and shells. No enemy was able to take root here. No shackles bind our free spirit. We are free people who have their own path.

# ***Blessed are the Peacemakers***

*G.A. Studdert Kennedy was a WWI chaplain, nicknamed "Woodbine Willie" for giving soldiers Woodbine cigarettes. After the war, he became a poet, pacifist, and activist for the working class.*

Blessed are the eyes that see  
the things that you have seen,  
Blessed are the feet that walk  
the ways where you have been.

Blessed are the eyes that see  
the Agony of God.  
Blessed are the feet that tread  
the paths His feet have trod.

Blessed are the souls that solve  
the paradox of Pain,  
And find the path that, piercing it,  
leads through to Peace again.

## ***Lux Æterna Domine***

*Text from the traditional Roman Missal Requiem.*

Lux æterna luceat eis, Domine,  
cum sanctis tuis in æternum, quia pius es.  
Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine,  
et lux perpetua luceat eis,  
cum sanctis tuis in æternum, quia pius es.

May eternal light shine on them, Lord,  
with your saints for ever, for you are gracious.  
Give them eternal rest, Lord,  
and may light perpetual shine upon them,  
with your saints for ever, for you are gracious.

## ***Shenandoah***

*Text from the traditional sea shanty.*

O Shenandoah, I long to see you,  
And hear your rolling river  
O Shenandoah, I long to see you,  
Way, we're bound away, across the wide  
Missouri.

I long to see your smiling valley  
And hear your rolling river.  
I long to see your smiling valley,  
Way, we're bound away, across the wide  
Missouri.

'Tis sev'n long years since last I see thee,  
And hear your rolling river  
'Tis sev'n long years since last I see thee,  
Way, we're bound away, across the wide  
Missouri.

When first I took a rambling notion  
To leave your rolling river,  
To sail across the briny ocean,  
Way, we're bound away, across the wide  
Missouri.

# ***My Heart be Brave***

*James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) was a lawyer, professor, diplomat, anti-lynching political advocate, patron of the Harlem Renaissance, leader of the NAACP, and poet. His most famous text is "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," set to music by his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson.*

My heart be brave, and do not falter so,  
Nor utter more that deep, despairing wail.  
Thy way is very dark and drear I know,  
But do not let thy strength and courage fail;

For certain as the raven-winged night  
Is followed by the bright and blushing morn,  
Thy coming morrow will be clear and bright;  
'Tis darkest when the night is furthest worn.

Look up, and out, beyond, surrounding clouds,  
And do not in thine own gross darkness grope,  
Rise up, and casting off thy hind'ring shrouds,  
Cling thou to this, and ever inspiring hope:

Tho' thick the battle and tho' fierce the fight,  
There is a power in making for the right.

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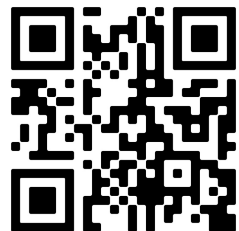
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