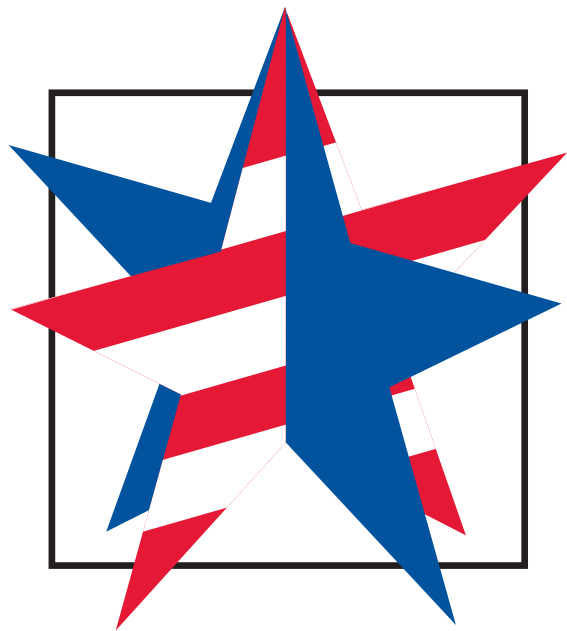


NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
AND
CHORUS AMERICA

NEA



AMERICAN
MASTERPIECES

CHORAL MUSIC

American Masterpieces: Choral Music

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Philip Brunelle, Executive Editor
Don Ball, Publication Manager
Katryn Conlin, Designer
Catherine Davies, Editor
Kara Fairchild, Image Researcher
Rex Levang, Recording Researcher
Bill Parker, Author



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The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation's largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.

National Endowment for the Arts
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506-0001
202-682-5400
www.arts.gov

Dana Gioia, Chairman
Wayne Brown, Director of Music and Opera
Felicia K. Knight, Director of Communications
Court Burns, Music Specialist
Victoria Hutter, Communications Specialist
Don Ball, Publications Manager



Chorus America

Founded in 1977, Chorus America serves the spectrum of professional, volunteer, children/youth, and symphony/opera choruses. To accomplish its mission of strengthening choruses and increasing appreciation of choral music so that more people are enriched by its beauty and power, Chorus America provides information, publications, conferences, consulting, training programs, surveys, networking, and awards to support choruses throughout North America.

Chorus America
1156 15th Street N.W., Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-331-7577
www.chorusamerica.org

Ann Meier Baker, President and CEO
Robin Perry Allen, Director of Communications

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
<i>Dana Gioia, Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts</i>	
Preface	6
<i>Philip Brunelle, Artistic Director, American Masterpieces: Choral Music</i>	
American Masterpieces: Choral Music	7
Choral Music in America	8
Composer Profiles	
Dominick Argento	11
Samuel Barber.....	12
Leonard Bernstein.....	13
William Billings.....	14
William Bolcom.....	15
Harry T. Burleigh	16
Chen Yi.....	17
Aaron Copland	18
Brent Michael Davids	19
William Dawson	20
R. Nathaniel Dett.....	21
Stephen Foster	22
Jennifer Higdon	23
Moses Hogan.....	24
Charles Ives	25
Aaron Jay Kernis	26
Libby Larsen	27
Morten Lauridsen	28
Norman Luboff	29
Gian Carlo Menotti.....	30
Alice Parker & Robert Shaw	31
Stephen Paulus	32
Ned Rorem.....	33
William Schuman	34
Conrad Susa.....	35
Randall Thompson	36
Virgil Thomson	37
Eric Whitacre.....	38
Image Credits.....	39

Introduction



More people in America sing in choruses than participate in any other performing art—from church choirs to children’s choruses, from symphonic chorales to chamber singers. Their repertoire includes everything from gospel music and Broadway tunes to medieval plainchant and the symphonic classics. The National Endowment for the Arts wants to celebrate this extraordinary artistic legacy with audiences familiar and unfamiliar with its richness.

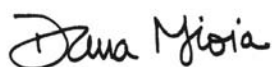
The NEA’s **American Masterpieces: Choral Music** initiative is designed to celebrate our national musical heritage by highlighting significant American choral composers and their works of the past 250 years. It is part of the larger National Endowment for the Arts program, **American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius**.

The choral component was launched in Washington, D.C. on June 11, 2006 with a rousing concert from a range of ensembles gathered under the auspices of Chorus America and directed by Philip Brunelle, founder and artistic director of VocalEssence. Mr. Brunelle also serves as artistic director of the initiative and I applaud his guidance.

From September 2006 through June 2007, seven exemplary organizations are producing regional choral festivals to bring beautifully blended voices to all corners of the country. From Seattle to Statesboro, audiences have the opportunity to enjoy this fundamental part of their artistic and cultural heritage.

In addition to stirring concerts, American Masterpieces: Choral Music brings educational and choral workshops to its locations. Not only do we want more Americans to hear this great music, we want to cultivate a love and appreciation of it for future generations.

American Masterpieces presents choral music at its finest. We hope you enjoy this concert and many more to come.



Dana Gioia
Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts

Preface



Gathering to sing has been a tradition in the United States since earliest times. Composers from the Revolutionary War times to the present day inspire us with their ability to capture emotions in song, whether their music is performed by a professional ensemble, children's choir, church or synagogue choir, male or female ensemble, community chorus, or symphonic choir. Certain men and women stand out as composers of particular note for their significant and lasting contributions to our American choral heritage—not only through original compositions, but also by preserving spirituals and folk songs in what have become “standard” arrangements.

Of the various musical arts, singing is unique because it combines notes with words—poetry, scripture, folk tales, or prose from anywhere and everywhere. The composers in this compilation represent some of the finest musicians devoted to the choral art; they were chosen for their noted affinity for writing for voices coupled with their masterful sense of textual relationship to the music they compose.

There are, of course, thousands of American choral composers down through history, and this roster of 29 composers represents an important introduction to the richness and diversity of American choral music. Similarly, the works and recordings listed for each composer are not meant to be exhaustive. It is hoped that choral conductors, singers, and enthusiasts will use this publication as a resource for concert programming or personal enjoyment, and as a springboard for discovering the full and glorious range of American choral music.

It has been a pleasure to be involved in a project with such marvelous potential for musicians everywhere.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Brunelle". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Philip Brunelle
Artistic Director, American Masterpieces: Choral Music
Artistic Director and Founder, VocalEssence

American Masterpieces: Choral Music

Celebrating some of our country's best artistic work with as many people in as many communities as possible is the goal of **American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius**, a project of the National Endowment for the Arts. The NEA created American Masterpieces to better acquaint Americans with exemplary works from the nation's artistic heritage. Following a pilot phase in 2004, the first American Masterpieces grants were awarded in 2005 for museums and visual arts projects.

The following year, American Masterpieces expanded to include dance, literature (through the NEA's the **Big Read** program), musical theater, and choral projects. The choral component features the first American Masterpieces grants to highlight music.

Those first grants were made to the seven organizations listed below and support regional choral festivals and tours. At least half of the programming will focus on the work of the American composers listed in this publication. All performances will be directed by experienced choral directors leading renowned choruses. In addition to performances, each engagement includes master classes, workshops for choral directors, composer-in-residence programs, and other activities. A second round of choral music grants will be awarded in 2007.

The participating choruses and their partner organizations are:

Brazeal Dennard Chorale of Detroit, Michigan, will present a choral festival in Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Brighton, Michigan. Partnering choruses are Our Own Thing Chorale in Ann Arbor and Livingston County Chorale in Brighton.

Cantus of Minneapolis, Minnesota, will present a choral festival in several northern Minnesota communities—Duluth, Virginia, Hibbing, and Grand Rapids—as well as in Minneapolis. VocalEssence of Minneapolis will partner with Cantus.



Conspirare of Austin, Texas, will present a choral festival in Austin with six collaborating choruses, including University of Texas, Austin choir; Texas State University at San Marcos choir; Conspirare Children's Choir; and the following high school choirs: Judson High School from Converse, Faith Family Academy from Dallas, and Stephen's School from Austin.

Georgia Southern University Research and Service Foundation of Statesboro, Georgia, will present a choral festival focusing on spirituals and will partner with Boston Camerata and the Fisk University Jubilee Singers from Nashville, Tennessee.

The Providence Singers of Providence, Rhode Island, will present a choral festival featuring a community sing led by composer, conductor, and educator Alice Parker.

Seattle Pro Musica will present a choral festival partnering with choruses from throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Virginia Symphony Orchestra of Norfolk, Virginia, will present a choral festival with partner choruses the Virginia Chorale, Virginia Symphony Chorus, Virginia Children's Chorus, and Norfolk State University Choir.

More information on *American Masterpieces: Choral Music* can be found at <http://www.arts.gov/national/masterpieces/index.html>

Choral Music in America



According to *America's Performing Art: A Study of Choruses, Choral Singers, and Their Impact* commissioned by Chorus America, nearly 28.5 million adults and children in the United States are engaged in choral singing. In addition, not only are large numbers of Americans performing in choruses, but many of them are singing in more than one chorus—about one-third of them sing in two, three or more of the estimated 250,000 choruses in this country. All told, more Americans engage in the public performance of choral singing than in any other art form.

For most, choral singing begins in a school chorus—almost 70 percent of those who sing in choruses today say they sang in a chorus when they were in elementary or middle school. More than half of choral singers say they grew up in a home where another family member regularly sang in a chorus. This has important long-term implications for the role of education and families in early exposure to the arts.

The broad appeal of choral singing stems from the opportunity it gives each singer to participate in an activity that involves them artistically, builds community, enhances their skills, and results in a product of great beauty. This multifaceted mission infuses choral organizations and their singers with energy and purpose that result in extraordinary contributions to their communities through stellar performances and recordings, innovative educational programs, and cooperative partnerships with other community organizations.

Furthermore, the choral art form is kept vibrant by the commissioning of new works by many ensembles (an activity that has resulted in the majority of works cited in this publication). Choruses work with composers to ensure that the choral repertoire is continually reflective of contemporary themes and musical genres.

Choral music embodies two of the most powerful forms of human expression, music and language, leading choral musicians and their audiences to connect intimately and immediately during performances. Both the quality and quantity of choral concerts are on the rise in the 21st century, an indication of the power, professionalism, and reach of this compelling art form.

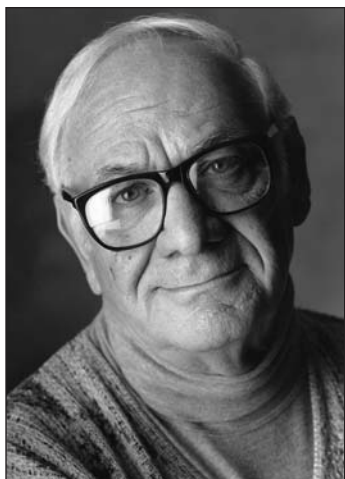
Composer Profiles

NEA



AMERICAN
MASTERPIECES

CHORAL MUSIC



One of America's best-known composers, **Dominick Argento** joined the faculty of the University of Minnesota in 1958 and taught composition there for 39 years. He was born in York, Pennsylvania, attended the Peabody Conservatory, and earned his Ph.D. from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Howard Hanson, Bernard Rogers, and Alan Hovhaness. Previously he had studied with Henry

Cowell, Hugo Weisgall, and Nicolas Nabokov at the Peabody Conservatory. In addition, he studied with Luigi Dallapiccola in Italy. Perhaps no composer in history has had a larger number of eminent masters, and then become one himself.

Argento won the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1975 for his song cycle *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf*. His 14 operas have met with nearly unanimous critical acclaim and have been successfully mounted both in the U.S. and in Europe. He shares with Gian Carlo Menotti—also of Italian heritage—the claim to being America's leading composer of lyric opera. He differs from Menotti in employing less conservative principles of writing; however, although he has employed atonality and serial technique, his music has always remained tonally centered and focused on communicating drama and meaning rather than showing off his craft.

In addition to his operatic, vocal, and orchestral works, Argento has composed a significant body of choral music. Perhaps most famous is his *Te Deum*, which was recorded and nominated for a Grammy. His *Three Motets*, consisting of "A Thanksgiving to God, for His House," "Easter Day," and "To God," appear frequently on sacred music concerts. Secular choral works such as *I Hate and I Love*, based on texts by the Roman poet Catullus, and *Peter Quince at the Clavier*, a setting of a narrative verse by American poet Wallace Stevens, attest to the unusual literary sophistication of their composer.

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Boosey & Hawkes

A Nation of Cowslips
SATB

Easter Day
SATB

I Hate and I Love (Odi et Amo)
SATB, percussion

Jonah and the Whale
Tenor, bass, narrator, SATB, percussion, brass

Peter Quince at the Clavier
SATB, piano

Te Deum (Verba Domini cum verbis populi)
SATB, orchestra

Tria Carmina Paschalia
SSAA, harp, guitar

Walden Pond
SATB, three cellos, harp

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Appear and Inspire
(Includes *I Hate and I Love*)
Robert Shaw Festival Singers
Robert Shaw, conductor
Telarc

Argento & Duruflé
Los Angeles Master Chorale
Paul Salamunovich, conductor
RCM

Walden Pond
Dale Warland Singers
Dale Warland, conductor
Gothic Records

Samuel Barber

1910–1981

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from G. Schirmer

Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)
SATB

A Nun Takes the Veil (Heaven-Haven)
SATB or SSAA

A Stopwatch and an Ordnance Map
TTBB, timpani (and optional brass)

Let Down the Bars, O Death
SATB

Prayers of Kierkegaard
Soprano, SATB, orchestra

Reincarnations
SATB

Sure on this Shining Night
SA or SATB, piano (arr. Crocker)

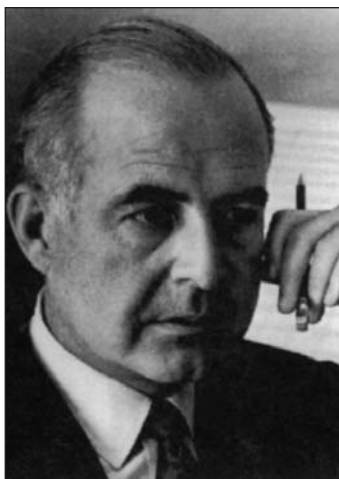
Twelfth Night
SATB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Barber: Prayers of Kierkegaard
Atlanta Symphony Chorus
Robert Shaw, conductor
Telarc

Heaven to Earth
(Includes “Agnus Dei”)
Westminster Choir
Joseph Flummerfelt, conductor
Avie Records

Reincarnations
Dale Warland Singers
Dale Warland, conductor
Gothic Records



Born in West Chester, Pennsylvania, Samuel Barber was a nephew of Louise Homer, a “golden age” contralto at the Metropolitan Opera, and he inherited a bit of voice himself. He not only took singing lessons but made a recording of his own setting of Matthew Arnold’s poem “Dover Beach.” Vocal and choral music remained lifelong affinities for him.

His music study began early: at seven he was writing piano pieces, and at 12 he

got a paying job as a church organist. Unfortunately, the choirmaster one day demanded young Sam hold a note longer than the score indicated. He refused, and was fired. Two years later he was admitted into the first class of the new Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. That city’s great orchestra premiered his overture *The School for Scandal* when he was 23.

In the 1930s, while studying in Italy, he won the admiration of Arturo Toscanini, who conducted the premieres of two of his orchestral works, including the *Adagio for Strings*, which Barber had arranged from a movement of his String Quartet No. 1. When this became his most beloved work, he took the novel step of adapting its mournful but consoling melody into the choral “Agnus Dei,” so that it may be said to have three incarnations. (*Reincarnations*, not surprisingly, became another of his successful choral works; it consists of three settings of old Gaelic poetry as rewritten by James Stephens.)

Prayers of Kierkegaard, settings of four prayers by the Danish theologian Søren Kierkegaard, was completed in 1954 to a commission from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation and is regarded as one of Barber’s vocal masterpieces. His lovely 1968 Christmas piece, “Twelfth Night,” set to a text by British poet Laurie Lee, is another choral gem.



Leonard Bernstein was a media phenomenon as well as a great musician. From the momentous night when he substituted for an ailing Bruno Walter as conductor of the New York Philharmonic in 1943, he was news. The dashing, flamboyant youth was in the papers the next day, and ever since.

He was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts. His father, Sam, a Russian Jewish immigrant, wanted his son to join

him in the beauty supply business, but from age ten, when his aunt Clara gave the family an old upright piano, Bernstein had ears only for music. He later studied at Harvard University (with Walter Piston), The Curtis Institute (with Fritz Reiner), and at Tanglewood (with Serge Koussevitzky)—in other words, with three of the greatest musicians within a thousand miles.

From 1944, when he wrote the ballet (and later musical) *Fancy Free*, to 1957, the year of his triumph with *West Side Story*, Bernstein was most active on Broadway and in films (e.g., *On the Waterfront*). After 1958, when he was appointed music director of the New York Philharmonic, his activities veered more towards classical repertoire, both in composing and conducting.

Chichester Psalms is an uplifting choral composition commissioned for the 1965 Southern Cathedrals' Festival at Chichester Cathedral. This piece, in which a chorus sings texts in Hebrew, has become Bernstein's most famous choral work and one of America's most-performed choral masterpieces.

His *Mass*, commissioned for the opening of the Kennedy Center in 1971, is an amalgam of Broadway, classical, jazz, gospel, rock, Jewish chant, swing, and virtually every other musical tradition Bernstein had experienced. Though initial reaction was hostile, within a year *New York Times* critic Donal Henahan deemed it "a minor miracle of skillful mixing."

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Boosey & Hawkes

Chichester Psalms

Boy soprano, SATB or TTBB, orchestra

Hashkiveinu

Cantor, SATB, organ

Kaddish (Symphony No. 3)

Soprano, narrator, SATB, boys choir, orchestra

The Lark (French & Latin Choruses)

SATB

Make Our Garden Grow (from *Candide*)

SATB, piano or orchestra (arr. Page)

Mass

Baritone, boy soprano, SATB, children's choir, orchestra

SELECTED RECORDINGS

An American Collection

(Includes choruses from *The Lark*)

The Sixteen

Harry Christophers, conductor

CORO

Bernstein: Symphony No. 3

(Includes *Kaddish*, *Chichester Psalms*)

Camerata Singers

Leonard Bernstein, conductor

Sony Classical

SELECTED WORKS

Be Glad Then, America
SATB (arr. Pisano)
Walton Music

David's Lamentation
SATB (arr. Daniel)
C.F. Peters

I Am the Rose of Sharon
SATB (arr. Pisano)
Walton Music

The Lord Is Risen
(An Anthem for Easter)
SATB (arr. Pisano)
Walton Music

Modern Music
SATB (arr. Pisano)
Walton Music

O Praise the Lord of Heaven
(An Anthem for Thanksgiving)
SATB (arr. Van Camp)
Concordia Publishing House

When Jesus Wept
SATB (arr. Parker/Shaw)
Alfred

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Early American Choral Music Vol. I
His Majesty's Clerkes
Paul Hillier, conductor
Classical Express

I Am the Rose of Sharon
The Western Wind
Western Wind

William Billings: Wake Every Breath
William Appling Singers
William Appling, conductor
New World Records

Bostonian William Billings was a tanner by trade. Lame, blind in one eye, rude in manner, and noted for “an uncommon negligence of person,” he was nevertheless the most important American composer of choral music in the 18th century. There were composers and music arrangers before him, but none whose names are familiar to anyone but scholars of Colonial times.



Although Billings pro-

fessed a free spirit (“I don’t think myself confin’d to any Rules for Composition”), he shared with many of his predecessors a strict adherence to the unaccompanied psalm-singing of the Calvinist Protestant tradition, i.e., “psalmody.” This music, strongly modal in flavor, was directly descended from Medieval and Renaissance choral singing. It is fascinating to find early American music more ancient in sound and structure than music of the same time in Europe, during the periods of Handel, Haydn, and Mozart.

In 1770 Billings published 120 vocal works under the title *The New-England Psalm-Singer*, which included a long preface of instruction. The frontispiece (shown above) was engraved by none other than Paul Revere—some say he also engraved the music, but there is no proof. This was followed by more collections, the most popular being *The Singing Master’s Assistant* of 1778, which went through four editions.

Though mostly self-taught, Billings was a natural musician of great originality (if often rough technique), who by the time of the American Revolution was being touted as “the father of our new England music.” Sadly, his last years were spent in spiraling poverty, and by the time of his death he was so far forgotten that his place of burial was unrecorded, and is unknown to the present day.

No known portrait of William Billings exists, though tradition holds that the figure on the left in the illustration above is Billings himself.



Composer and pianist **William Bolcom** is one of the few musicians since George Gershwin to comfortably straddle the divide between popular and classical music, elevating the former and demystifying the latter.

He was born in Seattle, Washington, in 1938. Exhibiting exceptional early musical talent, at age 11 he began private composition and piano lessons with faculty at the University of Washington,

where he later earned his B.A. Further studies followed with Darius Milhaud at Mills College in California and later at the Paris Conservatory. He completed his doctorate in composition at Stanford University in 1964, and returned to the Paris Conservatory where he won the *Deuxième Prix* in composition in 1965.

Compositions from every period of his life have earned him many commissions and countless honors, including the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1988 for *12 New Études for Piano*. Bolcom's work is well represented on recordings—as pianist, in collaboration with his wife, mezzo-soprano Joan Morris, and as composer. Bolcom has taught at the University of Michigan since 1973, where he has been a full professor since 1983.

After the Ball, a recording of early 20th-century songs, almost created a new genre in the record industry, and was nominated for a Grammy. Grammys also were proposed for his *Fourth Symphony* and his *Orphée-Serenade* for chamber orchestra, but it was his masterpiece *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, setting to music the William Blake poems of the same name, that finally won Grammys—four of them. *Songs*, a work on the scale of Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, successfully synthesizes an impressive range of musical styles: reggae, classical, country western, rock, opera, and more. Other notable choral works include "May-Day," an anthem on a text by Ralph Waldo Emerson, and *The Mask*, a cycle of five poems by African-American writers.

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from E.B. Marks Music Company

Alleluia
SATB

Carol (from *The Wind in the Willows*)
(with Joan Morris)
SATB, piano

Chorale on St. Anne's Hymn
Soprano, SATB, organ

The Mask
SATB, piano

May-Day
SATB

Simple Stories
I. Dancers (Soprano, SATB)
II. Wheel of the Oxcart (SATB, chamber orchestra)

Songs of Innocence and of Experience
Soloists, choruses, and orchestra

SELECTED RECORDINGS

The Mask
New York Concert Singers
Judith Clurman, conductor
New World Records

Songs of Innocence and of Experience
University Musical Society
Leonard Slatkin, conductor
Naxos

SELECTED WORKS

Deep River
SATB
G. Schirmer

Dig My Grave
SATB
G. Schirmer

Ethiopia's Paean of Exaltation
SATB
Burleigh Estate

Go Down Moses
SATB or SSA
Ricordi

My Lord, What a Mornin'
SATB
Franco Columbo

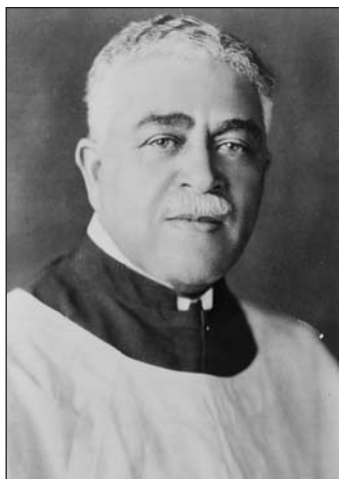
Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen
SATB
Ricordi

Were You There?
SATB, piano
Franco Columbo

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Got the Saint Louis Blues
(Includes *Ethiopia's Paean to Exaltation*)
VocalEssence
Philip Brunelle, conductor
Clarion Records

Toil & Triumph: African American Spirituals
The Spirituals Project Choir
Arlen Hershberger & Bennie Williams, conductors
The Spirituals Project



In 1892, the great Bohemian composer Antonín Dvořák accepted an invitation to take directorship of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. Before long he was spending many an evening listening with increasing fascination to the songs and spirituals of African-Americans as sung to him in the rich baritone of one of his students, **Harry T. Burleigh**. Dvořák would use some of these melodies the next year in

his most famous symphony, No. 9, *From the New World*. Decades later Burleigh's still expressive voice had a similar effect on Darius Milhaud, who incorporated influences of African-American music in his ballet *La Création du Monde*.

Burleigh was born just after the Civil War in Erie, Pennsylvania. As a child he heard his partially blind grandfather, a former slave, sing the old spirituals and plantation songs, and he developed a lifelong passion for music. As a youth he sang in his own Presbyterian church choir and at a Jewish temple. A scholarship enabled him to attend the National Conservatory where he studied voice, harmony, and counterpoint.

In 1894 he became the first African-American soloist hired by St. George's Episcopal Church in New York City. Befriended by the entrepreneur and philanthropist J. Pierpont Morgan, Burleigh stayed at St. George's for 52 years, enabling him to spend the rest of his time following his muse. In addition to composing and performing, he helped foster the careers of other singers, most notably Marian Anderson and Paul Robeson. He was recognized with the NAACP Spingarn Medal and was a founding member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

Burleigh is remembered today principally for his innumerable arrangements of spirituals, more than a hundred of them, many of which have become regarded as the standard versions.



Chen Yi is one of today's most cosmopolitan composers. Born in China in 1953 to a family of classical music lovers, she began studying violin and piano at the age of three. As a young woman she studied theory and composition in both hemispheres: at the Beijing Central Conservatory, and later at Columbia University in New York City.

In her works she has endeavored to blend elements of Eastern and Western music in a way that appeals to listeners from all cultures. She has produced an enormous body of work with remarkable speed and facility, resulting in countless honors and fellowships, commissions from major artists and orchestras, worldwide performances, and award-winning recordings.

In 1986 she became the first woman in China ever to receive a master's degree in composition. Dr. Chen has taught composition at the Peabody Conservatory and the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music. She served as Composer-in-Residence with the Women's Philharmonic, Chanticleer, and the Aptos Creative Arts Center in San Francisco. She received the prestigious Charles Ives Living Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 2005 was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

She has written choral music for the Kansas City Chorale, Chicago *a cappella*, the San Francisco Girls Chorus, and the Singapore Youth Choir, among others. "Know You How Many Petals Falling?" was premiered by the Elmer Iseler Singers at the Sixth World Symposium on Choral Music in 2002. Among her many other choral pieces that might be singled out for special mention are "To the New Millennium," "Spring Dreams," the *Chinese Myths Cantata*, *Chinese Poems*, and her *Set of Chinese Folk Songs* in three volumes.

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Theodore Presser Company

A Set of Chinese Folk Songs

SA(T) *children's chorus, strings*
SATB, *piano*
TTBB

Chinese Mountain Songs

SSAA

Know You How Many Petals Falling?

SATB

Landscape

SATB

Spring Dreams

SATB

Tang Poems

TTBB or SATB, *chamber orchestra*

The West Lake

SATB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Colors of Love

(Includes *Tang Poems*)

Chanticleer

Joseph Jennings, music director

Teldec

Eclectric

(Includes "The West Lake")

Chicago *a cappella*

Centaur Records

Aaron Copland

1900–1990

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Boosey & Hawkes, except as noted

At The River

SATB, SA, TTBB, or unison, piano
(arr. Wilding-White)

Four Motets

SATB

In the Beginning

Mezzo-soprano, SATB div

Lark

Baritone, SATB
ECS Publishing

The Promise of Living; Stomp Your Foot (from *The Tender Land*)

SATB, orchestra or piano 4-hands

Simple Gifts

SATB, SA, TB, or unison, piano
(arr. Brunner)

Zion's Walls

SATB, SSAA, TTBB, or unison, piano
(arr. Koponen)

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Bernstein: Chichester Psalms; Copland: In the Beginning; Barber: Agnus Dei

Corydon

Matthew Best, conductor

Hyperion Records

The Tender Land

Chorus of the Plymouth Music Series

Philip Brunelle, conductor

Virgin Classics



Aaron Copland was not the only great American classical composer in the 20th century. There were dozens of others, as Copland himself emphatically proclaimed. But quite early in his career Copland became known as “the dean of American composers,” and there was no one who subsequently fit the description more neatly.

Born in the first year of the century, his life spanned nine productive decades.

He not only wrote his own music, he worked tirelessly to promote the music of his fellow composers. Copland was the first American composer to be internationally recognized as creating musical works that were both distinctively American and unquestionably of lasting merit.

Written in 1954, his opera *The Tender Land* stands as the culminating masterpiece of his “Americana” period of composition, ca. 1935-1955. “Stomp Your Foot,” a choral square dance from the second act, is considered one of the most rousing moments in American opera.

Originally composed for solo voice and piano, *Old American Songs* consists of ten settings of minstrel and religious songs from the 19th century. Copland later transcribed them for voice and orchestra. Other composers, notably Irving Fine, have arranged most of them for chorus in various voicings.

Also significant in Copland’s choral canon are his *Four Motets* for mixed voices, “Lark” for baritone solo and mixed chorus, and *In the Beginning*, a jazz-tinged work for unaccompanied chorus and mezzo-soprano “narrator” describing the seven days of creation from the Bible.



When American composers are described as “native” the definition is not usually as accurate as when applied to **Brent Michael Davids**, a American Indian and enrolled member of the Mohican Nation. He has consciously and deliberately focused on his indigenous heritage, honoring its unique qualities in a contemporary setting. He blends Eurocentric techniques of classical music composition with Native musical

traditions in a way that is never glib or facile, but rich in resonance.

Davids earned a master’s degree in music composition from Arizona State University and also trained in film music at Robert Redford’s Sundance Institute. He has won numerous awards and honors from ASCAP, the National Endowment for the Arts, and other organizations, and has been commissioned by the Kronos Quartet (*The Singing Woods*), The Joffrey Ballet (*Moon of the Falling Leaves*), and the National Symphony Orchestra (*Canyon Sunrise*). Most of his works employ traditional Native American instruments and often some of his own design, including quartz crystal flutes.

Davids has worked extensively in the choral field. His work for 200-voice chorus and orchestra, *We the People*, honors the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. with the names of all the American Indian nations sung back to back, without repeats, for 30 minutes.

Earlier choral pieces of note include *Night Chant*, *Mohican Soup*, and *Un-Covered Wagon*, all commissioned by Chanticleer; and the *Native American Suite*, written for the Dale Warland Singers.

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Blue Butterfly Group, except as noted

Native American Suite

SATB, quartz crystal flute, percussion earthsongs

Powwow Symphony

SATB div, quartz crystal flute, orchestra, Powwow M.C., dancers

She Is One of Us

SATB div, quartz crystal flute, hand drum

Un-Covered Wagon

SATB div, 2 nose flutes

We the People

SATB div, American Indian flute and percussion, orchestra

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Our American Journey

(Includes *Un-Covered Wagon*)
Chanticleer
Joseph Jennings, music director
Teldec

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Neil A. Kjos Music Company

Ain'-a That Good News
SATB, SSAA, or TTBB

Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit
SATB, SSAA, or TTBB

Ezekiel Saw de Wheel
SATB

Mary Had a Baby
SATB or TTBB

Oh, What a Beautiful City
SATB

Soon Ah Will Be Done
SATB or TTBB

Steal Away
SATB or TTBB

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
SATB, SSA, or TTBB

There Is a Balm in Gilead
SATB, SSA, or TTBB

**There's a Lit'l Wheel A-Turnin'
in My Heart**
SATB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Spirituals
Tuskegee Institute Choir
William L. Dawson, conductor
Neil A. Kjos Music Company

The Spirituals of William Dawson
The St. Olaf Choir
Anton Armstrong, conductor
St. Olaf Records



William Dawson's name is among the most familiar of all African-American composers of classical music. His long and distinguished career centered on the famed Tuskegee Institute, which he began attending at age 13 after running away from home in order to enroll. A native of Alabama, Dawson worked at manual labor to put himself through Tuskegee. Ten years after graduating he founded the School of Music

there and conducted the 100-voice Tuskegee Choir for 25 years. He brought the choir to national prominence, directing it in performances at Radio City Music Hall, Carnegie Hall, and the White House.

He was active beyond the Institute as well. In addition to earning degrees in theory and composition, he played trombone in the Chicago Civic Symphony and taught in the public schools. He was a young man when his *Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano* was performed at a Kansas City Symphony concert.

But it was after the premiere of his *Negro Folk Symphony* with The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski in 1934 that his worldwide reputation was ensured. He traveled the world to lecture, guest conduct choral groups and symphony orchestras, and undertake research into native music of Africa. Although his compositional output always celebrated the traditions of his African-American heritage, influences from his broad experience as a musician and scholar were plentiful.

Dawson is most remembered for his vocal music, including some of the most admired settings of spirituals, such as "Ain'-a That Good News," "Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit," "Ezekiel Saw de Wheel," and "There Is a Balm in Gilead." These have been sung and enjoyed for decades around the world.



R Nathaniel Dett belonged to the generation before Dawson and perhaps because of that has been less well-known until recently, but his achievements were no less impressive. He possessed sterling academic credentials including a doctorate from Harvard University and study with Nadia Boulanger at the Paris Conservatory.

As a concert pianist, he played at Carnegie Hall and other august venues. He was hired in 1933 to conduct a 16-voice choir for Stromberg-Carlson's weekly NBC radio broadcasts. In addition to writing prize-winning articles on "Negro music," he edited notable collections of spirituals and folksongs. Dett also created his own distinctive arrangements of spirituals and composed several major works for chorus and orchestra.

Although he was clearly dedicated to the cause of African-American music, he insisted on the right and even duty of African-American musicians to avail themselves of Western European classical music forms. He believed that traditional African-American melodies and rhythms were fully amenable to being incorporated into operas, concertos, and orchestral concert music.

"Listen to the Lambs," an anthem for eight-part mixed chorus written in 1914, is one of his best-known choral works. His collections of spirituals in his own arrangements are principally found in his publications *Religious Folksongs of the Negro* and the *Dett Collection of Negro Spirituals*. Other notable choral works include "Ave Maria" for baritone and four-part mixed chorus, and two oratorios based on spirituals, *The Chariot Jubilee* and *The Ordering of Moses*.

SELECTED WORKS

Ave Maria

Baritone, SATB
Hinshaw Music

The Chariot Jubilee

Tenor, SATB, organ/piano or orchestra

Listen to the Lambs

Soprano, SATB or SAB (arr. Nash)
SSAA (arr. Harris)
G. Schirmer

The Ordering of Moses

SATB soli, SATB div, piano/organ or orchestra
European American Music

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Listen to the Lambs

Nathaniel Dett Chorale
Brainerd Blyden-Taylor, conductor
Marquis Classics

Got the Saint Louis Blues

(Includes *The Chariot Jubilee*)
VocalEssence
Philip Brunelle, conductor
Clarion Records

SELECTED WORKS

A Stephen Foster Medley

SATB (arr. Washburn)

*Camptown Races, Beautiful Dreamer,
Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair,
My Old Kentucky Home, Oh! Susanna*
Walton Music

Beautiful Dreamer

SATB (arr. Parker/Shaw)
Alfred

Camptown Races

SATB div (arr. Halloran)
Gentry

Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming

SATB
G. Schirmer

Hard Times Come Again No More

SATB
Golden Book of Song

Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair

SATB (arr. McConnell)
Hinshaw Music

Old Folks at Home (Swanee River)

SATB div (arr. Perna)
William Grant Still Music

Three Portraits by Stephen Foster

SATB, piano (arr. Fissinger)
Laura Lee, Gentle Annie, Oh! Susanna
Walton Music

SELECTED RECORDINGS

**Songs of the Civil War
& Stephen Foster Favorites**
Mormon Tabernacle Choir
Sony Classical

Stephen Foster Songbook
Robert Shaw Chorale
Robert Shaw, conductor
RCA Records



Although he wrote a few solo piano pieces in his short life, **Stephen Foster** produced songs almost exclusively—over 200 of them. His simple, moving melodies have the distinct flavor of a bygone day and yet seem to stay fresh forever. They have such a timeless quality that many have assumed they were folk songs. Years after his tragic story became known—how he wrote most of his best

songs in a period of ten years and died at age 38 with 37 cents in his pocket—he became a figure of American myth.

He was not, as legend has it, an untutored genius who dashed off miracles of melody in flashes of divine inspiration. He came from a solid middle-class family in Pennsylvania where he was schooled in private academies, had some formal music study, and labored long hours over his scores, often agonizing over the minutest details. This is not to say he was not precocious: his first song, “Open Thy Lattice Love,” was published when he was 18. He was 20 when he had his first hit, “Oh! Susanna,” although he realized only \$100 for it. The absence of enforceable copyright for his songs meant royalties were rare.

“Old Folks at Home” (also known as “Swanee River”) was the biggest success of his lifetime. It was felt that this was the definitive lyrical expression of longing for the Old South, and yet, Foster had been there only briefly, once, on his honeymoon. Scores of other heartfelt songs, including “Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming,” “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair,” “Hard Times Come Again No More,” “Camptown Races,” and “Beautiful Dreamer” continue to touch listeners in their original versions and in countless fine choral arrangements.

By her early 40s Jennifer Higdon had already composed 60 works. *USA Today* chose her orchestral score *Shine* as Best Contemporary Piece of 1996. Her *Concerto for Orchestra* caused a sensation at its premiere in 2002 by The Philadelphia Orchestra. It was nominated for four Grammy Awards, but even more importantly it caught the ear of major conductors such as Robert Spano and Leonard Slatkin who became eager to program her music. Suddenly, she was forced to turn down commissions for lack of time.

Although she was born in Brooklyn, New York, Higdon grew up in rural Tennessee. Her first exposure to music was the late-1960s rock favored by her counterculture parents, and playing the flute in her high school marching band. Along her academic journey she discovered a love of composition. After graduating from The Curtis Institute of Music she became a professor of composition there, as well as Composer-in-Residence with the Philadelphia Singers.

She has established herself as one of America's most sought-after choral composers. Among her best-known choral works are "O magnum mysterium" for mixed choir and small instrumental ensemble, an ingenious setting of both the Latin and English texts of the traditional meditation on the birth of Christ, and "Deep in the Night," an a cappella setting of Higdon's own poem which *ClassicsToday.com* reviewer David Felsenfeld singled out for its "steady, rapturous monochromatic build." Her largest choral composition has been *Southern Grace*, a suite of eight choral songs based on old Southern tunes, concluding with a chorale on "Amazing Grace."

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Lawdon Press

A Quiet Moment

SATB, TTBB, or SSAA

Deep in the Night

SATB

Imagine

SATB or TTBB

O magnum mysterium

SATB, 2 flutes, 2 crystal glasses, chimes

Sanctus

SATB div

Sing, Sing

SATB

Southern Grace

SATB

This Singing Art

SATB, chimes, organ

Voice of the Bard

TTBB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

All Is Bright

(Includes "O magnum mysterium")

Handel & Haydn Society

Grant Llewellyn, conductor

Avie Records

A Season's Promise

(Includes "Deep in the Night")

New York Concert Singers

Judith Clurman, conductor

New World Records

Moses Hogan

1957–2003

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Hal Leonard

The Battle of Jericho

SATB div

Elijah Rock

SATB div

Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit

SATB

Give Me Jesus

SATB

My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord

SATB div

Ride On, King Jesus

SATB div or SSAA

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

SATB

This Little Light of Mine

SATB div

Wade in the Water

SATB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

**Deep River; This Little Light of Mine;
Choral Series 2002**

Moses Hogan Singers & Chorale

Moses Hogan, conductor

MGH Records

Negro Spirituals

Moses Hogan Chorale

Moses Hogan, conductor

Virgin Classics



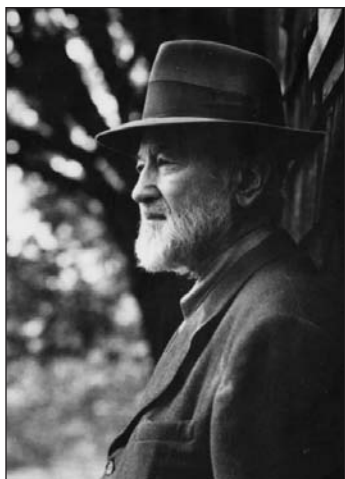
A native of New Orleans, Moses Hogan spent most of his career in that city except for music studies (principally piano) at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and The Juilliard School. He also studied at Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge) and the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts. He won first place in the 28th annual Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competition in

New York and soon achieved an international reputation as pianist, conductor, and arranger.

Hogan was one of America's most admired choral arrangers of the younger generation, building on the tradition of predecessors like Harry T. Burleigh and R. Nathaniel Dett. He founded the acclaimed Moses Hogan Singers in 1993, and was subsequently appointed Artist-in-Residence at Dillard University in New Orleans. In 1995 he arranged and performed several pieces for the PBS documentary *The American Promise*. At the height of his career, he died unexpectedly on February 11, 2003 at the age of 45.

Hogan's sensitive settings, more contemporary in sound than those that held sway for decades, are accessible without sacrificing dignity. They have become favorites of high school, college, church, community, and professional choirs, as well as with audiences worldwide. In addition, his arrangements have been generously praised by critics in the *New York Times* and *Gramophone* magazine, among others.

Surely one of his finest legacies was editing the *Oxford Book of Spirituals*, first published in 2001 and recognized today as one of the most comprehensive anthologies of spirituals ever assembled.



Charles Ives, born in Danbury, Connecticut, was a mild-mannered businessman by day and an unstoppable composer by night. Inspired by his father, who had experimented with quarter-tone music and polytonality decades before the “modern” composers, and by the transcendentalist philosophy of so many New England writers, Ives sought to write truly American music in a style divorced from the orthodox European traditions.

After graduating from Yale University he married and went into the insurance business, finding it in accord with his humanitarian impulses. Beginning in about 1922 his compositions began to circulate among interested musicians and gradually some of the works received performances and critical acclaim. In 1947 his Symphony No. 3 was awarded the Pulitzer Prize—42 years after it was composed! (He gave the money away, commenting that “prizes are for mediocrity.”)

Despite Ives’s radicalism, much of his sacred choral music came from his early career, while he was still a church organist, and it tends to be conservative. The sacred cantata *The Celestial Country* could almost have been written by his Yale music professor, the staid Horatio Parker. The same can be said for most of his Psalm settings, yet they are all worth hearing if not fully characteristic of his musical philosophy. His wife said “Psalm 90” was the only one with which he was fully satisfied. Meanwhile the *Three Harvest Home Chorales* have had a vigorous concert career.

His secular choral works span his whole career. Many of these, however, are re-arrangements of his solo songs by himself or others. John J. Becker made the chorus and orchestra version of *General William Booth Enters into Heaven*, while Ives himself was responsible for *Lincoln, the Great Commoner*.

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Peermusic Classical, except as noted

The Celestial Country

Tenor, baritone, two SATB solo quartets, SATB, chamber orchestra

Crossing the Bar

SATB, organ
G. Schirmer

Easter Carol

SATB soli, SATB, organ
G. Schirmer

General William Booth Enters into Heaven

Unison chorus, orchestra (arr. Becker)

Processional: Let There Be Light

SATB or TTBB, organ or string orchestra

Psalm 90

SATB div, organ, bells
Merton Music

They Are There! (A War Song March)

Unison chorus, piano (ed. Smith)

Three Harvest Home Chorales

SATB div, brass, organ

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Charles Ives - The Celestial Country

The St. Olaf Choir
Anton Armstrong, conductor
St. Olaf Records

Heaven to Earth

Westminster Choir
Joseph Flummerfelt, conductor
Avie Records

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from G. Schirmer, except as noted

Dorma, Ador

Mezzo-soprano, SATB
Boosey & Hawkes

Ecstatic Meditations

Soprano, tenor, SATB div

Garden of Light

Boy soprano, SATB soli, SATB, children's choir, orchestra

I Will Lie Down

SATB, piano

Music Is a Gift

SATB, piano
Boosey & Hawkes

Stein Times Seven

SATB, piano

Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord

SATB, organ

Two Meditations

SATB, organ
Boosey & Hawkes

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Voices 1900/2000

(Includes *Ecstatic Meditations*)
San Francisco Symphony Chorus
Vance George, conductor
Delos International



A native of Philadelphia, Aaron Jay Kernis is one of today's most-performed living composers. His music is noted for its exuberant eclecticism, expressive lyricism, and engaging wit. He was one of the youngest composers ever to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize for music (*String Quartet No. 2*).

From his very first works in the early 1980s he has unapologetically mixed every genre—from pop and jazz to

classical, from medieval Church music to Jewish cantillation—into his works, with a primary objective of communicating with everyday people.

Kernis decided at the age of 13 to become a composer, after learning violin and then teaching himself piano. He studied at Manhattan School of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and Yale University. Among his instructors in composition were John Adams, Charles Wuorinen, Jacob Druckman, and Morton Subotnick. He currently serves as New Music Advisor to the Minnesota Orchestra and teaches composition at Yale University. Liveliness and vivid color are qualities constantly remarked about his earlier works, which seemed imbued with the sheer joy of music-making. Newer works have often been more somber. His inspirations have ranged from salsa dancing to the Persian Gulf War.

A number of choral works have attracted favorable notice. *Ecstatic Meditations* sets words of the medieval mystic Mechthild of Magdeburg. *Stein Times Seven* was his 1980 choral tribute to poet Gertrude Stein. His most ambitious choral work to date is *Garden of Light*, commissioned by the Disney Company for the third millennium celebrations. More recently, *Two Meditations*, written for the Cincinnati Vocal Arts Ensemble, is a setting of two psalms that speak to the acceptance of death and the loving presence of God.



Libby Larsen has had a remarkable two-track career as a successful composer and as an effective advocate for composers. Her catalogue of more than 200 works in many genres has assured her an important place in American concert life; and her founding in 1973, with Stephen Paulus, of the American Composers Forum, has led to an ever-expanding network of involvement in organizations that support and promote

the musical arts. She has held the Harissios Papamarkou Chair in Education and Technology at the Library of Congress and received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The breadth and depth of her achievement are tributes to an extraordinary physical and mental energy.

Larsen was born in Wilmington, Delaware, but has lived most of her life in Minnesota, where she studied composition at the University of Minnesota under Dominick Argento, Eric Stokes, and Paul Fetler. Her music is often praised for its vigor and vision, its masterful melding of eclectic elements (jazz, pop music, and parlor songs are all on occasion woven into her tightly controlled classical structures), and its frequent forays into whimsy, as evidenced by such titles as *The Astonishing Flight of the Gump* and *Psyke and the Psyskraper*. She is equally able, however, to touch deep chords of feeling as in her song cycle *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.

In vocal and choral music she has especially triumphed. *USA Today* has called her “the only English-speaking composer since Benjamin Britten who matches great verse with fine music so intelligently and expressively.” Among her best-known choral works are *Ringeltänze*, sparkling Christmas music for chorus, strings, and handbells, and *The Settling Years*, settings of American pioneer texts for mixed chorus, woodwind quintet, and piano.

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from ECS Publishing, except as noted

Canticle of the Sun

SSAAA, finger cymbals, synthesizer, organ

I Find My Feet Have Further Goals

SATB

Oxford University Press

In a Winter Garden

Soloists, SATB, chamber orchestra

Missa Gaia: Mass for the Earth

Soprano, SATB, SSA choir (optional), oboe, strings, piano 4-hands

Ringeltänze

SATB, handbells, string orchestra

The Settling Years

SATB, woodwind quintet, piano

Seven Ghosts

Soprano, SATB, brass quintet, piano, percussion

Oxford University Press

Song-Dances to the Light

SA, Orff instruments, full orchestra

Oxford University Press

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Choral Currents

(Includes *The Settling Years*)

The Dale Warland Singers

Dale Warland, conductor

Innova Recordings

Missa Gaia: Mass for the Earth

Oregon Repertory Singers

Gilbert Seely, conductor

Koch International Classics

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Peermusic
Classical

Ave Dulcissima Maria
TTBB

Ave Maria
SATB

Les Chansons des Roses
SATB, *piano*

Lux Aeterna
SATB, *chamber orchestra or organ*

**Madrigali: Six Fire Songs on Italian
Renaissance Poems**
SATB

Mid-Winter Songs
SATB, *chamber orchestra*

O Magnum Mysterium
SATB or TTBB

Three Nocturnes
SATB, *piano*

Ubi Caritas et Amor
SATB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Lux Aeterna
Los Angeles Master Chorale
Paul Salamunovich, conductor
RCM

Morten Lauridsen: Lux Aeterna
Polyphony
Stephen Layton, conductor
Hyperion Records



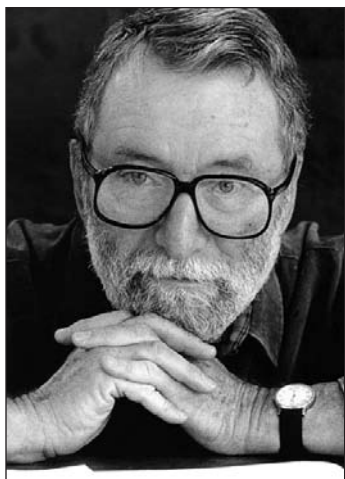
The composer who can make a career almost exclusively from choral music has been a rarity since the Baroque era, but **Morten Lauridsen** has done it in our day, and while living, studying, and working in the same general area his entire life.

Born in the state of Washington, he was reared in Portland, Oregon, worked for the Forest Service near volcanic Mount St. Helens for a time,

then studied composition at the University of Southern California where Halsey Stevens and Ingolf Dahl were among his distinguished teachers. He progressed rapidly to become a professor of composition at Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California, a position he has held for more than 30 years, chairing the department for 13 years.

From 1994 to 2001 he was Composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale, which frequently performed his works and helped to promote them around the world. Along with Randall Thompson, he is now one of America's most frequently performed choral composers—his works have appeared on more than 100 CDs.

"O Magnum Mysterium" is the best-known of his sacred a cappella motets and has become distributor Theodore Presser's best-selling choral octavo in its history dating back to 1783. It offers one of the most haunting vistas of Lauridsen's often serenely mystical style. Also high on the list of favorites are his *Madrigali: Six Fire Songs on Italian Renaissance Poems*, along with six other cycles taking their textual inspiration from around the globe: *Mid-Winter Songs*, *Les Chansons des Roses*, *Cuatro Canciones*, *Nocturnes*, *Lux Aeterna*, and *A Winter Come*.



The days are gone when association with Hollywood and popular culture was a mark against the “serious” musician: the great Wagnerian soprano Helen Traubel’s career at the Met in the 1950s, for example, was doomed after she dared to sing at a night club on an off night.

Perhaps something of the same was suffered by **Norman Luboff**, one of America’s great choral directors and

arrangers, who dared to make much of his living working in the popular culture media of his era. And maybe that is why today he is being reassessed and newly appreciated for the sterling musician he was, and for his enormous contributions to American choral music.

Luboff was born in Chicago and studied at the University of Chicago and Central College, doing graduate work with Leo Sowerby. He put himself through school by singing and composing for local radio stations. He moved to New York City hoping to make a career in radio music, then was lured to Hollywood to direct choral music for a popular national radio show, *The Railroad Hour*.

Soon he was scoring for early television programs and for more than 80 Hollywood films. His Norman Luboff Choir recorded more than 75 albums over a period of 25 years, sometimes featuring solos by singers such as Frank Sinatra, Doris Day, and Jo Stafford. He took pains also to record classical choral music from the Renaissance to recent times as well; these recordings, however, did not receive the critical attention they deserved.

One of his most important legacies is his prolific output of engaging and accessible folk song arrangements, which helped preserve these beloved melodies from generation to generation. His vast and invaluable collection of scores and memorabilia was donated to the Library of Congress in 1993.

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Walton Music

A Capital Ship

Two-Part or SATB

All Through the Night

SATB

A-Roving

TTBB

Black Is the Color of My True Love’s Hair

SATB

Dixie

SATB

Riders in the Sky

TTBB

Skip to My Lou

SATB

Vigolin

SATB

Whoopee Ti Yi Yo

SATB or TTBB

Yellow Bird

SATB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Songs of the South/Songs of the Sea

Norman Luboff Choir

Norman Luboff, conductor

Collectables

Velvet Voices, Satin Songs

Norman Luboff Choir

Norman Luboff, conductor

Good Music Company

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from G. Schirmer, except as noted

Amahl and the Night Visitors

Soloists, SATB, two pianos or orchestra

The Death of the Bishop of Brindisi

Soloists, SATB, children's chorus, orchestra

For the Death of Orpheus

Tenor, SATB, orchestra

Llama de amor viva

Baritone, SATB, orchestra

Missa O Pulchritudo

SATB soli, SATB, orchestra

Muero porque no muero

(Cantata for St. Teresa of Avila)

Soprano, SATB, orchestra

The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore

SATB, chamber ensemble, dancers

Alfred

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Menotti

(Includes For the Death of Orpheus)

Spoletto Festival

Richard Hickox, conductor

Chandos Records

The Unicorn, the Gorgon & the Manticore

Carolina Chamber Choir

Timothy Koch, conductor

Albany Records



In America, especially after World War I, the popularity of opera was challenged by both the cinema and the Broadway musical show. All the more striking, then, has been the success of Gian Carlo Menotti, an Italian-American who has dared to center his career on writing operas, two of which (*The Saint of Bleeker Street* and *The Consul*) won the Pulitzer Prize for music among

other awards.

Unashamedly conservative in technique, Menotti has always written in a traditional tonal language. His television Christmas opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, won him a mass audience and remains today one of the most frequently performed stage works in America.

Despite his concentration on opera, he has also composed a significant body of choral music. The largest has been the cantata *The Death of the Bishop of Brindisi*. *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore*, designated a "madrigal-ballet," is sung as well as danced. *Missa O Pulchritudo* is scored for soloists, chorus, and orchestra and was premiered at the Spoleto Festival in Italy, which Menotti founded in 1958.

Menotti has shown extraordinary vigor at an age when most people have been long retired. He has continued to compose, and to direct opera, well into his 90s. In his later years he has become if anything even more prolific in the choral field. *For the Death of Orpheus* was first performed under the direction of Robert Shaw in 1990, a *Gloria* was written in 1995 as part of a composite Mass by various composers, and "Jacob's Prayer" (1997) was commissioned by the American Choral Directors Association.

Alice Parker (b. 1925) & Robert Shaw (1916–1999)



Composer and conductor Alice Parker, now living in Massachusetts, says she sang before she spoke—an appropriate beginning for a career spanning nearly six decades and dedicated to the music of the human voice. Parker began composing at age five and wrote her first orchestral score while still in high school. Later she attended Smith College and

The Juilliard School, studying composition and conducting. She was associated for many years with Robert Shaw in arranging spirituals, folk songs, and hymns that have become part of the standard choral repertoire around the world.

Parker has received literally hundreds of commissions from choruses all over North America and composed major vocal works from cantata to opera, including sacred anthems and songs to texts by distinguished poets. Her own group, the 16-voice Musicians of Melodious Accord, has presented an annual concert series in New York City since 1985, and recorded several albums. Parker conducts workshops and lectures in the U.S. and abroad. She has written several books and received four honorary doctorates.

During his long and distinguished career, Atlanta-born Robert Shaw became one of the world's most respected and beloved choral directors. His Robert Shaw Chorale, founded in 1948, set high standards for choral singing, toured the world, and made dozens of best-selling recordings, four of which were awarded Grammys. His many arrangements of spirituals and other choral music are among the best-known in the repertoire. *Dear People*, an authorized biography, captures Shaw's legacy as an innovative interpreter of masterpieces of the classical canon who inspired an entire generation of choral singers and conductors.



SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Alfred, except as noted

Amazing Grace
SATB

Black, Black, Black
SATB

Carol of the Birds
SATB
G. Schirmer

Haul Away, Joe
TTBB

He's Gone Away
SATB

Lowlands
TTBB

Saints Bound for Heaven
SATB

Seeing Nellie Home
TTBB

Sometimes I Feel
Alto, SATB or Baritone, TTBB

What Shall We Do with the Drunken Sailor?
TTBB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

My Love and I
Men of Melodious Accord
Alice Parker, conductor
Gothic Records

Amazing Grace: American Hymns and Spirituals
Robert Shaw Chorale
Robert Shaw, conductor
Telarc

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Paulus Publications, except as noted

Calming the Storm
SATB

The Day Is Done
SATB

Hallelu!
Two-part voices, harp or piano
European American Music

Love Opened a Mortal Wound
SATB

Meditations of Li Po
SATB
European American Music

Pilgrim Jesus
SATB, organ
European American Music

Pilgrims' Hymn
SATB

So Hallow'd Is the Time
Boy soprano, tenor, baritone, SATB, chamber orchestra
European American Music

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Divine Grandeur
(Includes *Meditations of Li Po*)
The New York Concert Singers
Judith Clurman, conductor
New World Records

Harvest Home
Dale Warland Singers
Dale Warland, conductor
Gothic Records

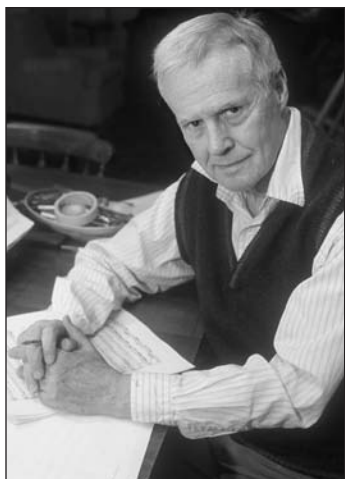


Stephen Paulus is nationally and internationally recognized as one of today's leading composers. Born in Summit, New Jersey, he studied at the University of Minnesota under both Paul Fetler and Dominick Argento. In 1973, with Libby Larsen, he founded the American Composers Forum. He has been Composer-in-Residence with both the Minnesota Orchestra and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

His style is usually diatonic and accessible, always noted for solid construction and expert scoring. But perhaps what makes his work stand out the most is what the *New York Times* called "melodic patterns that are fresh and familiar at the same time." As a result, his choral works are regularly performed by choruses ranging from high school to fully professional groups. His more than 50 recordings place him among the most-recorded of contemporary American composers.

He is also a respected composer of opera. His nine stage works include *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, based on the novel by James M. Cain and first presented by Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. The following year it became the first American opera production mounted by the Edinburgh International Festival. In addition, Paulus is the only American composer to have a work commissioned for the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge, in England.

Perhaps his best-known choral work is "Pilgrims' Hymn," originally composed for the church opera *The Three Hermits*. Most notably performed at President Reagan's funeral, its transparent beauty has made it a perennial favorite. Other highly regarded compositions include the Christmas suite, *So Hallow'd Is the Time*; *Letters for the Times*, based on 17th-century American newspapers and diaries; and *Meditations of Li Po*, based on contemplative 8th-century Chinese texts.



Decades ago *Time* magazine called Ned Rorem “the world’s best composer of art songs” and few have challenged that judgment since. Though he has written exceptionally fine orchestral music (his suite *Air Music* won the 1976 Pulitzer Prize for music), his songs and choral pieces seem destined to remain his best-known legacy, in part because they are so performer-friendly, but

most importantly because audiences find them full of striking and beautiful ideas.

He was born in Richmond, Indiana, then moved with his family to Chicago as a child. He began piano lessons and was enchanted by Debussy and Ravel. His later studies were at Northwestern University School of Music, The Curtis Institute, and The Juilliard School. Along the way, he served briefly as Virgil Thomson’s copyist and studied with Aaron Copland at Tanglewood.

From 1949 to 1958 he lived in France, composing and writing his diaries. Uniquely, Rorem early on became just as famous for his literary efforts—which now total 14 books of music criticism, lectures, and his frank personal diaries—as for his music. His inner life has thus become perhaps the most public of any composer in history.

His outstanding choral works, many with organ accompaniment, encompass a variety of anthems, canticles, motets, and hymns. Among them are “Shout the Glad Tidings,” a setting of an 1826 hymn text, the *Three Motets* on texts by Gerard Manley Hopkins, and the beautiful anthem of peace, “Sing, My Soul, His Wondrous Love.”

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Boosey & Hawkes, except as noted

A Whitman Cantata

TTBB, twelve brass, timpani

Canticles, Set I

Confiteor tibi, *Unison*

Magnificat anima mea, *SA or TB*

Nunc dimittis, *SA*

Canticles, Set II

SATB

Benedictus es Domina, Phos Hilaron,

Ecce Deus

In Time of Pestilence

SATB

Sing, My Soul, His Wondrous Love

SATB

C.F. Peters

Three Choruses for Christmas

SATB

Three Motets

SATB, organ

Three Poems of Baudelaire

SATB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Rorem: Works for Choir & Organ

(Includes *Three Motets*)

Harvard University Choir

Murray Forbes Somerville, conductor

Black Box Classics

Sing, My Soul

Concora

Richard Coffey, conductor

Albany Records

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from G. Schirmer, except as noted

A Free Song

Baritone, SATB, orchestra
or piano 4-hands

Carols of Death

SATB
Theodore Presser Company

Casey at the Bat

Soloists, SATB, orchestra or piano 4-hands

The Lord Has a Child

SATB or SSAA, piano
Theodore Presser Company

Perceptions

SATB
Merton Music

Te Deum

SATB

This Is Our Time

SATB, orchestra

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Samuel Barber & William Schuman

(Includes *Perceptions*)
Joyful Company of Singers
Peter Broadbent, conductor
ASV Platinum

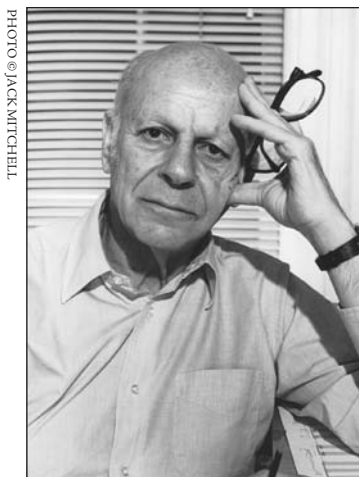


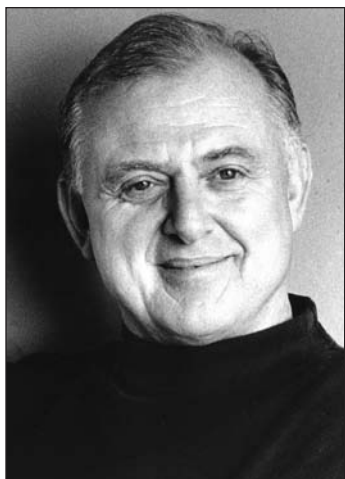
PHOTO © JACK MITCHELL

William Schuman ranks among the most honored and distinguished American composers, although most of his works are less well-known among the general public than those of his contemporaries Copland, Bernstein, and Barber. An exception to this is his *New England Triptych*, an orchestral work often paired on programs with the similarly conceived (but very

different sounding) *Three Places in New England* by Charles Ives.

In 1943 he won the first Pulitzer Prize for music ever given. He was the first composer ever commissioned to write a work by the U.S. government. He was president of The Juilliard School for 18 years, and president of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts for its first eight years. He was granted more than 20 honorary degrees in a lifetime as an educator, administrator, and composer, and had an enormous impact through his teaching and his tireless efforts to incorporate classical music into the lives of the American public.

Schuman's catalogue is particularly rich in choral works. He was an acknowledged master of accompanied and a cappella choral music both complex and simple in scope (some pieces are written specifically for amateur singers). He made a point of emphasizing American poetry for his texts. His *Carols of Death* are settings of three powerful verses by Walt Whitman. On a lighter note, the choruses from *Casey at the Bat* (a 1976 "baseball cantata" adapted in turn from his 1953 opera *The Mighty Casey*) revel in the rollicking humorous verse of Ernest Lawrence Thayer, reflecting Schuman's lifelong passion for baseball.



Conrad Susa's entire creative life has been centered on vocal and dramatic music. As a student he earned a B.F.A. from Carnegie Institute of Technology and an M.S. from The Juilliard School, where he studied with William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti. He joined the composition department at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music in 1988, becoming its Chair in 2000. His musical language is strongly tonal with influence

from Baroque counterpoint and polyphony plus many contemporary techniques and idioms drawn from popular music.

Susa has composed more than 100 works for theater, documentary films, and television. His first opera, *Transformations*, has become one of the most-performed American operas. Since then, he has written operas commissioned by San Francisco Opera, Minnesota Opera, and the American Guild of Organists, among others.

With a background rich in theater, serving as Composer-in-Residence for the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego and dramaturge at the Eugene O'Neill Center in Connecticut, it is no surprise that he is known for composing choral cycles that follow a story line or are linked thematically. Examples include whimsical cycles such as *Landscapes and Silly Songs* and *Hymns for the Amusement of Children*, the latter an intriguing setting of texts by the 18th-century poet Christopher Smart. Many of his larger choral works use instrumental ensembles of all sorts.

Some of Susa's most beloved compositions are for the Christmas season, such as *A Christmas Garland*, his popular *Carols and Lullabies: Christmas in the Southwest*, *The Midnight Clear*, and *Three Mystical Carols*.

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from ECS Publishing

A Christmas Garland

SATB or TTBB, brass, organ or orchestra

Carols and Lullabies: Christmas in the Southwest

SATB, SSAA, or TTBB, guitar, marimba, harp

Fum, Fum, Fum

SATB, SSAA, or TTBB

Hymns for the Amusement of Children

SATB, piano 4-hands

Landscapes and Silly Songs

SATB

Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis

SATB div, organ

Three Mystical Carols

SATB, organ

Two Marian Carols

SATB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Nativitas

(Includes *Three Mystical Carols*)

Kansas City Chorale

Charles Bruffy, conductor

Nimbus Records

Welcome Christmas: Carols & Lullabies from Around the World

(Includes *Carols and Lullabies*)

VocalEssence Ensemble Singers

Philip Brunelle, conductor

Clarion Records

Randall Thompson

1899–1984

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from ECS Publishing

Alleluia

SATB, SSAA, or TTBB

Americana

SATB, piano or orchestra

The Best of Rooms

SATB

Frostiana

SATB, piano, band, or orchestra

The Last Words of David

SATB or TTBB, piano, band, or orchestra

The Peaceable Kingdom

SATB div

The Place of the Blest

SSA, piano or orchestra

Six Odes of Horace

TTBB

The Testament of Freedom

SATB or TTBB, piano, band, or orchestra

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Randall Thompson: The Light of Stars

Choral Arts Northwest

Richard Sparks, conductor

Gothic Records

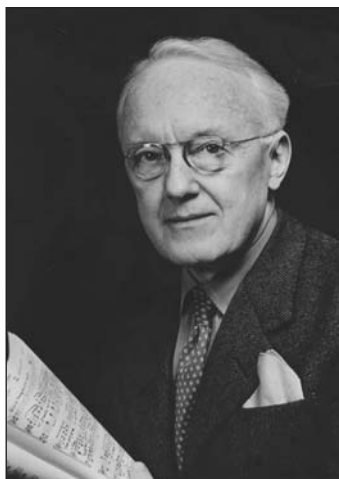
Ye Shall Have a Song

(Includes *The Peaceable Kingdom*)

The American Repertory Singers

Leo Nestor, conductor

ARSIS Audio



Randall Thompson was the pre-eminent American choral composer of an earlier generation. His music, though grounded in traditional European rules, always seems very much of its time and place, perhaps because he frequently drew upon the early folk music of New England and the Appalachian region.

He was a Yankee by heritage, born in New York City to a New England family. His father was an English teacher,

and sent him to Harvard University where he studied choral music and composition. After graduation he had some private lessons with Ernest Bloch. He won the Prix de Rome in 1922. After studying abroad he returned to the U.S. and spent the rest of his career teaching at various universities, most notably at his alma mater Harvard from 1948 to 1965. Among his most famous students were Leonard Bernstein and Lukas Foss.

Although Thompson wrote piano music and songs, chamber music and symphonies, and even a Biblical opera, it is for his exceptionally apt choral music that he has remained most admired. His “Alleluia,” written in 1940, quickly became a staple of church choirs in towns big and small and was recorded over a dozen times in the next few decades. Thompson seemed to understand by the 1950s that his style was no longer in vogue in academia; from then on he concentrated his efforts upon community, church, and college choir ensembles—and with enthusiasm, not regret.

Among his most famous larger works are *The Peaceable Kingdom*, *The Testament of Freedom*, and *Frostiana*, each of which evokes stirring elements of the American experience, whether in sound, structure or textual inspiration.



Virgil Thomson was one of America's most stimulating, thoughtful, original, and long-lived composers and critics. He created one of the first really distinctive American operas (*Four Saints in Three Acts*), he composed distinguished film scores (*The Louisiana Story* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1949), he wrote witty and perceptive critiques of the American musical scene for many years, and he was still active into his 90s.

He was born in Kansas City, Missouri, into a morally strict family. He gravitated to music and was composing piano pieces with names like "The Chicago Fire" at age four. During study in France he came under the spell of Erik Satie and the Group of Six who overturned Romantic orthodoxy by mixing jazz and dance-hall tunes with serious compositional techniques. It was a perfect fit for Thomson, who found a unique style by blending this with his heritage of nostalgic middle-Americana.

His music is elegantly crafted, yet warm and human. It is richly evocative of an America half real, half imagined, but vividly recreated out of nostalgia and sincere affection. The range of Thomson's choral music is wide. His 1934 *Mass* for two-part chorus and percussion is a dissonant, minimalist piece that seems avant-garde even today. Also in the 1930s he wrote incidental music for productions at John Houseman's Phoenix Theater in New York. A planned staging of one Greek tragedy never came off, but Thomson saved his choral music as the concert piece *Seven Choruses from the Medea of Euripides*.

Four Songs to Poems of Thomas Campion pays tribute to music techniques of Elizabethan England. More characteristic of the Thomson most of us know are the straightforwardly simple *Hymns from the Old South*, *Variations on Sunday School Tunes*, and "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need."

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from G. Schirmer, except as noted

De profundis

Baritone, SATB, piano

Jerusalem, My Happy Home

SATB, cello

Mass

Two-part chorus, percussion

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need

SATB, SSA, or SAB

Alfred

The Nativity

Alto, tenor, bass, SATB, orchestra

Scenes from the Holy Infancy

Tenor, baritone, bass, SATB, piano

Seven Choruses from the Medea of Euripides

SATB, percussion ad lib (ed. Pinkham)

Tribulationes civitatum

SATB or TTBB

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Aaron Copland & Virgil Thomson

(Includes *Mass*)

Gloriae Dei Cantores

Elizabeth C. Patterson, conductor

Paraclete Press

I Never Saw Another Butterfly: Songs of the Twentieth Century (Includes *Seven Choruses from the Medea of Euripides*)

San Francisco Girls Chorus

Sharon J. Paul, conductor

San Francisco Girls Chorus

SELECTED WORKS

All works available from Walton Music

Cloudburst

SATB div, piano, percussion

Five Hebrew Love Songs

SATB div, piano, violin or SA

i thank You God for most this amazing day

SATB div

Leonardo Dreams of His Flying Machine

SATB div

Lux Aurumque

SATB div or TTBB

Sleep

SATB div

Water Night

SATB div

When David Heard

SATB div

SELECTED RECORDINGS

Eric Whitacre: Cloudburst and other Choral Works

Polyphony

Stephen Layton, conductor

Hyperion Records

Eric Whitacre: The Complete A Cappella Works, 1991-2001

Brigham Young University Singers

Ronald Staheli, conductor

ARSIS Audio



Eric Whitacre is the youngest of our group of choral composers. His incredible accomplishments before the age of 30 show that America's choral tradition is alive and well and has a bright future. Born in 1970, Whitacre began his music studies at the University of Nevada and later graduated from The Juilliard School where he studied composition with both John Corigliano and David Diamond.

Although he has composed a good

deal for wind band, orchestra, and film, Whitacre is principally known for his choral works. The Philadelphia *Inquirer* has proclaimed him "the hottest thing in choral music." He has been Composer-in-Residence with the Pacific Chorale in California and has served as guest conductor for numerous choral ensembles across the U.S. and in Europe, Asia, and Australia. His first stage work, the "opera electronica" *Paradise Lost*, premiered in 2004; it combines elements of trance, electronica, and traditional classical and operatic styles.

Five Hebrew Love Songs are settings of poems by Whitacre's wife Hila Plitmann, whom he met at Juilliard. Other choral works have texts from an engaging array of voices: e. e. cummings, Edward Esch, James Joyce, Jalal al-Din Rumi, Emily Dickinson, Federico García Lorca, Edmund Waller, and the Bible.

One of Whitacre's favorite writers is the Mexican poet Octavio Paz and his setting of "Water Night" as translated by Muriel Rukeyser has become one of his most popular works with high school and college choirs. The Los Angeles *Times* has called "Cloudburst," also to an Octavio Paz poem, "a work of unearthly beauty and imagination."

Another well-known piece, "Sleep," is a setting of a poem by Charles Anthony Silvestri. It is virtually unique in that, unlike most vocal and choral works, the music was composed first and the poem later written to fit the music.

American Masterpieces: Choral Music

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