COLORADO Bach ENSEMBLE

James Kim, Artistic Director

MASTERWORKS

Messiah

December 12th, 2025 | 7:00 p.m.Parker United Methodist, Parker

December 13th, 2025 | 7:00 p.m.
Central Presbyterian Church, Denver

December 14th, 2025 | 2:30 p.m.
First United Methodist Church, Fort Collins

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Table of Contents

Program Notes	1
Program	2
Part One	4
Part Two	8
Part Three	12
Singers	15
Instrumentalists	18
Donors	
Support Colorado Bach Ensemble	21

Program Notes

Background to Messiah

The first reference to Messiah predates its composition. In a letter to his friend Charles Holdsworth dated July 10th, 1741, the librettist Charles Jennens (who had previously provided Handel with the libretto for Saul) wrote:

"Handel says he will do nothing next winter, but I hope to persuade him to set another Scripture collection I have made for him... I hope he will lay out his whole genius and skill upon it, that the composition may excel all his former compositions, as the subject excels all other subjects. The subject is Messiah."

At around the same time. Handel himself received an invitation from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. William Cavendish, to contribute to a series of concerts in Dublin from December 1741 to June 1742, to be performed for the benefit of various charitable causes. This incentive prompted Handel to begin work on Messiah on August 22nd. He famously completed the composition in just over three weeks, on September 12th. (Astonishingly, Handel also completed the composition of Samson by the end of October in that same year, even though work on that piece would not have begun until after Messiah had been concluded. Handel's phenomenal speed of composition would also be on display in 1749, when he composed Solomon, from start to finish, in only 20 days.)

The first performance of Messiah, in Dublin on April 13th, 1742, was a great success. According to a review in the Dublin Journal, "Words are wanting to express the exquisite delight it afforded to the admiring crowded audience." Its first London performance followed in March 1743.

Handel's Messiah has remained a permanent favorite with performers and audiences ever since, with many annual performances by famous orchestras around the world, usually before Christmas or Easter.

The Libretto

Charles Jennens (1700-1773) deserves much credit for the extraordinary power of Messiah. The persuasive artistic power - aided by its overall structure and coherence - owes as much to the creativity of the librettist as to the composer. Letters to his friends suggest that Jennens had begun work on the libretto by the end of December 1739, and he delivered the finished text to Handel eighteen months later, in July 1741.

The entire text of Messiah is derived from the Bible. This was intentional: Jennens was himself a believer who devoted much of his life to the dissemination of the Christian faith in general and of the Bible in particular. Naturally, he used the Authorized Version, the King James Bible, even though he occasionally adapted it slightly in ways that always remained faithful to its sense.

Remarkably, the text of the libretto contains significantly more biblical poetry than biblical prose, and significantly more material from the Old Testament than from the New Testament. As a consequence, the libretto is an artistic composition of the highest caliber that succeeds in telling the story of Messiah with great persuasive force. This is especially remarkable considering that there is an almost complete absence of texts from the Gospels, the four narratives of the life of Jesus in the New Testament. The story of Jesus unfolds in ways that capture the imagination, even though the name of Jesus occurs only once in the entire script. In fact, most of the other central characters in the Bible are not named at all, and so the drama of Messiah unfolds without the cast ever quite taking center stage.

- Rev. Dr. Knut M. Heim

Program

Part One

Scene 1: Isaiah's prophecy of salvation

- Sinfonia (Overture)
- 2. Accompagnato: Comfort ye my people
- 3. Aria: Ev'ry valley shall be exalted
- 4. Coro: And the glory of the Lord

Scene 2: The coming judgment

- 5. Accompagnato: Thus saith the Lord of hosts
- 6. Aria: But who may abide the day of His coming
- Coro: And he shall purify the sons of Levi

Scene 3: The prophecy of Christ's birth

- 8. Recitativo: Behold, a virgin shall conceive
- 9. Aria and Coro: O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion
- 10. Accompagnato: For behold, darkness shall cover the earth
- 11. Aria: The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light
- 12. Coro: For unto us a child is born

Scene 4: The annunciation to the shepherds

- 13. 13. Pifa ("Pastoral Symphony")
- 14. a. Recitativo: There were shepherds abiding in the fields
 - b. Accompagnato: And lo, the angel of the Lord
- 15. Recitativo: And the angel said unto them
- 16. Accompagnato: And suddenly there was with the angel
- 17. Coro: Glory to God in the highest

Scene 5: Christ's healing and redemption

- 18. Aria: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion
- 19. Recitativo: Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened
- 20. Duet: He shall feed his flock like a shepherd
- 21. Coro: His yoke is easy

15-Minute Intermission

Part Two

Scene 1: Christ's Passion

- 22. Coro: Behold the Lamb of God
- 23. Aria: He was despised and rejected of men
- 24. Coro: Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows

- 25. Coro: And with his stripes we are healed
- 26. Coro: All we like sheep have gone astray
- 27. Accompagnato: All they that see him laugh him to scorn
- 28. Coro: He trusted in God that he would deliver him
- 29. Accompagnato: Thy rebuke hath broken his heart
- 30. Aria: Behold and see if there be any sorrow

Scene 2: Christ's Death and Resurrection

- 31. Accompagnato: He was cut off
- 32. Aria: But thou didst not leave his soul in hell

Scene 3: Christ's Ascension

33. Coro: Lift up your heads, O ye gates

Scene 4: Christ's reception in Heaven

- 34. Recitativo: Unto which of the angels
- 35. Coro: Let all the angels of God worship Him

Scene 5: The beginnings of Gospel preaching

- 36. Aria: Thou art gone up on high
- 37. Coro: The Lord gave the word
- 38. Duet: How beautiful are the feet
- 39. Coro: Their sound is gone out

Scene 6: The world's rejection of the Gospel

- 40. Aria: Why do the nations so furiously rage together
- 41. Coro: Let us break their bonds asunder
- 42. Recitativo: He that dwelleth in heaven

Scene 7: God's ultimate victory

- 43. Aria: Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron
- 44. Coro: Hallelujah

Part III

Scene 1: The promise of eternal life

- 45. Aria: I know that my Redeemer liveth
- 46. Coro: Since by man came death

Scene 2: The Day of Judgment

- 47. Accompagnato: Behold, I tell you a mystery
- 48. Aria: The trumpet shall sound

Scene 3: The final conquest of sin

- 49. Recitativo: Then shall be brought to pass
- 50. Duet: O death, where is thy sting?
- 51. Coro: But thanks be to God
- 52. Aria: If God be for us, who can be against us?

Scene 4: The acclamation of the Messiah

53. Coro: Worthy is the Lamb/ Amen

Part One

Prophecy of the Messiah and Its Fulfillment

What makes Messiah such an extraordinary work that unfailingly leaves such lasting impressions on its audiences? On the one hand, it is Handel's genius for combining uplifting choral settings with rousing orchestration. On the other hand, it is his ability to express the sense of the words in musical form, such that the sentiments that the words seek to evoke are captured in timeless fashion that speaks through the centuries. His artistic sensibility is already on display in the opening bars of the "Sinfonia," which sets a gently joyful tone for all of Part One of Messiah. Here, the coming of the Messiah is first prophesied (Comfort ye"), and his birth ("Glory to God") and ministry ("Come unto Him," with the following chorus, the only texts in the work based on words of Christ) are then celebrated.

Part One also includes the only other instrumental piece, the brief "Pastoral Symphony." Even so, it is in transferring the sense and sentiment of text into the medium of music that Handel's artistic talent truly shines, shaping Messiah into the semi-operatic work that has captured the imagination of audiences ever since. Throughout, the musical interpretation explains, enlivens, and reinforces the words of the text, and helps audiences to imagine themselves among those who first experienced the events and emotions that are narrated in the musical performance. In the sound of a bass voice to sing of "darkness," for example, or the sound of strings to convey the thrill of interruption during the shepherds' peaceful night watch as the strings mimic the angelic host's quivering excitement when they announce the arrival of the Messiah.

Even though Jennens vehemently criticized Handel's work ("[Handel...] did all [he] could to murder the words"), and despite the occasional mismatch of tempo and text (for example in Part Two: "Surely he hath borne our Griefs" and "All we like Sheep"), Handel's music is the servant of the Word. His theatrical skill is demonstrated in his instruction that in the chorus "Glory to God," the trumpet is to sound "in the wings." In this fashion, the trumpet's location off stage signals that with the birth of the Messiah, the glory of God breaks into this world from another realm, from beyond the confines of the ordinary.

Prophecy of God's Salvation of Humankind

- 1. Sinfonia (Overture)
- Accompagnato

Tenor

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

(Isaiah 40: 1-3)

3. Aria Tenor

> Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry moutain and hill made low; the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

> > (Isaiah 40: 4)

4. Coro And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it

together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

(Isaiah 40: 5)

Prophecy of God's Salvation of Humankind

5. Accompagnato

Bass

Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come.

(Haggai 2: 6-7)

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom you delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

(Malachi 3: 1)

6. Aria Alto or soprano

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He

appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire.

(Malachi 3: 2)

7. Coro And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an

offering in righteousness.

(Malachi 3: 3)

Prophecy of Messiah's Incarnation and Revelation to Humankind

8. Recitativo

Alto

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, God with us.

(Isaiah 7: 14; Matthew 1: 23)

9. Aria and Coro

Alto

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your god!

(Isaiah 40: 9)

Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

(Isaiah 60: 1)

Chorus

O thou that tellest. . . etc.

10. Accompagnato

Bass

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

(Isaiah 60: 2-3)

11. Aria

Bass

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

(Isaiah 9: 2)

12. **Coro**

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

(Isaiah 9: 6)

Announcement of Messiah's Nativity

13. Pifa ("Pastoral Symphony")

14. a. Recitativo

Soprano

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

(Luke 2: 8)

b. Accompagnato

Soprano

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

(Luke 2: 9)

15. **Recitativo** Soprano

And the angel said unto them: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

(Luke 2: 10-11)

16. Accompagnato Soprano

And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host,

praising God, and saying:

(Luke 2: 13)

17. **Coro** "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men."

(Luke 2: 14)

Messiah's Healing Ministry

18. Aria Soprano

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. Rejoice greatly. . . da capo

(Zecharaiah 9: 9-10)

19. **Recitativo** Alto

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

(Isaiah 35: 5-6)

20. **Duet** Alto & soprano

He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

(Isaiah 40: 11)

Come unto Him, all ye that labour, come unto Him that are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take his yoke upon you, and learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

(Matthew 11: 28-29)

21. **Coro** His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

(Matthew 11: 30)

Interval

Part Two

From Passion to Triumph

Part Two somehow manages to tell the story of Holy Week without explicit reference to the crucifixion. It tells the good news of Easter without direct mention of the resurrection. And it celebrates the Ascension and Pentecost without explicit reference to the Holy Spirit. It somehow succeeds to tell of the rejection of the Christian faith by the world and the persecution of the Messiah's followers without explicit reference to the church. It is this strategy of indirection that enables *Messiah* to leave such deep impressions on audiences. The power of *Messiah* lies in this allusive quality of the text and music, where the text of the libretto touches only tangentially on the main events of the biblical narrative, and yet reveals at a deeper level what is of ultimate concern. This poetic finesse sets *Messiah* apart from Handel's other biblical oratorios, and also makes it quite different from Bach's great Passions.

Early in Part Two, Handel evokes the depth of Christ's sorrows, the scorn of his accusers, and the helpless woe of his friends, who recognize their Savior in him. Mournful strings and woodwind instruments are prominent. Yet from the beginning of the aria "But though didst no leave his soul in hell," through to "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron," there is a swelling and developing sense of triumph and celebration, an inescapable movement that builds and builds, until it finally breaks like a wave in the climax of the "Hallelujah" chorus.

At the end of Part Two, the trumpets sound again – but this time in the body of the orchestra. The glory of God is no longer hidden, or only beginning to reach this world. Now God's glory covers the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Messiah's Passion

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22. Coro	Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.
	(John 1: 29)
23. Aria	Alto
	He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
	(Isaiah 53: 3)
	He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off His hair: He hid not His face from shame and spitting. He was despised da capo
	(Isaiah 50: 6)

Messiah Colorado Bach Ensemble | 8

24. Coro Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows! He was wounded

for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of

our peace was upon Him.

(Isaiah 53: 4-5)

25. **Coro** And with His stripes we are healed.

(Isaiah 53: 5)

26. Coro All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own

way. And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

(Isaiah 53: 6)

27. Accompagnato Tenor

All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and

shake their heads, saying:

(Psalm 22: 7)

"He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, if He 28. Coro

delight in Him."

(Psalm 22: 8)

29. Accompagnato Tenor

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart: He is full of heaviness. He looked for

some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to

comfort him.

(Psalm 69: 20)

30. Aria Tenor

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow.

(Lamentations 1: 12)

Crucifixion, Descent into Hell, and Resurrection

31. Accompagnato Soprano or tenor

He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of Thy

people was He stricken.

(Isaiah 53: 8)

32. Aria Soprano or tenor

But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy

One to see corruption.

(Psalm 16: 10)

33. **Coro**

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.

(Psalm 24: 7-10)

34. Recitativo Tenor

Unto which of the angels said He at any time: "Thou art My Son, this day

have I begotten Thee?"

(Hebrews 1: 5)

35. Coro Let all the angels of God worship Him.

(Hebrews 1: 6)

36. Aria Alto or soprano

> Thou art gone up on high; Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even from Thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell

among them.

(Psalm 68: 18)

Whitsun, Preaching of the Gospel to the World

37. Coro	The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the preachers.
	(Psalm 68: 11)
38. Duet	Soprano or alto (or soprano, alto and Chorus) How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.
	(Isaiah 52: 7; Romans 10: 15)
39. Coro	Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.

(Romans 10: 18; Psalm 19: 4)

World's Rejection of Christianity

40. Aria	Bass Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed.
	(Psalm 2: 1-2)
41. Coro	Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. (Psalm 2: 3)

Divine Destruction of Enemies of Religion; Christianity's Eternal Triumph

42. Recitativo	Tenor He that dwelleth in Heav'n shall laugh them to scorn; The Lord shall have them in derision.
	(Psalm 2: 4)
43. Aria	Tenor Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.
	(Psalm 2: 9)
44. Coro	Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.
	(Revelation 19: 6)
	The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.
	(Revelation 11: 15)
	King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.
	(Revelation 19: 16)

Hallelujah!

The custom of audiences of Messiah to rise to their feet during the performance of the Hallelujah Chorus probably dates back to the London premiere of Messiah in 1743. The performance was attended by the British monarch, King George II (1683–1760), who was one of Handel's patrons. (He was also the last British king to appear on the battlefield with his soldiers, in the Battle of Dettingen, in 1743.) There is credible testimony that George II rose to his feet during the Hallelujah Chorus, which—following royal protocol—obliged everyone else to stand also. If this is correct, then George II acknowledged Christ also as his king and sovereign, perhaps moved by the words of the chorus, which acclaim Christ as "King of kings, and Lord of Lords."

Messiah Colorado Bach Ensemble | 11

Part Three

Messiah's Role in Life after Death

The last and shortest part of Messiah explores the consummation of God's salvation in the general resurrection and the re-creation of all things. This part draws heavily on texts from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 15.

Again, the trumpet plays a significant symbolic role in heralding the work of God, transforming corruption into incorruptibility. The change of tempo contrasting death with resurrection and Adam with Christ, in the chorus "Since by Man" is especially powerful and moving. The final victory of the Messiah is in the defeat of death, and this victory is followed by the worship of the Lamb, a symbolic representation of the crucified and risen Christ.

In the final chorus, Handel produced a conclusion worthy of the whole: The drums drive home the resounding finale. It is a tour de force: The single word "Amen" is repeated again and again in mounting cadences for a full four and a half minutes. Even so, it never becomes repetitive because every single iteration is performed in ever different and new ways.

The trumpets are again prominent, announcing in glorious triumph that the glory of the Lord is finally and fully revealed. There is nothing else to be said; nothing different to be heard, as all creation joins in the glorious acclamation of the Messiah, who is worthy of all blessing, and honor, and glory.

Faith in Personal Resurrection and Redemption

45. Aria	Soprano I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.
	(Job 19: 25-26)
	For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep.
	(I Corinthians 15: 20)
46. Coro	Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.
	(I Corinthians 15: 21-22)

Messiah Colorado Bach Ensemble | 12

General Resurrection

47. Accompagnato Bass

> Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

(I Corinthians 15: 51-52)

48. Aria Bass

> The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. The trumpet . . . da capo

> > (I Corinthians 15: 52-53)

Death and Sin Superceded; Messiah's Intercession at Last Judgment

49. Recitativo	Alto
	Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is
	swallowed up in victory."

(I Corinthians 15: 54)

50. **Duet** Alto & tenor

> O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

> > (I Corinthians 15: 55-56)

51. **Coro** But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord

Jesus Christ.

(I Corinthians 15: 57)

52. Aria Soprano alto

If God be for us, who can be against us?

(Romans 8: 31)

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us.

(Romans 8: 33-34)

Adoration of Messiah by Blessed in Heaven

53. **Coro**

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing and honour, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Amen.

(Revelation 5: 12-14)

The performance of Messiah ends with the declaration that adoration should be given to God (= unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb) "for ever and ever." These four words are then repeated eight times, the repetition suggesting the unlimited temporal extension of praise.

And this leads into the climax of the performance, where all choral and solo voices come together and combine with the sounds of the assembled musical instruments to unite all of the performers as they embody all beings in heaven and on earth who now join the adoration through their universal affirmation - in the single word "Amen," repeated more than sixty times in ever new variations of sound and tempo-that God indeed deserves blessing and honor, and glory and power - for ever.

The subheadings in small Capitals are based on a structure provided by Jennens for the London performance of Messiah in 1743, with headings not just for each of the three main parts of the oratorio, but also for each new section.

Program notes have been written by The Rev. Dr. Knut M. Heim, Professor of Old Testament at Denver Seminary, building on program notes by The Rev. Dr. Pete Wilcox for a performance of Messiah at Symphony Hall in Birmingham, UK, on December 10 and 14 in 2004.

Singers



Emily Donato Soprano Arias/Ensemble

Regarded as a "bright soprano" by Opera News, with "vocal abilities, musical intuition, and poise...well beyond her years" by the East Hampton Star, soprano Emily Donato enjoys connecting with audiences through performances of music ranging from the Baroque to works by contemporary composers. Based in Brooklyn, New York, she has performed as a soloist with Musica Viva of New York, the American Symphony Orchestra, and Juilliard415, and has sung under the batons of conductors including Masaaki Suzuki, Simon Carrington, Leon Botstein, David Hill, and Nicholas McGegan. Her operatic credits include Miss Wordsworth in Albert Herring at the New England Conservatory; Eurydice in Gluck's Orfeo ed Eurydice at Bard College; Pamina in Die Zauberflöte with Middlebury College; and Gretel in Hansel und Gretel with Diamond Opera Company, A champion of new music, the 2016-2017 season saw Emily sing the world premiere of a one-woman opera, These Walls by Kyle Tieman-Strauss, at the Steinhardt Blackbox at NYU. On the concert stage, Ms. Donato has performed Handel's Messiah and Alexander's Feast; Bach's Magnificat and Johannes-Passion; and Orff's Carmina Burana.

Since the beginning of her musical training in the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, Emily has been passionate about choral repertoire, and has since appeared with worldrenowned ensembles such as Bach Collegium Japan; Theatre of Voices; and the Yale School Cantorum, with whom she has participated in forthcoming albums on the Hyperion Label.

Ms. Donato holds her Bachelor of Arts in Music from Bard College, and has studied at the New England Conservatory with Lorraine Nubar. She received her Master of Music from the Yale School of Music, where she studied with tenor James Taylor as a member of the Yale Voxtet.



Abigail Nims Alto Arias/Ensemble

Mezzo-soprano Abigail Nims is regarded as a musician of integrity and versatility for her performances of repertoire spanning from Monteverdi, Bach, and Mozart to Crumb, Ligeti and premieres of new works. She has performed as a soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, São Paulo Symphony, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, São Paulo Symphony, Boston Baroque, Carmel Bach Festival, Detroit Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Colorado Symphony, Teatro Municipal (Chile), Portland Baroque Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Mexico, the Louisiana Philharmonic, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi,

Indianapolis Symphony, Colorado Music Festival, Colorado Springs Philharmonic, Virginia Symphony, the Phoenix Symphony, the Colorado Bach Ensemble, and the Bach Festival Society of Winter Park among others.

On the operatic stage, she has performed leading roles with opera companies including Wexford Festival Opera, New York City Opera, Atlanta Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Opera Omaha, Florentine Opera, Virginia Opera, Opera Grand Rapids, and Opera New Jersey. Ms. Nims has collaborated with renowned conductors including Michael Tilson Thomas, Leonard Slatkin, Roberto Abbado, John Butt, Gary Wedow, Martin Pearlman, Grete Pederssen, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Thomas Zehetmair, Jun Märkl, Giuseppe Grazioli, and JoAnn Falletta. Her recordings include Boston Baroque's Grammy-nominated recording of Monteverdi's Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria (Linn Records), Mazzoli and Vavrek's Proving Up with the International Contemporary Ensemble (Pentatone), Peter Ash's The Golden Ticket with Atlanta Opera (Albany Records), and Martin Bresnick's song cycle "Falling" with pianist Wei-Yi Yang on the album Every Thing Must Go (Albany Records). She holds degrees from Yale School of Music, Westminster Choir College, and Ohio Wesleyan University. Ms. Nims resides in Colorado with her husband and two sons and is a member of the voice faculty at the University of Colorado-Boulder.



Gene Stenger Tenor Arias/Ensemble

Hailed as an "impressive tenor" (The New York Times) who sings with "sweet vibrancy" (The Cleveland Plain Dealer) Gene Stenger is one of the country's most called upon Bach specialists who is also heralded for his performances of oratorios by Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Mozart.

Mr. Stenger's 2024-2025 season features solo engagements with the Charlottesville Symphony (Mozart's Requiem), Washington Bach Consort (Bach's Christmas Oratorio), Colorado Bach Ensemble (Bach's Christmas Oratorio, St. Matthew Passion, & BWV 20), Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra (Handel's Messiah), the Harvard University Choirs & Orchestra (world premiere of James Kallembach's opera, American Jezebel: The Trial of Anne Hutchinson), Upper Valley Baroque (Handel's L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed il Moderato), Academy of Sacred Drama New York (Tosi's Il martiro di Santa Caterina), and Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity New York (BWV 60, 243, 111, & 249).

Originally from Pittsburgh, PA, Gene holds degrees from Yale University's School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, Colorado State University, and Baldwin Wallace University Conservatory of Music. Recent discography credits include the role of the Minstrel/Narrator in the world premiere recording of Arnold Rosner's opera The Chronicle of Nine with Odyssey Opera, and BMOP, tenor soloist in Schmelzer's Le Memorie Dolorose with TENET Vocal Artists and ACRONYM, tenor soloist on Yale Schola Cantorum's album Fauré Requiem and other sacred music led by David Hill released on Hyperion Records, and a new solo quartet recording of David Lang's The Little Match Girl Passion which will be released on Cantaloupe Records this fall. He currently resides in New Haven, CT, where he serves as instructor of voice at Yale.



Andrew Garland Bass Arias/Ensemble

Andrew Garland has performed recitals at Carnegie Hall, the New York Festival of Song, the Ravinia Festival, Vocal Arts DC, Marilyn Horne Foundation, The Bard Festival, The Cleveland Art Song Festival, Camerata Pacifica, Andre-Turp Society Montreal, Voce at Pace, Huntsville Chamber Music Guild, Fanfare in Hammond, LA, Cincinnati Matinee Musicale, Cincinnati Song Initiative, Tuesday Morning Music Club, Vocal Arts DC, college campuses around North America, and venues in Italy, Croatia, Greece and Turkey.

He has premiered works by Jake Heggie, William Bolcom, Stephen Paulus, Steven Mark Kohn, Eric Nathan, Lee Hoiby, Tom Cipullo, Thomas Pasatieri, and Gabriela Frank. Last season he released his tenth album: El Rebelde: Gabriela Frank and Dmitri Shostakovich and has nine other commercial recordings on the Telarc, Naxos, Azica, Roven Records, DASP, and other labels.

He has performed in concert with the Atlanta Symphony, Boston POPS, Boston Baroque, Handel and Haydn, Boston Youth Symphony, National Philharmonic, Albany Symphony, Washington Master Chorale at the Kennedy Center, National Chorale at Lincoln Center, Colorado Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Houston Symphony, UMS Ann Arbor, Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado, Wild Beautiful Orchestra, and with the Takács, Dover, Amernet, and Daedalus String Quartets. He has performed leading opera roles at Seattle Opera, New York City Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, Minnesota Opera, Arizona Opera, Hawai'i Opera Theatre, Opera Colorado, Boston Lyric, Dayton, Fort Worth Opera, The Bard Festival, Opera Saratoga, and others. He performs with Music For Food to raise money for local pantries. Garland is an Associate Professor of Voice at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and is a mentor with Bel Canto Boot Camp and tonebase.com.

Andrew (Andy) bicycles year-round and for the past 31 years has raised funds for the Dana Farber Cancer Institute through the Pan Mass Challenge.

Andrew Halladay

Sopratio	
· Alice Del Simone	· Michael Hoffman
· Emily Murdock	 Todd Teske
· Laura Horn	· Cody Laun
· Mo Bailey	 Thomas Bocchi
· Mackenzie Laun	· Lucas Jackson
· Adrianne Fleming	Dong Cheol Kim
Alto	Bass
· Jenna Clark	Stuart Dameron
· Rebecca Robinson	· Matthew Weissenbuehler
· Gabrielle Razafinjatovo	· Jason Rober
· Leah Creek Biesterfeld	· Grant Jackson
· Anna Engländer	· Samuel Wendt

Tenor

Sanrana

· Lauren Kelly

Instrumentalists

Violin I

- · Robyn Julyan Concertmaster
- · Rebekah Durham 1B
- · Tori Woodrow 2A
- · Leena Waite 2B

Violin II

- · Heejung Kim Principal
- · Desiree Suarez-Ward 1B
- · Chris Menter 2A

Viola

- · Phillp Stevens Principal
- · Aniel Cabán 1B

Cello

- · Sarah Biber Principal
- · Becky Kutz-Osterberg 1B

Bass

· David Crowe - Principal

Oboe I

· Ian Wisekal - Principal

Oboe II

· Rachel Becker

Bassoon

· Cayla Bellamy - Principal

Trumpet I

· Michael Brotherton - Principal

Trumpet II

· Amy Millesen

Timpani

· Eric Hollenbeck

Keyboard

· Ken Mervine - Principal

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- Donika McKelvie
- · Elissa & Stanley Guralnick
- Eric Nye & Carol Frost

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- · Galen & Patty Darrough
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- · Jeffrey Zax
- · John Blair
- · John Lindemann
- · John & Mary Ann Parfrey
- · Jonathan Teeter
- · Karen Mohr
- · Karen & Scott Yarberry
- · Keith & Kathryn Isenberger
- · Kevin & Rebekah Durham
- Leslie Stevenson
- · Malcolm Murray
- · Mark & Lisa Kautsky
- · Mary Pelletter
- Melvin Stolzenburg & Rose Martinez
- · Michael Harr
- · Monica Poelchau
- · Michael Pohlenz
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- · Adrianne Fleming
- · Aims & Susie McGuinness
- · Alexis & Joel Senger
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- Anonymous
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