



Rebecca Scott, Director



Traveling

Saturday, April 30, 2022

Christ United Methodist Church

Grant funding has been provided by the Middlesex County Board of County Commissioners through a grant award from the Middlesex County Cultural and Arts Trust Fund





TRAVELING

April 30, 2022

PROGRAM NOTES, TEXTS, AND TRANSLATIONS

Welcome to Cantabile Chamber Chorale's 2022 Spring Concert. We are so grateful for your attendance to this, our second in-person concert of the season, after a year of canceled singing in front of an audience!

Tonight, we celebrate our return to in-person singing with some new music, some familiar songs and some music that has been mostly neglected for almost 100 years. All our singing tonight will be in honor of the memory of our dear alto, Jan Foley, who passed in February 2019. We hope you will enjoy our "Irish" tilt towards Jan's heritage and our own love of the genre. And if you wish, you may join us at the end, in singing one of Jan's favorite songs, ***Somewhere Over the Rainbow***.

Thank you for attending our performance! We hope you will join us again when we will premiere two new compositions on December 3, 2022. Until then a beautiful spring and summer season to you all!

As a safety health precaution, at the conclusion of the concert kindly exit quickly and we will meet you outside where we can breathe freely and talk.

Rebecca Scott, Artistic Director and Conductor

Saturday, April 30, 2022, at 7:30 pm

Christ United Methodist Church, Piscataway, New Jersey

CANTABILE CHAMBER CHORALE
Rebecca Scott, Artistic Director and Conductor

Lynne Stallworth, *piano*

Anita Gould, *flute* Aideen O' Donnell, *Irish harp and vocals*

PROGRAM

Irish Tunes..... traditional

Aideen O' Donnell, Irish harp

I Know Where I'm Goin'.....arr: Neil Ginsberg

The Road Home.....Stephen Paulus

Esti Dal..... Zoltán Kodály

The Parting of Friends..... traditional Irish tune

Anita Gould: flute, Aideen O'Donnell: Irish harp

The Gift of Love.....traditional Irish tune

Aideen O'Donnell, voice and Irish harp

Songs for Jan:..... Eric Ewazen

I. Nothing Gold Can Stay

II. On the Death of the Beloved

World Premiere

Magnolias..... R. Nathaniel Dett

Movement I from Magnolia Suite for Piano

Lynne Stallworth, piano

Let Us Cheer the Weary Traveler..... R. Nathaniel Dett

Somewhere Over the Rainbow.....Harold Arlen

REBECCA RUTH SCOTT, Founding Artistic Director of Cantabile, was born in New Brighton, Pennsylvania, surrounded by music, art, and poetry. She holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano and Vocal and Choral Education from the Eastman School of Music, and a Master of Science in Choral Conducting from The Juilliard School. Now in her 34th season as artistic director of Cantabile, Ms. Scott has conducted over 35 premieres of new choral works with Cantabile. Her commitment to fostering and promoting new music garnered the Chorus America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming for Cantabile. She continues to teach ear training as a member of the faculty in the college division of The Juilliard School.

LYNNE STALLWORTH, piano, grew up in Westerly, Rhode Island, where she began playing the piano at the age of five. Although encouraged to pursue piano performance as a profession, Ms. Stallworth chose to expand her knowledge and experience in other areas in college, including studying jazz piano at New England Conservatory of Music. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy, a Master of Public Administration from Rutgers University, and a Doctorate of Physical Therapy from Simmons College. Ms. Stallworth is Director of Music Ministry at Christ United Methodist Church Piscataway and is in her 12th year accompanying Cantabile Chamber Chorale.

AIDEEN O'DONNELL is a critically acclaimed professional harpist and vocalist. She hails from Dublin, Ireland and has showcased her talents at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, New Jersey Performing Arts Center, the Helix in Dublin, and other notable venues. Ms. O'Donnell's distinctive voice and musicianship creates a powerful sound and leaves her audience with an original and memorable performance.

ANITA GOULD has been playing flute since the age of 10, studying with James Sabo, Svetlana Kabalin, Dorit Winter and Amy Borman. She has a PhD in molecular biology from Caltech and credits her participation in chamber music and choral music with preserving her sanity during her graduate studies. She joined Cantabile in 2005, where she met her husband, Rick Snyder.

ERIC EWAZEN's compositions have been performed by distinguished soloists, chamber ensembles, vocalists, wind ensembles and orchestras around the world. His compositions for brass, percussion, woodwinds, and wind ensembles have become staples of the repertoire. For its 34th anniversary season Cantabile has commissioned Dr. Ewazen's newest choral work: *Songs for Jan: Nothing Gold Can Stay and On the Death of the Beloved*, which is being premiered this evening. This will be the seventh choral work of Dr. Ewazen which Cantabile has had the honor to perform over the years. Dr. Ewazen has been Vice-President of the League of Composers—International Society of Contemporary Music and has been a faculty member of The Juilliard School since 1980. He received his Bachelor of Music from the Eastman School of Music in 1976 and his Master and Doctoral degrees from Juilliard in 1978 and 1980, respectively. He continues to teach Music Theory in the College Division and Composition in the Pre-College Division.

CANTABILE CHAMBER CHORALE
Rebecca Scott, Artistic Director, and Conductor
Lynne Stallworth, piano

Soprano I

Ruth Anderman
Michelle Davenport*
Kaitlin Dunn
Katherine Lainhart
Elizabeth Whitehead*

Tenor I

Larry Cohen
Mickey Diener*
Jerry Phillips

Soprano II

Mitzi Lasky
Yeung-gyo Shin
Gail Tilsner

Tenor II

Ray Nolan*
Gerry Spelrem

Alto I

Poldi Binder
Nancy Engel*
Elizabeth Verderosa
Lynne Motto

Bass I

Jaime Ross
William Whitehead*
Ali Ekrem Yesilkanal

Alto II

Anita Gould
Eileen Silverstein
Jean Thomas

Bass II

Bruce Bush
Dan Sillitti*
Rick Snyder

I havee sung *I Know Where I'm Goin'* since I was a wee child, as many of you may have. But I never understood the lyrics. This was a popular song in the USA in the 1960's sung by dozens of folk singers. But the music arranger tells us that the song is an Irish country song from the northeastern county of Antrim on Lough Neagh, close to Belfast. We used to sing "but the devil knows who I'll marry." Others sang "but the Lord knows who I'll marry." The original phrase was "dear knows," the Ulster equivalent of "goodness knows." The men sing a percussion part that would normally be played by the Bodhran, the ubiquitous Irish hand drum that is played by virtuoso Irish musicians. A young Irish lassie has fallen for the "bad" guy. She is willing to give up all the comfort that is offered her from her rich suitor: silk stockings, shoes of fine green leather, combs for her hair, rings for every finger, a feather bed, and rooms finely painted. But she knows her parents will never allow her to marry the "handsome, winsome Johnny." So, she can only dream about him.

The Road Home by American composer Stephen Paulus (1949-2014) speaks to us about our search for our place in this world and in the next. It is set to a text by his frequent collaborator and friend Michael Dennis Browne and to a tune adapted from Southern Harmony from 1835. After life's trials, we "wake from a dream" to a voice leading us home, with love in our hearts, as the only way. This is one of our favorite songs by this very prolific and popular American composer, who was born in New Jersey. He spent most of his life in Minneapolis, which we visited on a singing tour in 2017 when we learned the song. Paulus composed over 400 choral pieces, 55 orchestral works, concertos - including a jazz concerto for his son, and dozens of other various works. An advocate for contemporary composers, he organized the Minnesota Composers Forum, now known as the American Composers Forum. He taught at The Juilliard School for one semester before he had a stroke and died. But he left hundreds of pieces of choral instrumental and vocal music for us to enjoy. A beautiful legacy.

THE ROAD HOME text by Michael Dennis Browne

Tell me where is the road I can call my own,

That I left, that I lost, so long ago?

All these years I have wandered,

Oh, when will I know

There's a way, there's a road that will lead me home?

After wind, after rain, when the dark is done,

As I wake from a dream in the gold of day,

Through the air there's a calling

From far away,

There's a voice I can hear that will lead me home.

Rise up, follow me, come away is the call,

With love in your heart as the only song;

There is no such beauty as where you belong.

Rise up, follow me,

I will lead you home.

Esti Dal - This beautiful song set by Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967) resonates even more with us today because of the dire situation in Ukraine. According to the Kings Singers the anonymous traditional text is about a young soldier who prays to God for shelter and safe-keeping through the night. He is lost in the woods in the evening darkness trying to find a place to lay down his head for the night. He prays the Lord will send a holy angel, encourage his heart, and give him a good night's rest. The music gets slower as he falls asleep with his head on his coat for a pillow. Singing in the original language of Hungarian is not easy, but gives the feeling that is needed to this beautiful but sad song, which reminds us of how lucky we are to have a safe home and a bed to sleep in.

ESTI DAL words by Lassan, 1938

*Erdő mellett estvélédtem,
Subám fejem alá tettem,
Ösz szetöttem két kezemet,
Úgy kértem jó Istenemet:
Én Istenem, adjál szállást,
Már meguntam a járkálást,
A járkálást, a budjosást,
Az idegën földön lakást,
Adjon Isten jó éjszakát,
Küldje hozzám szent angyalát,
Bátorítsa szívünk álmát,
Adjon Isten jó éjszakát.*

(EVENING SONG)

I have put my coat under my head as a pillow,
Evening darkness overtook me near the woods,
I have put my hands together,
To pray to the Lord, like this:
Oh, my Lord, give me a place to sleep,
I am weary from wandering,
With living on foreign land,
May the Lord give me a good night,
May he send me a holy angel,
May he encourage our heart's dreams,
May he give us a good night.

The Parting of Friends (*Scarúint na gCompánach*), one of thousands of traditional Irish tunes, has the melancholy mood that matches its title. Flutes, violins, and pipers all improvise their own versions of these tunes based on their instrument and their abilities. Today we are honored to have Anita Gould playing it on flute with the assistance of Irish singer and harpist, Aideen O'Donnell. We offer this performance as part of the remembrance of our friend and alto Jan

Foley, who was proud of her Irish heritage. We are grateful to have Ms. O'Donnell with us, who hails from Ireland but now lives in New Jersey, to sing a solo song in Jan memory.

Songs for Jan. Eric Ewazen has been a friend of Cantabile's from its inception. This is his 7th commission from Cantabile. Eric knew Jan Foley well and saw her just before she died in February 2019. He has put his heart and soul into these two songs which are sung as one. I asked Jan who her favorite poet was and discussed our intent to commission a piece in her memory from Eric. She mentioned Robert Frost as one of her favorites. And the Irish poet John O'Donohue is a favorite of all folks Irish and beyond.

The first song opens with a melody in 4/4 time in A minor, with the right hand of the piano sounding like bells ringing over the waves of the shore. The chorus enters wordlessly with a Siren-like song out in the water and then sadly states the subject: *Nothing Gold Can Stay*. As the mode changes from minor to A Major, the sopranos and altos present a vision of that early spring green that is golden as it emerges from the plants and trees - little buds of gold. The men repeat the scene as the tempo winds down with the bell sounds repeating in the piano and sharps change to flats into the key of eb minor. The chorus returns, now in four parts over the rolling sea of piano chords. "Her early leaf's a flower, but only so an hour. Then leaf subsides to leaf. So Eden sank to grief." The line slows and sinks down in the eb minor scale to hit the bottom with a B Major chord, but cadences on F Major. As the chorus sings "So dawn goes down to day. Nothing Gold can Stay," there is a death knell in the piano left hand as we shift to Bb Major and finally end in d minor with a strong statement of complaint!

Time rolls onward! The second poem begins here in an even more rolling 12/8 time in Bb Major. "Though we need to weep your loss... you dwell in that safe place... in our hearts." As the poet admonishes us not to look only in memory for the loved one where we would grow lonely without you, a quiet cadence moves us into G minor. The music takes a breath with a C Major cadence and moves into A Major for a more positive mood: "You would want us to find you in presence." Your spirit is beside us now - when beauty brightens. The key moves up to D Major: "When kindness glows" and then to G Major for ringing bells of celebration as each voice echoes the other: "When music echoes" and the energy gains momentum as we move to the climax through a circle of key changes in loud chords of "music echoes eternal tones", ending in a positive D Major. Life is eternal!

NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY poem by Robert Frost

Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf,
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day
Nothing gold can stay.

ON THE DEATH OF THE BELOVED poem by John O'Donohue

Though we need to weep your loss,
You dwell in that safe place in our hearts
Where no storm or night or pain can reach you
Let us not look for you only in memory,
Where we would grow lonely without you.
You would want us to find you in presence,
Beside us when beauty brightens,
When kindness glows
And music echoes eternal tones.

Magnolias by R. Nathaniel Dett (1882-1943) is the first movement of five from *Magnolia: Suite for Piano* composed in 1912 when Dett was beginning his teaching career at Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee. It expresses a love of nature in its lightness and in the titles of the various movements, said to be inspired by the trees on the college campus. These lines were placed at the beginning of the score: "Gorgeous Magnolias, Spotless in splendor, Sad in the beauty, Heavy with perfume." We are grateful to Lynne Stallworth for introducing us to the piano music of this fine American composer. Dett was a fine pianist, a teacher, a poet, a writer as well as a composer. He was the first person of African descent to graduate from Oberlin College in 1908. He majored in both piano and composition. He earned honorary doctorate in music from Howard University in 1924 and Oberlin in 1926. He enrolled at the Eastman School of Music in 1931 to get a master's degree. *The Emancipation of Negro Music* received a literary prize at Harvard University in 1920. He published a volume of poems entitled *The Album of a Heart*. Dett's philosophical and cultural interests were wide and varied.

We are thankful to Dr. Marques L.A. Garrett for sharing his excellent edition of Dett's *Let Us Cheer the Weary Traveler* and allowing us to perform it for you today. Dr. Garrett is publishing all of Dett's pieces that are in public domain and allowing them to be performed so that people can learn about Dett's music. *Let Us Cheer the Weary Traveler* was first published in 1926 by the John Church Company. It was subtitled: *A Negro Spiritual in the form of a short unaccompanied motet for mixed voices. Melody from Religious Folk Songs of the Negro as sung at Hampton Institute, edited by R. Nathaniel Dett*. The description "motet" could usually describe a polyphonic unaccompanied piece for mixed voices. However, the word has been used to describe many distinctive styles of compositions. It is clear, however, that Dett was signaling his use of a popular Negro spiritual as the basis for a new composition. It indeed is cheerful and without accompaniment. Although basically homophonic in structure on the refrain, it includes imitation and delayed entrances on the verses and running lines in 3rds and 6ths between the inner voices. The use of intense dynamic and tempo changes indicate that it is a new 20th century composition.