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for supporting our Fall 2017 season!

Thank you to all the friends, family and members of Voci
who volunteer hours of work to make our performances possible!

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Voci Women’s Vocal Ensemble
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Voci Women’s Vocal Ensemble Mitchell Covington, Artistic Director

*Rejoice!
Rejoice!*

with the *Jubilate Baroque Orchestra*
and guest artist *MacKenzie Covington, Soprano*

Saturday, December 9, 2:00 PM

St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 114 Montecito Avenue, Oakland

Sunday, December 10, 7:30 PM

St. Mary Magdalen Church, 2005 Berryman Street, Berkeley

About Today's Program

We are so glad you have joined us as we journey back to 18th century Venice, a city that was experiencing a remarkable flowering of sacred music composed specifically for women's voices, by some of the world's great masters of vocal music.

The Venetian Ospedali

The energy behind this flowering of creativity was provided by Venice's several *Ospedali*—charitable institutions established by the Catholic church to house young female wards who were considered undesirable in Venetian society. These included orphans, homeless children, lepers and reformed prostitutes. Quite unpredictably, by the mid 1700s, these institutions occupied a position at the core of Venetian society and continued to do so for half a century.

The *Ospedali* provided girls and young women with an education in many subjects, including rigorous musical training. The most talented residents were selected to become *figlie del coro* (daughters of the choir) and perform in the *Ospedali*'s musical ensembles, known as *cori*. One of the service obligations for members of the *cori* was to sing in liturgical services and in concerts, which were attended by members of Venice's wealthy merchant class. The *Ospedali*, which started merely as charitable institutions, increasingly drew international attention because of the high caliber of the *cori*'s performances.

Financial support from wealthier Venetians allowed the *cori* to flourish and reach a high standard of musicianship. Venice's top operatic and church composers also served in posts at the *Ospedali*. These included Vivaldi, Porpora, Hasse and, a Voci favorite, Chiara Margarita Cozzolani. These men and women were expected to produce new music on almost a weekly basis. Thus, we have inherited a large *oeuvre* of beautiful music for women's voices, which the musical world is only beginning to uncover.

The *cori* produced many virtuosic soloists among their singers. Some of the scores that Antonio Vivaldi composed for the *coro* at the *Pietà*, where he was resident composer, include names of specific soloists for whom they were written. Tonight's performance will be illuminated by several of Voci's wonderful solo voices as well as our guest artist, MacKenzie Covington.



Voci Staff

Artistic Director: Mitchell Covington

Assistant Conductor: Edna Yeh

Accompanist: Anne Rainwater

Chorus Manager: Mishaela De Vries

Communications & Marketing: Elizabeth Brashers (lead),

Rose Hansen, Susan Sands, Lezak Shallat

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Karla Sagramoso, Adina Sara, Victoria Skerritt, and members of Voci

Program: Elizabeth Brashers (lead), Mitchell Covington,

Rose Hansen, Lezak Shallat

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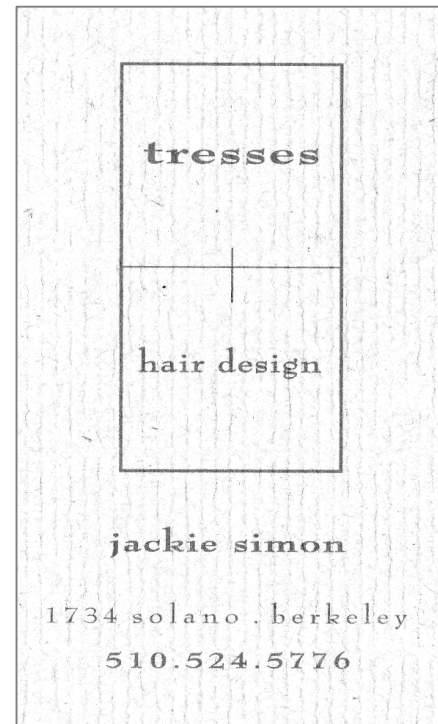
Mishaela De Vries, Susan Sands,

Mitchell Covington & Edna Yeh (ex officio)

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Empowering Women

The *Ospedali* contributed to Venetian culture by breaking class barriers and by empowering women, in opposition to the social conventions of the time. The *Ospedali* allowed women to choose education and independence over marriage or a convent. And, remarkably, the *cori* escaped the common association of immorality with female public performance. Audiences not only accepted, but celebrated the *cori's* concerts. In addition, the structure of the *Ospedali* relied on female leadership. The *Ospedali* developed educated women, virtuosic female musicians, and leading female administrators.

Precursors

Tonight's concert will also feature music that was written in earlier times, and in places other than Venice. We will start the evening with a chant composed by 12th century philosopher, mystic, visionary and Benedictine Abbess, Hildegard von Bingen. Three renaissance motets also appear on the program, starting each of the two halves of the concert. These motets were written by an Italian, an Englishman and a Spaniard. You will also hear two contrasting works by J.S. Bach.

A Historically Informed Performance

We present this music to you today as it would have been performed in the middle of the 18th century. The members of our guest orchestra are experts in the performance of baroque music and will be playing on period instruments. In addition, we are using baroque tuning, which is about a half-step lower than modern tuning. The performance of ornaments and phrasing is also based on baroque practices. We believe that this exceptional music comes alive when performed in the way it was intended to be heard.

Voices of Peace

Voci also believes in the power of singing to make a difference in the world. Our very first concert way back in 1991 raised funds for victims of that fall's Oakland Hills Fire. Since 9/11, we have focused on themes of peace in all of our fall concerts through our *Voices in Peace* concert series (now in its 15th year). This year, our performance at St. Joseph Basilica on December 3 raised funds for the Alameda Food Bank, and was offered in partnership with the *Notes for Nourishment* music series, which similarly brings together artists across cultures and traditions, in concerts to feed the soul.

Our singing has inspired us on our individual paths toward peace. May it inspire you as well.

-- Mitchell Covington

Program

O frondens virga

(O greening branch) A hymn to Mary

*O frondens virga,
in tua nobilitate stans,
sicut aurora procedit:
Nunc gaude et laetare
et nos debiles dignare
a mala consuetudine liberare,
atque manum tuam porrige
ad erigendum nos.*

O greening branch,
standing in your nobility
as dawn advances;
now rejoice and be glad
and deem us, helpless ones,
worth freeing from evil habits,
and stretch forth your hand
to lift us up.

Hildegard von Bingen

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Rejoice, rejoice, with heart and voice,
In Christes' birth this day, rejoice.

William Byrd

Sucepit Israel

(O servant, Israel) from Magnificat

*Suscepit Israel, puerum suum,
recordatus misericordiae suae.*

He has helped His servant, Israel,
Remembering His mercy.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Wir eilen mit schwachen, doch emsigen Schritten

(We hasten with weak, yet eager steps)
from Cantata No. 78 "Jesu, der du meine Seele"

*Wir eilen mit schwachen,
doch emsigen Schritten,
O Jesu, O Meister, zu helfen zu dir.
Du suchest die Kranken und Irrenden
treulich.
Ach, höre, wie wir die Stimme erheben,
um Hilfe zu bitten!
Es sei uns dein gnädiges Antlitz
erfreulich!*

We hasten with weak,
yet eager steps,
O Jesus, O Master, to You for help.
You faithfully seek the ill and erring.
O listen as we lift up our voices to ask for
help!
Let Your gracious countenance
be joyful to us!

Johann Sebastian Bach



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Ave, Regina coelorum
(Hail, Queen of Heaven)

Giovanni Legrenzi

Ave, Regina coelorum, Hail, O Queen of Heaven,
Ave, Domina angelorum: Hail, O Lady of Angels:

Salve, radix, salve, porta Hail! thou root, hail!
Ex qua mundo lux est orta: Thou gate, from whom unto the world a
light has arisen:

Gaude, Virgo gloriosa, Rejoice, O glorious Virgin,
Super omnes speciose. Lovely beyond all others.

Vale, o valde decora, Farewell, most beautiful maiden,
Et pro nobis Christum exora. And pray for us to Christ.

Laudate pueri
(Give praise), Psalm 112

Johann Adolf Hasse

Laudate pueri
Liz Binning & Vicky Faulk, soloists

Laudate pueri Dominum Praise, O ye servants of the Lord,
Laudate nomen Domini. Praise the name of the Lord.

Sit nomen Domini benedictum Blessed be the name of the Lord,
ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum. From this time forth and for evermore.

Excelsus super omnes gentes
Susan Martin & Lisa Sanders, soloists

Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus The Lord is high above all nations,
et super coelos gloria ejus. And his glory above the heavens.

Quis sicut Dominus
Mishaela De Vries, soloist

Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster Who is as the Lord our God,
qui in altis habitat. who dwelleth on high.

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Suscitans a terra

Suscitans a terra inopem, et de stercore erigens pauperem; He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,
And lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;
Ut collecet eum cum principibus, cum principibus populi sui. That he may set him with princes,
Even with the princes of his people.

Sicut erat in principio

Liz Binning & Vicky Faulk, soloists

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper et in saecula saeculorum. As it was in the beginning,
Is now and ever shall be;
World without end.
Amen. Amen.

Fecit Potentiam

Nicola Porpora

(He has shown power) from Magnificat

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos, mente cordis sui. He has shown the power of His arm,
Scattering the proud of heart.
Deposuit potentes de sede: et exaltavit humiles. He has displaced the mighty from their
thrones and exalted the lowly.
Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit inanes. He has fed the hungry, and the rich he has
sent away empty.
Suscepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae, He has saved Israel, his servant,
mindful of his mercy.
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semeni ejus in saecula. As he spoke to our forefathers,
Abraham and his descendants, forever.

— **INTERMISSION** —

the Harmony Ensemble at Rossmoor. A real estate broker, she helps families in transition at Rossmoor to purchase or sell their retirement homes in this 55+ community.

Edna Yeh, Assistant Conductor, joined Voci in 2008. After a childhood spent playing the piano and violin, she began singing with a women's chorus in college, and eventually earned a master's degree in music theory. Edna works by day in web development and is the mother of two young adults.

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Nicky Reed loves being a part of Voci! She sang in an all-women's choir in college and enjoys the complexity and sound of women's choral music. In addition to singing with Voci, she loves to trail run and bake desserts of all shapes and sizes.

Karla Sagramoso is very pleased to be part of Voci, having participated in choral singing of all sorts since childhood. She is convinced that if the world's people all belonged to choirs and ate regular infusions of chocolate, they'd all be happier and healthier, though perhaps not slimmer. She especially enjoys singing in small ensembles and house concerts, and loves learning repertoire from many centuries and countries. When not singing, she works as a clinical psychologist and enjoys her family.

Lisa Sanders enjoys being part of such a talented group of singers. Lisa also sings in The Dulcet Four, an a cappella quartet based in the San Francisco Bay Area, performing repertoire from the Great American Songbook and other classics. She has sung with Festival Opera in Walnut Creek and the Livermore Valley Opera. On weekends, Lisa cantors at the St. Perpetua Church in Lafayette and sings jazz. When not singing, Lisa teaches technology and math at St. Mary's School in Walnut Creek and keeps up with her two 20-something daughters and a traveling husband.

Susan Sands has been singing in groups all her life, and has joyously sung with Voci for 25 years. She is a clinical psychologist in private practice, and also teaches, writes articles, and supervises other therapists. In her former life, she was a print and television journalist. She has an adult son and loves traveling all over the world with her husband.

Adina Sara is returning to Voci after a 13-year break, during which she pursued other musical interests with Broadway, pop and jazz ensembles. A veteran performer, she produced three albums of original music and performed as a singer/songwriter in folk festivals and clubs throughout Northern California. Adina is also a member of MOZAIK, an a cappella chorus that sings Eastern European music. When not singing, she can be found digging in her garden, crocheting clothes or visiting her 4 grandchildren in southern California, where she loves to sing duets with her 12 year-old granddaughter.

Lezak Shallat started singing choral music in college and has never stopped. She's sung mostly in chamber groups and symphonic choirs, and music from Latin America. In addition to singing in choirs, she loves to travel with choirs and participate in music festivals, and is famous for making copious notes in her scores.

Victoria Skerritt is happy to be in year three as a member of Voci and loves learning Voci's diverse repertoire. Victoria's music background is rooted in musical theater, alternative rock bands and jazz vocal ensemble work. When she is not singing with Voci, Victoria manages parks and recreation activities for Contra Costa County. She thanks her co-workers, her friends and family for encouraging her musical journey.

Marsha Wehrenberg has been a choral singer since elementary school, first with church choirs and later with a variety of Symphony Choruses in Napa, Oakland and Stockton. Marsha discovered music for women in the last few years while singing with

Magnificat

*Magnificat anima mea Dominum
Et exultavit spiritus meus
in Deo salutari meo.*

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

My soul magnifies the Lord
And my spirit rejoices
in God my Savior.

Duo seraphim clamabant

(Two angels called to one another)

*Duo Seraphim clamabant alter ad
alterum:
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth:
Plena est omnis terra gloria eius.
Tres sunt qui testimonium dant in coelo:
Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus:
Et hi tres unum sunt.*

Tómas Luis de Victoria

Two angels called to one another:
Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of Sabaoth:
The earth is full of your glory.
There are three who give testimony in
heaven,
Father, Word, and Holy Spirit,
and these Three are One.

In nativitate Domini nostri Jesu Christi canticum

(Song of the Nativity of the Lord), H 421

Historicus (narrator)
Elizabeth Brashers, soloist

*Frigidae noctis umbra totum orbem
tegebat,
et pressos curis homines sopor altus
habebat.*

The shadow of cold night covered the
world
and deep sleep held men oppressed with
worry.

Chorus pastorum (chorus)

*Pastores autem Judaeae vigilabant super
gregem suum.
Et ecce Angelus Domini stetit juxta eos,
et claritas Dei circumfulsit
et terruit illos.
Et ait eis Angelus:*

Shepherds of Judea were watching over
their flocks.
And lo, an angel of the Lord stood by
them,
and the glory of the Lord shone round
about them
and they were sore afraid.
And the angel said unto them:

Angelus (the Angel)
Mishaela De Vries, soloist

Nolite timere, pastores. Fear not, shepherds.
Ecce enim annuntio vobis gaudium For behold, I bring you good tidings of
magnum, great joy
quod erit omni populo: which shall be to all the people.
quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator, for there is born to you this day a Saviour,
vester Christus Dominus in civitate who is Christ the Lord, in the city of
David. David.
Et hoc erit signum vobis: And this is the sign unto you:
invenietis infantem pannis involutum ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling
et reclinatum in praesepe. clothes, and lying in a manger.
Surgite pastores, properate, festinate, Rise, shepherds, hurry, hasten,
ite Bethlehem, et adorare illum. go to Bethlehem and worship him.

Chorus pastorum

Surgamus, properemus, festinemus, Let us rise, let us hurry, let us hasten,
eamus usque Bethlehem, let us go to Bethlehem
et videamus hoc verbum, quod factum est, and see this thing which has come to
quod Dominus ostendit nobis. pass,
which the Lord has made known to us.

Historicus

Euntes autem pastores pervenerunt So the shepherds went, and came
ad locum ubi puer natus erat, to the place where the boy was born,
et intrantes domum and entering into the house
invenerunt Mariam et Joseph they found Mary and Joseph
et infantum pannis involutum and the infant wrapped in swaddling
et positum in praesepe. clothes
and lying in a manger.

Chorus pastorum

Et procidentem adoraverunt eum, inculato, And kneeling they adored him with
sed devoto carmine dicentes: artless
but devoted songs, saying:

Rose Hansen has been singing with Voci since 2016. Singing has always played an important role in her life, and she is grateful for the special opportunities it has afforded, such as singing in magnificent European and Mexican churches on choir tours and performing as the live “soundtrack” for a silent film at film festivals. When not singing in choirs or writing about science (her day job), Rose enjoys reading, hiking, writing fiction and traveling with her husband, whom she met while singing.

Emily Kirk has been involved in music since she was very young. She studied classical singing for 10 years and was involved in various high school and college music groups for eight years. She graduated from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA in 2015 where she earned a BA in International Political Economy, and a minor in Music. She now works at a law firm in San Francisco, and is thrilled to be singing with Voci after a post-graduation hiatus from choral music.

Pauline Ma-Senturia was born in Guilin, China, and grew up singing at her mother’s church in Taiwan. She holds degrees in both Music and Interior Architectural Design. She has sung with various choral groups in the Bay Area, while working as a design and construction project manager for the U.S. General Services Administration for 18 years. Since her retirement, she is busier than ever, enjoying her seven grandchildren, singing, dancing, doing craft projects and traveling near and far.

Katherine McStravick is amazed to now be one of the old timers, having joined Voci in the early 00’s! She has sung with varied ensembles and characters through the years, including daily concert chorale under Jane Hardester while a music major in college. Recent retirement from a long career in healthcare allows her more freedom to enjoy yoga, hiking and biking, friends and family, and of course, singing!

Susan Martin has been singing with Voci since 2008. She is currently a full-time music student at San Francisco State University, but also continues to work as a veterinarian. Her two kids are now in college; she and her husband live in El Cerrito with their dog, who has no plans to leave the nest. She also sings with The Dulcet Four, an a cappella jazz quartet formed with three other Voci singers, as well as in several other vocal groups at SFSU.

Terry Meyers grew up in Los Angeles, the youngest child of two musicians. In a former life she danced, made art, played the violin and performed in musical theater. Terry joined Voci as a founding member in 1991 and has worked behind the scenes for Voci for 22 years, currently serving as board president. She also sings with The Dulcet Four and Resmiranda Vocal Ensemble. She is a clinical psychologist in private practice and has 2 grown daughters and a supportive husband who is usually working the box office for Voci.

Michelle Pitcher comes to Voci as a recent UC Berkeley graduate. She has been part of various ensembles throughout her life, singing everything from madrigals to show tunes. To pay those student loans, Michelle works as a writer and marketing manager. She is thrilled to be part of a choir again, especially with such an amazing group of women!

Mitchell Covington was music director for many years. Twenty-eight years of Sunday morning anthems, Christmas and Easter concerts, and three international choir tours gave her a great appreciation for the breadth, the beauty and the power of sacred choral music. She was pleased to join Voci this past spring and is enjoying the challenging new choral experience.

Ayyana Chakravartula has sung in many choirs and a cappella groups, with one of the first being a high school madrigals group directed by former Voci Artistic Director Anne Hege! Ayyana would not classify any of her time as “spare,” but she does manage to squeeze in hanging out with her husband and three sons, music, baking and mechanical engineering.

Mishaela De Vries is in her third season with Voci. She has studied music since the age of six, beginning with violin, and later studying piano and voice. Since graduating with her bachelor’s degree in music education from the University of Oregon, she has taught private music lessons and studied choral conducting. Her passions are early music of the Renaissance, coffee (small batch, local roasts...self-proclaimed coffee snob) and teaching music to the very young.

Cynthia Dodge has enjoyed a lifetime of singing in all sizes of choral groups around the country. From Albany Pro Musica in New York to the Anchorage Opera Chorus in Alaska, she finds collaborating with fellow musicians to be a grounding and sustaining force. Cynthia is thrilled for the opportunity to sing with Voci, her first all-female ensemble. Early in her career she served as a clinical psychologist in the US Air Force, and now serves veterans within the VA Northern California Healthcare System.

Ruth Ekhaus can think of few things that she finds more fulfilling than taking her place on the risers and singing with Voci. During the days she sits silently behind a little machine in a courtroom in San Mateo writing the official record. When not engaged in her chosen profession, she is made whole by loving her family, embarrassing her children by simply existing (as a mother should), doing laundry and vigorously scratching her dogs’ bellies.

Vicky Faulk has been singing, and loving it, since she was a small child. As a young adult she studied voice and has performed with choirs and smaller ensembles almost continuously. Vicky works with Coldwell Banker as a residential real estate agent. She has assisted with marketing and selling homes in the East Bay area since 1987. Says Vicky of singing with Voci, “Nothing is as soul-satisfying as standing in the midst of a glorious choral chord, the vibrations swirling around my head. It is transformative!”

Margaret Garms has been singing since high school, including with the New York State Honor Chorus, Stanford University Chorus and the St. James Cathedral Choir (Episcopalian, Chicago). Since moving back to the Bay Area 20 years ago, she has sung with Baroque Choral Guild, Midsummer Mozart Festival and Oakland Symphony Chorus, as well as co-founding Chora Nova, now in its 12th year. She is a retired corporate bankruptcy attorney and the mother of an Oakland police detective.

Una ex choro (solo and chorus)

Katherine McStravick, Emily Kirk, Susan Martin & Lisa Sanders (soloists)

*Salve, puellule, salve, puellule,
O nate parvule, quam bonus es.
Tu coelum deseris, tu solo nasceris,
nobis te ut miseris assimiles.*

Hail, little boy, hail, tender little one,
O tiny baby, how good you are.
You have left heaven, you are born on
the earth,
to make yourself like us poor wretches.

*O summa bonitas, excelsa Deitas,
vilis humanitas fit hodie.
Aeternus nascitur, immensus capitur.
et rei tegitur sub specie.*

O greatest good, highest deity,
that today becomes common humanity.
The Eternal is born, the immense
encompassed
And concealed in worldly garb.

*Virgo puerpera, beata viscera,
Dei cum opera, dant Filium.
Gaude, flos virginum, gaude, spes
hominum,
fons lavans crimum proluvium*

Virgin mother, your blessed flesh,
through God gives birth to a son.
Rejoice, flower of virgins, rejoice, hope
of mankind,
fount that washes away the stain.

Ave, Regina caelorum
(Hail Queen of Heaven)

Chiara Margarita Cozzolani

See text above

Laetatus sum
(I rejoiced)

Nicola Porpora

MacKenzie Covington, soloist

Laetatus sum
*Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi
in domum Domini ibimus.
Stantes erant pedes nostri in astriis tuis,
Jerusalem;*

I rejoiced, when it was said to me:
Let us go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet will stand within your entrance,
Jerusalem;

*Jerusalem, quae aedificatur ut civitas,
cuius par ticipatio eius in id ipsum.
Illic enim ascenderunt tribus,
tribus Domini, testimonium Israel,
ad confitendum nomini Domini.*

Jerusalem, which is built as a city
Which is compact together.
For there the tribes will ascend,
The tribes of the Lord, of the testimony
of Israel,
To give thanks to the name of the Lord.

Quia illic sederunt sedes

*Quia illic sederunt sedes in iudicium,
sedes super domum David.
Rogate quae ad pacem sunt Jerusalem
et abundantia
diligentibus te.*

For there will be placed thrones of judgment,
The thrones over the house of David.
Pray that Jerusalem be at peace,
And that there be abundance
for those who love you.

Fiat Pax

*Fiat pax in virtute tua
et abundantia in turribus tuis.
Propter fratres meos et proximos meos
loquebar pacem de te.
Propter domum Domini Dei nostri
quaesivi bona tibi.*

May there be peace in your strength,
And abundance in your towers.
For the sake of my brothers and my neighbors,
I will ask for peace for you.
For the sake of the house of the Lord my God,
I have sought good things for you.

Gloria Patri

*Gloria Patri, et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto.*

Glory to the Father, and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit.

Sicut Erat

*Sicut erat in principio, et nunc,
et semper, et in saecula saeculorum.
Amen.*

As it was in the beginning, now,
And forever, in the age to come.
Amen.

Janet Biblin joined her first choir in fourth grade, where she discovered her love of choral music. She's been singing in choirs ever since, most recently as a founding member of the Berkeley choir Chora Nova. She is excited to be singing with Voci and be part of the close harmony and sound of an all-women's group. In her free time, she enjoys playing the Appalachian dulcimer, hiking in the open spaces of the East Bay, and keeping track of the NBA.

Liz Binning grew up singing with the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir. She was a founding member of the high school women's ensemble, Ancora, which originally practiced in her parents' living room. In college she studied civil engineering, but still continued to sing and study voice. Liz currently works for San Francisco Public Works, upgrading pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to increase public safety. In her spare time, she rides both road and mountain bikes, works on her never-ending home construction projects, and hosts frequent plant-based dinner parties.

Julie Blade has sung virtually all her life, with her first choral experience being in the fourth grade. She joined Voci in the fall of 2009 and considers this her finest choral experience. Julie has sung with notable community choruses and ensembles. She has also performed in a number of musical stage productions and dabbled in jazz and opera. Julie's encore career is as a personal historian who helps clients write their memoirs and publish them in books. She has three adult children and four grandchildren. In addition to singing, Julie's passions are live music in many forms (opera, symphony, jazz), theater, dancing, gardening, hiking and always learning, learning, learning.

Elizabeth Brashers has enjoyed singing all her life. She sang with the San Francisco Girls Chorus in her teens, and in college sang with and directed Yale's all-women's a cappella group, The New Blue. 2017-18 marks her 14th year with Voci. Elizabeth is Assistant Dean and UC Berkeley-UCSF Campus Liaison at UC Berkeley, where she works to foster greater collaboration between the two institutions. Elizabeth loves being outdoors in the garden, the Sierras or the hills of Mendocino.

Jenny Breckler comes from a musical family. Her father played piano by ear and her sister is an accomplished recorder player of the baroque repertoire. Jenny is a biologist, has a husband and 2 adult children and recently become a grandmother. She loves hiking, traveling on the west coast and taking french classes. She played piano for years as a child and took up classical choral singing about ten years ago.

Kate Buckelew has sung all her life in choirs and with family and friends, and she loves singing with the women of Voci. She is an artist who paints and draws. She has been married to her husband, Bruce, for 34 years, has two children and two stepchildren, half of whom are married, and one granddaughter!

Barbara Brenner Buder has sung in church choirs for most of her life, beginning with the First Baptist Church of Elk Grove where her father was pastor. She is a long-standing member of the Chancel Choir at First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, where



Voci Singers



Front row, from left: Rose Hansen, Katherine McStravick, Vickie Faulk, Mishaela de Vries, Janet Biblin, Barbara Brenner Buder, Terry Meyers, Cynthia Dodge, Adina Sara, Edna Yeh, Ruth Ekhaus.

Second row, from left: Susan Martin, Karla Sagramoso, Emily Kirk, Julie Blade, Pauline Ma-Senturia, Lisa Sanders, Michelle Pitcher, Nicky Reed, Margaret Garms, Ayyana Chakravartula, Jenny Breckler.

Back row, from left: Marsha Wehrenberg, Ella Bacon, Susan Sands, Elizabeth Brashers, Liz Binning, Lezak Shallat, Kate Buckelew, Mitchell Covington.

Not shown: Victoria Skerritt.

Ella Bacon grew up singing with the Piedmont Choirs for 11 years, and participated in many tours, choral competitions and festivals around the world. This is her first year with Voci. In her spare time, Ella plays the viola, and enjoys singing to, and gardening with, her two young daughters.



Composers

(in order of appearance in the program)

Hildegard von Bingen, also known as Sybil of the Rhine (1098–1179, sainted in 2012; feast day Sept. 17) stands out as one of the few women of the Medieval era widely recognized for her ingenuity and leadership. Born of noble parents, von Bingen was educated in a Benedictine cloister, took religious orders as a teen, became prioress of the abbey, and later founded a new convent at Rupertsberg. As an abbess, she developed her gifts as a mystic, composer, writer, artist, healer and naturalist. She also invented an alternative alphabet. In composing the liturgical dramas and lyric poems that she set to music for worship, von Bingen made use of the newest technology of her time—written music—to preserve and transfer her works. She is considered one of the earliest and most influential composers: a mother of Western music from art song to opera. The antiphon, *O frondens virga (O greening branch)* was written, like most of her music, for a solo vocal line. The leafy branch of the text refers to the Blessed Virgin.

English composer **William Byrd** (c.1539–1623) is best known today for his dedication to the English madrigal, and for his keyboard (virginal and organ) compositions. But the reputation he enjoyed in his lifetime as one of the great musical masters of the Shakespearean era, rests on the more than 450 works he composed for all of the instruments popular in his day. Byrd was a protégé of the organist and composer Thomas Tallis, and, in 1575, Queen Elizabeth granted the two men a monopoly on the importing, printing, publishing and sale of music and the printing of music paper. Byrd also wrote sacred music for both the Anglican and Catholic Churches. The fanfare-like “*Rejoice! Rejoice!*” we sing today—and which provides the title of our concert—is a joyous call to celebrate the birth of Christ on Christmas Day.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), a German composer of the Baroque era, is regarded as one of the greatest composers of all time. He was also one of the most prolific, writing instrumental masterpieces for small groups and orchestras, as well as sacred music featuring the voice. Among the latter are Bach’s 300 cantatas, many of which have been lost. “*Wir Eilen mit Schwachen, doch emsigen Schritten*” is an aria for soprano and alto soloists (sung tonight by the full choir) with organ, from Cantata No. 78, *Jesu, der du meine Seele*. First performed in 1724 in Leipzig, Germany, it is a staple

of the Voci repertoire, and an audience favorite. Our second work by Bach, “*Sucepit Israel*,” is a miniature aria from Bach’s 12-movement *Magnificat*. First performed in 1723, Bach revised this version in 1733 to produce the *Magnificat in D* (BWV 243) so popular with audiences today.

Acclaimed for his chamber works and operas, **Giovanni Legrenzi** (1626–1690) was a leading composer in Venice at the end of the Baroque era. An ordained priest, Legrenzi served as organist and chaplain in Bergamo and Ferrara before becoming *maestro di cappella* of the San Marco Basilica in Venice. He also taught music and composed for the all-women Venetian *Ospedale* (orphanages/music conservatories) that produced much of the music we perform tonight. Only a few of Legrenzi’s 17 operas have survived, but we know they were extravagantly produced and immensely popular in Venice. While his fame would eventually wane, Legrenzi had an international reputation during his lifetime, and his compositions influenced the work of Vivaldi, J.S. Bach and Handel. Legrenzi included this Ave Regina coelorum in a collection of sacred works, entitled *Sentimenti devoti espressi con la musica* (Book 2, Op. 6, No. 4). The laughter-like section in the middle of the work builds on the word ‘gaude,’ the Latin word for “Rejoice!” and the theme of tonight’s concert.

Johann Adolph Hasse (1699–1783) was a prolific and much-celebrated composer of Italian-style Baroque opera. Born in Germany, Hasse began his career as a singer and made his debut as a composer at age 22. He soon traveled to Italy, where he studied with Nicola Porpora (*see below*) and became known as “*Il Sassone*” (*The Saxon*). He established his reputation as a composer in Venice, where he was associated with the *Ospedale*. He later composed for opera houses in Dresden and Vienna. Hasse wrote more than 60 operas, in addition to oratorios, masses and instrumental works. His music was enormously popular during his lifetime. The *Laudate pueri* we perform tonight is a setting of Psalm 112, and was composed for the female ensemble of the *Ospedale degli Incurabili* sometime between 1735 and 1749. The work is scored by solo voices, chorus, strings and continuo.

A noted Baroque-era composer of operas, **Nicola Antonio Giacinto Porpora** (1686–1768) was also one of Italy’s most celebrated vocal teachers. Born in Naples, Porpora graduated from the music conservatory there and wrote his first successful operas for the Neapolitan and Roman courts. In Venice, his most important teaching post was at the *Ospedale degli Incurabili*, where he composed works for women’s voices. As a vocal teacher, his most celebrated pupils were the composer Johann Adolph Hasse (*see above*) and some of Italy’s most celebrated castrati. In 1733, Porpora moved to London to work with an opera company created to compete with Handel’s company. When that failed, Hasse worked in Dresden as a chapel master. He then moved on to teach composition in Vienna, where a young Joseph Haydn worked as his accompanist and valet. Porpora’s career ended in misfortune: his florid style had become old-fashioned, and at his death he was so impoverished that his funeral had to be paid for by a subscription concert.



Guest Artists

The **Jubilate Baroque Orchestra** recently celebrated 25 years of service to the San Francisco Bay Area. Originally called the Magnificat Baroque Orchestra, the Jubilate Orchestra was formed in 1989 to provide period instrument ensembles to accompany Bay Area choirs and other arts organizations. In this capacity, Jubilate has performed over 200 times with dozens of professional and community choirs, churches and opera companies in public concerts, church services, and for a variety of private engagements. Under the general direction of Magnificat’s Artistic Director Warren Stewart since its inception, Jubilate has been managed since 2000 by violinist David Wilson.

The Jubilate Orchestra’s primary focus was on music of the Baroque era, but over the past two decades the orchestra has performed a repertoire ranging from Gabrieli to Brahms, and even collaborated in the premieres of works by contemporary California composers. The flexibility of Jubilate was perhaps best demonstrated when they performed at the opening celebration for Pandora Radio in 2007.

Musicians: David Wilson, Laura Rubenstein-Salzedo and Rachel Hurwitz (Violin 1); Aaron Westman and Cynthia Albers (Violin 2); David Daniel Bowes (Viola); David Morris (Cello); John Dornenburg (Violone) and Phebe Craig (Harpsichord).



MacKenzie Covington is a bright young soprano who is just beginning to make waves in the Bay Area. She received her Masters in Vocal Performance from Louisiana State University, under the instruction of Dr. Loraine Sims, in 2016. While studying at LSU, MacKenzie performed leading roles in Don Giovanni (Donna Anna) CA, MacKenzie studies with Sheri Greenawald, director of the San Francisco Opera Center and director of the Merola Opera Program. MacKenzie participated in the prestigious Redwoods Opera Workshop in 2015 and has appeared with West Edge Opera, and Verismo Opera, performing the roles of Michaela and Frasquita (Carmen), Flora and Annina (La Traviata), and Musetta (La Bohème).

American Choral Director's Association—Western Division, and is the Artistic Director of the “Duruflé in Paris” choral festival. Mitchell returned to Voci after 23 years, as Guest Conductor for the Spring 2017 season, and was appointed Artistic Director in Summer 2017.



Assistant Conductor, Edna Yeh, joined Voci in Spring 2008. She is the founder and former director of the Pacific Women's Chorus in San Diego and Cententus Women's Chorus in Rochester, New York. Edna currently serves as Assistant Conductor for Sacred & Profane Chamber Chorus, and performs with The Dulcet Four, an a cappella quartet performing repertoire from the Great American Songbook and other classics. She received her Master of Music degree from the University of Texas at Austin, where she studied conducting with Morris Beachy and Craig Hella Johnson.



Oakland-based pianist and **Voci Accompanist, Anne Rainwater** is a dexterous musician, known for her vibrant interpretations of works from J.S. Bach to John Zorn. Recognized for her “boldly assertive rhetoric” (San Francisco Examiner), and “bright golden honeycomb for a brain” (Roy Doughty, poet), she appears as a soloist, accompanist, chamber musician and educator. She holds a Bachelor's in Music from the Oberlin Conservatory and a Master of Music in Contemporary Performance from the Manhattan School of Music. Anne has performed in venues and festivals throughout the world, including the Donau Festival in Krems, Austria, the Kennedy Center, Princeton University, and Kampnagel in Hamburg, Germany, among others. Recent solo shows include performances at the Center for New Music, Switchboard Music Festival, Maybeck Studio and the Old First Series in San Francisco. Anne also teaches privately in her home studio to students of all ages.

Sing with Voci!

Seeking experienced choral singers
for spring 2018 and beyond

Visit our website at vocisings.org to learn more, and
contact Artistic Director Mitchell Covington at
music@mitchellcovington.com to schedule an audition

Porpora wrote two versions of *Laetatus sum*; we believe that the one we perform tonight—a fiery version for soprano and women's chorus written in 1774—has never before been performed in the United States. *Fecit Potentiam* is drawn from Porpora's larger “Magnificat,” written for, and first performed by, the women of the *Ospedali*.

The music of Italian composer **Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina** (1525–1594) is often viewed as the culmination of Renaissance polyphony. Born in the town of Palestrina, near Rome, Palestrina spent most of his career there as an organist, choirmaster and music director. The decade of the 1570s was difficult for him: he lost his brother, two sons and his wife in three separate outbreaks of the plague. He considered becoming a priest, but eventually remarried a wealthy widow instead. He died in Rome and was reportedly buried beneath the floor of St. Peter's Basilica; however, attempts to locate his grave have been unsuccessful. Famous in his day, Palestrina's reputation increased after his death for his mastery of contrapuntal composition. Palestrina's *Magnificat quarti toni* is one of thirty-five settings of this prayer that he composed. Tonight we present the opening section of the longer work.

Spanish cleric and composer **Tomás Luis de Victoria** (1548–1611) is regarded among the greatest Spanish composers of the Renaissance era. His works of sacred music—a genre to which he devoted himself exclusively—combine religious mysticism with joyful invention. Victoria was a choirboy and accomplished organist when King Philip II sent him to Rome to prepare for holy orders. There, he likely studied with Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (*see above*), whom he later succeeded as music director at the Roman Seminary. Victoria eventually returned to Spain and served as a convent chaplain in the service of the royal family until his death. He was able to return to Rome in 1593 and attended Palestrina's funeral. Victoria died in 1611 in the chaplain's residence and was buried in the convent, although his tomb has yet to be identified. The motet *Duo Seraphim Clamabant* is a duet for unaccompanied voices that interweaves imitative phrases to portray how two angels praise the Holy Trinity.

Regarded in his lifetime as the most important French composer of his generation, **Marc-Antoine Charpentier** (1643–1704) was largely forgotten until a 20th century revival of his works reestablished his stature as a master of the Baroque era. Legend claims that the young Charpentier traveled from his native Paris to Rome to study painting, where he was discovered by the Italian music teacher Carissimi. This story is unproven, but volumes of Charpentier's manuscripts are profusely illustrated with the arabesques used by professional scribes. Charpentier did, however, ground himself in the Italian musical style before returning to France where he composed music for opera, ballet and theater, including a long association with Molière and other playwrights. Charpentier was composition teacher to the Duke d'Orleans and music director at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. He spent many years as a house composer to the royal family of Louis XIV. His works for the Jesuit community in Paris established the *oratorio* musical form in France. Charpentier also composed many elaborate motets for chorus, solos and

orchestra. In the motet *In nativitate Domini Nostri Jesu Christi Canticum*, chorus and soloists alternate to recount the biblical story of an angel announcing the birth of Jesus, and the shepherds' hurried journey to the manger to worship the newborn child.

One of a dozen cloistered nuns who published sacred music 17th century Italy, **Chiara Margarita Cozzolani** (1602–1678) came from a wealthy Milanese family and spent her adult life within the walls of the convent of Santa Radegonda. The convent was famed for its music, as noted in an account by a contemporary observer: “The nuns of Santa Radegonda of Milan are gifted with such rare and exquisite talents in music that they are acknowledged to be the best singers of Italy. They wear the Cassinese habits of St. Benedict, but they seem to any listener to be...melodious swans, who fill hearts with wonder, and rapture tongues in their praise.” Cozzolani eventually became the abbess of the Santa Radegonda, and stopped composing. But she guided the convent through difficult times when she resisted an Archbishop's reforms seeking to limit the nuns' practice of music and their contact with the outside world. Although Cozzolani's compositions were published in her lifetime, only recently has she gained recognition as one of the most talented composers of the late Baroque era. The first modern edition of her motets appeared in 1998. The *Ave Regina caelorum* prayer to Mary was one of many traditional antiphons (short chants) said or sung daily in convent life. Cozzolani's version for three female voices is accompanied by organ.

***Save the dates for
Voci's Spring 2018 Performances!***

A Viennese Romance
House Concert & Fundraiser
Sunday, February 11, 2018 – 4:00 PM

Alchemy
*Voci's Spring concerts, featuring a cornucopia of creative works
around themes of earth, wind, water and fire*
Sunday, April 15 & Saturday, April 21, 2018



About Voci

Voci was established in September 1991 under the direction of founding conductor Mitchell Covington, and initially comprised of 16 women associated with the San Francisco Girls Chorus. Over the years, Voci has grown and developed into a mature musical organization, through the artistic guidance of five talented directors. Voci continues to thrive 26 years later, holding fast to its original mission of championing music for women and by women, from all parts of the world and every century.

Voci is dedicated to musical excellence in the performance of new and innovative music as well as treasured repertoire within the classical choral tradition, the ensemble has performed regularly throughout the Bay Area, commissioning and premiering over 23 works written by dynamic Bay Area, California and international composers. It enjoys a reputation among Bay Area audiences and critics as one of the finest choral groups in the area.

This fall marks the 15th year of Voci's *Voices in Peace* concert series. Started in 2001, this fall tradition offers stunningly beautiful music to calm and inspire us on a path to peace.



Artistic Director, Mitchell Covington, is an accomplished choral and orchestral conductor who has directed ensembles nationally and internationally over a 30-year career. He was the founding director of Voci (then Voci Women's Chamber Choir) from 1991–1995, directed the Bay Choral Guild from 1995–2001, and led a seven-choir music program with over 300 participants at First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley for 23 years. He is also an award-winning composer, whose compositions include works for orchestra, chorus, stage, film, television and video games. Covington has received the Aaron Copland Foundation Meet the Composer Award, a regional Emmy award, and several film festival awards and prizes. He received his MA in conducting from the University of Southern California, where he studied choral conducting with Rod Eichenberger, orchestral conducting with Hanz Beer and choral arranging with Morten Lauridsen, graduating with honors. He currently serves on the Executive Board of the