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for supporting our Spring 2017 season.

Thank you to all the friends, family, and members of Voci  
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*Voci Women's Vocal Ensemble*

*Beautiful is the World*

*Sunday April 30, 2017  
St. Perpetua Catholic Church  
Lafayette*

*Saturday May 6, 2017  
Lake Merritt United Methodist Church  
Oakland*

*Mitchell Covington, guest conductor  
Anne Rainwater, piano*

## ***About Today's Program***

### **Beautiful, Colorful, Strange and Mysterious**

Today's concert title, "*Beautiful is the World*," comes from former Voci director, Jude Navari's dazzling seven-movement work, *Siddhartha Fragments*, which explores Buddhist philosophy through text from Hermann Hesse's novel, *Siddhartha*. The first line of the first movement, "Beautiful is the world..." has been our guidepost in selecting the music for this program. The text continues, "colorful is the world, strange and mysterious..." All of today's music reflects those themes as well.

### **First Glimpses**

Another quality that all of today's pieces share is that all of them are "new." Each piece on this program was composed by a living composer. In fact, five of the six pieces are world premieres of new works by five Bay Area composers.

This season's concerts mark the first complete performance of Navari's seven *Siddhartha Fragments*. This work is an intricately composed masterpiece based on a scale of Navari's own invention. The fragments evoke a colorful and mysterious universe, and feature a virtuosic piano part, which showcases the extraordinary talent of Voci accompanist, Anne Rainwater. We will also premiere "Qasida of Breath," a setting of haunting verse by local Palestinian-American poet, Deema Shehabi—as well as evocative interpretations of traditional Russian melodies by Oakland-based composer, Arkadi Serper. You will also hear exciting new works by two emerging composers, Voci assistant conductor, Edna Yeh, and our *New Works Project* composer-in-residence, Julie Herndon.

### **Musical Adventures**

Herndon's "am an ocean" is the most adventuresome work on the program. It paints a mystical portrait of the ocean using *avant-garde* choral techniques, strongly influenced by electronic music and *Musique Concrète*. This work uses the individual phonemes of the text ("I know I am an o-ce-an") to immerse us in the sounds and colors of the sea. Yeh's "Renouncement" takes the form of an a cappella motet, using traditional contrapuntal techniques, yet with a richly contemporary and inventive quality.

Deema Shehabi's poignant text is what drives my setting of "Qasida of Breath." The poem explores her memories of the beautiful land and beautiful people of Palestine, contrasted with the current reality of a homeland broken by war. The music blends eastern and western tonalities; tone clusters, graceful melodies and exotic ornamentation are the brush strokes that help to portray this landscape.

Arkadi Serper's *Three Russian Songs* are interpretations of folk song lyrics he collected when he was a university student in Moscow. The simplicity of the choral parts, evocative of Russian folk music, are set against the inventive, and sometimes outlandish, piano part. The final piece on the program is Joan Szymko's lovely and uplifting setting of Wendell Berry's well-known poem "The Peace of Wild Things." The text tells of how we can find a refuge from despair and fear in the wild places of the world and the creatures that inhabit them.

### **Unity in Diversity**

One of the most beautiful things about our world, particularly in the Bay Area, is the rich diversity we find within it. Similarly, we seek in our performance to celebrate the differences between, and yet the similarities among, a range of textures, cultures and ideas. Cultural diversity is evident in the Buddhist philosophy of the *Siddhartha Fragments*, the colorful portrait of Palestine, and the snapshots of life in the Russian countryside. Emotions in the texts vary from worry and despair to magic and wonder. And the range of new works showcases the contrasting compositional techniques that each composer uses, to portray a world that is indeed beautiful, colorful, strange and mysterious.

– Mitchell Covington

# Program

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## Siddhartha Fragments (*Premiere*)

*Susan Martin, soprano*  
*Edna Yeh, bowed piano*

**Jude Navari**  
Text by Herman Hesse

### I. Beautiful is the World

Beautiful is the world, colorful is the world,  
strange and mysterious is the world!  
Here is blue, here is yellow, here is green.  
The sky and the river flow,  
the forest and the mountains are rigid.  
All of it is beautiful,  
all of it is mysterious and magical,  
and in its midst is the awakening one,  
on the path to myself.

### II. Everywhere at Once

Everywhere at once,  
at the source and at the mouth,  
at the waterfall, at the ferry, at the rapids,  
in the sea, in the mountains,  
only the present time  
not the shadow of the past, not the shadow of the future.  
Nothing was, nothing will be;  
everything IS.

### III. This is a Beautiful River

This is a beautiful river,  
Yes, a very beautiful river.  
I listen to it, I look into its eyes, I learn from it.  
It knows everything, the river,  
everything can be learned from it.  
With a thousand eyes, the river looks,  
with green ones, with white ones, with crystal ones,  
with sky-blue ones.

### IV. The River Has Many Voices

The river has many voices.  
Hasn't it the voice of a king,  
and of a warrior, and of a bull, and of a bird of the night,  
and of a woman giving birth, and of a sighing man,  
and a thousand other voices more?  
All voices of the creatures are in its voice.  
The voice of life, of what exists, of what is eternally taking shape.  
And do you know what word it speaks,  
when you succeed in hearing all of its ten thousand voices at once?

### V. The River Sings

The river sings with a voice of suffering  
Softly sounds the river, singing in many voices.  
each one heading for his goal,  
each one obsessed by the goal,  
each one suffering.  
Longingly it sings,  
longingly, it flows toward its goal,  
lamentingly its voice sings.  
All of these waves and waters are hurrying, suffering,  
towards goals, many goals,  
the waterfall, the lake, the rapids, the sea,  
and all goals are reached,  
and every goal is followed by a new one,  
and the water turns into vapor and rises to the sky,  
turned into rain and poured down from the sky,  
turned into a source, a stream, a river, headed forward once again, flows on once  
again!

### VI. I Listen

I listen attentively to the river,  
the song of a thousand voices.  
But the longing voice has changed.  
It still resounds, full of suffering, searching,  
but other voices join it, voices of joy and of suffering,  
good and bad voices, laughing and sad ones,  
a hundred voices, a thousand voices.  
These many voices in the river,  
today it sounds new.

## VII. Everything is One

Everything is one,  
everything is intertwined and connected, [and] entangled a thousand times.  
And everything together,  
all voices, all goals, all yearning, all suffering, all pleasure,  
all that is good and evil,  
all of this together is the world.  
All of it together is the flow of events,  
...the music of life.

— *INTERMISSION* —

### am an ocean (*Premiere*)

**Julie Herndon**

*Mishaela De Vries, Terry Meyers, Lisa Sanders, Edna Yeh*

I know I am an ocean

### Renouncement (*Premiere*)

**Edna Yeh**

Poem by Alice Meynell

I must not think of thee; and, tired yet strong,  
I shun the thought that lurks in all delight—  
The thought of thee—and in the blue heaven's height,  
And in the sweetest passage of a song.  
Oh, just beyond the fairest thoughts that throng  
This breast, the thought of thee waits hidden yet bright;  
But it must never, never come in sight;  
I must stop short of thee the whole day long.  
But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,  
When night gives pause to the long watch I keep,  
And all my bonds I needs must loose apart,  
Must doff my will as raiment laid away,—  
With the first dream that comes with the first sleep  
I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

### Qasida of Breath (*Premiere*)

**Mitchell Covington**

Poem by Deema Shehabi

The call to prayer at 5 a.m.  
Spreads my fingers over the scars of apple trees,  
And the smell of sleepy earth in my love's hair  
Makes hummingbirds race  
Into the buds of the fuchsia.

Not so long ago  
The air grew soft  
When the sun crawled from rock to cloud.

And I would pray to everything sacred  
And I would bow and stare deeply at the earth  
And walk through old cemeteries to find the dead softly gazing.

Sometimes, you breathe red poppies  
Over the hills in Palestine,  
And I see girls with orchards  
Of almonds in their eyes,  
And old men strolling silently  
Among burned villages.

And I can't say how I love my people  
And I can't tell my love how to leave our land without weeping  
And I can't always love this land

### Three Russian Songs (*Premiere*)

**Arkadi Serper**

*Based on traditional Russian melodies*

#### I. Svadebnaia (Wedding Song)

Zemlianichka iagadka,  
Atchevo zhe ty krasna  
Va syrom baru rasla,  
Protiv solnyshka tsvela,  
Na palianke vyzrela?

Wild strawberry,  
What made you so red?  
Growing in a moist forest,  
Against the sun  
Ripening on a meadow.

**II. Kolybelnaia** (Lullaby)

Ia kachaiu den' i noch',  
Ataidi bessonie proch.  
Ataidi da atvalis',  
V tiomnam lese zabludis'.  
V tiomnam lese va kustakh,  
Va malinovykh listakh.

I rock the cradle day and night  
You, sleeplessness, go away,  
Get away from my child,  
Get lost in the dark woods,  
In the dark woods, in the bushes, in the  
raspberry leaves.

**III. Pliasovaia** (Dancing Song)

Uzh ty, Porushka-Parania  
Ty za shto liubish Ivana?

Hey you, Porushka-Parania,  
Why do you love Ivan so much?

Ia za to liubliu Ivana,  
Shto golovushka kudriava,  
Baradushka kucheriava.  
Kudri viutsia v pol-litsa,  
Liubliu Vanu maladsa!

I love Ivan for his curly hair,  
For his bushy beard!  
Look at his curls - they cover half of his  
face!  
How can you not love such a handsome  
fellow!

**The Peace of Wild Things**

When despair for the world grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
waiting with their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

**Joan Szymko**  
Text by Wendell Berry

***Get your tickets for Voci's Spring Raffle!***

**Grand Prize:** 3-night stay at a cabin in South Lake Tahoe!  
**Additional Prizes:** \$100 gift card for Berkeley Repertory Theater,  
a luxurious champagne basket including NY Times best seller  
"The Widow Clicquot: The story of a champagne empire  
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**Tickets available in the lobby** with your donation:  
1 ticket \$5; 5 tickets \$20

**Drawing May 10, 2017**  
*(need not be present to win)*

## Featuring...

(in order of appearance in the program)



**Jude Navari** (*Siddhartha Fragments*) received his PhD in music composition from the University of California, Berkeley, and currently teaches at Skyline College. While Artistic Director of Voci for 14 years (1999–2013), he wrote many compositions for the ensemble. He composed *Siddhartha Fragments* as a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary gift to Voci. The lyrics come from a public-domain English translation of Hermann Hesse’s 1922 novel, *Siddhartha*. The scoring features elements inspired by the traditional music of North India, the implied setting of the novel, including parts for bowed piano (tanpura), an invented unfolding scale (raga), and wood block rhythms paired with piano ostinati (tabla). Voci premiered all but one movement of the composition in 2012 and then took two movements on tour, performing selections at the Tapestry International Women’s Choral Festival in Vancouver a few weeks later. Voci reprised portions of the work in 2014 and premieres the full cycle today.

In 2008, Navari and his interdisciplinary arts group, PlayWorks Productions, self-produced an evening of art song, film, and dance theater at the NOHspace in San Francisco. Navari’s song cycle *Hamlin House Songs* and film score to *Undone* were premiered at these performances. In December 2012, Counterpoint, the professional mixed vocal ensemble from Vermont, performed a new version of Navari’s *Shouts and Cradle Songs*, originally written for Voci. As a member of the music faculty at Skyline College in San Bruno, Navari conducts the Concert Choir and teaches music theory, musicianship, voice, and piano. He holds music degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied conducting with Marika Kuzma and Jung Ho Pak.

Navari wrote the piano part for *Siddhartha Fragments* for then-Voci-accompanist Sharon Lee Kim. We will be accompanied today by accompanist Anne Rainwater.



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), 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. Recent performances include solo and collaborative shows at the Center for New Music, Switchboard Music Festival, Forte House, and with the Nevada County Composers Cooperative, sfSound and New Keys, an eight-hands contemporary piano collective. Rainwater also teaches privately at her home studio in Oakland and at International High School in San Francisco.



**Julie Herndon** (*am an ocean*) is a California-based composer and performer, working along the boundaries of internal/external space with song, improvisation, text, graphics, and electronics. Her compositions and installations have been featured abroad in Italy and Singapore, as well as in the U.S. at venues including the Hot Air Festival in San Francisco, Megapolis Audio Art Festival in Oakland, Zen Mountain Cloud Center in Santa Fe, and the San Francisco Art Institute. Herndon is a graduate of Mills College and is currently pursuing a PhD in Musical Composition at Stanford University. She sang with Voci in 2015–16.

This year and next, Herndon is also working with Voci as the ensemble’s second New Works Project composer-in-residence. As part of its commitment to supporting new music, and music written for and by women, Voci launched the New Works Project in 2014 to expand the repertoire of contemporary music for women’s (treble) voices through a collaborative process. The Project brings together early- and mid-career composers, ideally from the San Francisco Bay Area, with Voci, to develop new compositions.

Herndon will workshop her compositions with Voci over a two-year period, while being mentored by inaugural composer-in-residence Ann Callaway. Herndon is developing a set of pieces for Voci, based around the emotional experience of natural phenomena. The first piece, “am an ocean,” which Voci will premiere today, uses palatal whistling and phonetic syllables to conjure up images of an oceanic landscape. From these sounds, the phrase “I know I am an ocean” arises and then disappears. Herndon says, “with these pieces, I hope to recreate the transformative realizations that are possible in nature: how we are as vast and limitless as our surroundings.” Of the opportunity to be writing for

Voci and working with both Anne Hege and Ann Callaway, Herndon says, “it’s such a wonderful experience having sung with the group last year and gotten to know its character from the inside.”

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**Edna Yeh** (*Renouncement*) joined Voci in 2008, and has served as its Assistant Conductor since 2009. She is the founder and former director of the Pacific Women’s Chorus in San Diego and Concentus Women’s Chorus in Rochester, New York. Yeh also 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.

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**Mitchell Covington** (*Qasida of Breath*), is Voci’s Guest Conductor, and also an award-winning composer and arranger. His compositions include works for orchestra, chorus, stage, film, television and video games. He has been awarded the Aaron Copland Foundation Meet the Composer Award, a regional Emmy award, and several film festival awards and prizes. His scores have appeared in international film festivals and on prime-time, nationally broadcast television. Several of his compositions are published by major U.S. publishers, including Augsburg Fortress, Hinshaw Music and Morningstar. His music has been performed throughout the United States and Europe.

Covington studied conducting and composition at the University of Southern California, graduating with honors. His composition teachers include Alex Post, Roger Nixon and Morten Lauridsen. He is currently on the faculty of the School of Music for Visual Media at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco.



**Deema K. Shehabi** (*Qasida of Breath*) is a poet, writer, and editor. Her poetry collection, *Thirteen Departures from the Moon*, was published by Press 53 in 2011. She is also co-editor with Beau Beausoleil of *Al-Mutanabbi Street* (PM Press, 2012), for which she received the Northern California Book Award's NCBR Recognition Award. From 2009 to 2013, she worked with Marilyn Hacker on the great poem sequence *Diaspo/Renga* (Holland Park Press, 2014). Her poems have appeared widely in journals and anthologies such as The Kenyon Review, Literary Imagination, New Letters, Callaloo,

Massachusetts Review, Perihelion, Drunken Boat, Bat City Review, Inclined to Speak: An Anthology of Contemporary Arab American Poetry, and The Poetry of Arab Women. Shehabi’s poems have been nominated for a Pushcart prize five times, and she served as Vice-President for the Radius of Arab-American Writers (RAWI) between 2007 and 2010.

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**Arkadi Serper** (*Three Russian Songs*), pianist and composer, received his music education in Russia at the Gnesin State Musical College and Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. He continues a distinguished career as a pianist, composer and music educator. Serper teaches piano, composition and music theory at the Crowden School and the San Francisco Conservatory in the Pre-College Department, and is on the faculty of Kairos Youth Choir. He has written many choral compositions for Kairos Choir, some of which have been published through the Henry Leck choral series. As an acclaimed composer, his symphonic and chamber compositions have been produced by several major orchestras. As a pianist, he continues to perform concerts, both as a soloist and a chamber musician, not only locally and nationally, but also in Austria, Britain, Czech Republic, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Thailand.

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**Joan Szymko** (*The Peace of Wild Things*), composer, is also a choral conductor with more than twenty years' experience directing choirs in the Pacific Northwest. Her choral work is characterized by abundant lyricism, rhythmic intensity, and keen awareness of text. She has found inspiration from such varied sources as Langston Hughes, May Sarton, Chief Seattle, and Hildegard von Bingen. In describing her creative process she has said: “I don’t start out crafting and making something up. I start out listening to what wants to be next. If I stay true to that process, then things flow easily.” In addition to choral works, Szymko has also composed chamber music, art songs, and music for the stage. She has contributed significantly to the musical literature for women’s voices. Her music has been included at several national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association.

## *About Voci*

Voci was established in September 1991 under the direction of founding conductor Mitchell Covington, composed of an initial group of 16 women drawn from around the Bay Area. Seeking a musical outlet of their own, many of the founding singers either worked with, or were mothers of girls in, the San Francisco Girls Chorus. The group held its first rehearsals at Calvary Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, and held its first performance that December—a benefit concert for the victims of the 1991 Oakland Hills firestorm.

Voci continues to thrive 25 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. We have performed regularly throughout the Bay Area, commissioning and premiering 23 works written by dynamic Bay Area, California and international composers. We have also built, and enjoy a reputation among Bay Area audiences and critics as one of the finest choral groups in the area.

In 2016-17 we continue our commitment to fostering a community of composers and musicians with a spring concert season featuring premieres of exciting new works by five local composers. Among these is an early result of the second phase of our New Works Project, which engages local emerging and mid-career composers in two-year cycles, providing mentorship and collaboration between composers, and incorporating Voci singers in the development and performance of new commissioned works. As described in the composer biographies above, emerging composer Julie Herndon was selected as our second New Works Project composer-in-residence in spring 2016, and is currently working with inaugural composer-in-residence Ann Callaway. We will perform her first composition for Voci today.

Voci is delighted to have Mitchell Covington as our Guest Conductor this spring, while Artistic Director Anne Hege is on maternity leave. Covington's return provides a wonderful closing of the circle on Voci's first 25 years. **We are delighted to announce that Covington will return as Voci's Acting Director for Fall 2017 while Hege continues her leave.**

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**Artistic Director Dr. Anne K. Hege** (on leave Spring-Fall 2017) is a composer, conductor, independent researcher, and vocalist based in the San Francisco Bay Area. She began her musical studies singing with the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir and the Oakland Youth Chorus' touring ensemble, Vocal Motion. Hege completed her undergraduate studies in music at Wesleyan University, and a MA in composition at Mills College. In 2014, she completed her PhD in Music Composition at Princeton University, where she studied how embodied cognition theory can be applied to musical multimedia analysis. She has founded and directed various vocal ensembles including the Albany Community Chorus (California), Cuatro Vientos (Mexico City), and Celestial Mechanics (New Jersey). Hege performs as a vocalist, composer, improviser, and electronic musician in her performance duo New Prosthetics, the laptop ensemble Sideband, for the Carrie Ahern Dance Company, and in her own productions. She currently enjoys her work as artistic director of Voci, instructor at Mills College, and director of Level IV of the San Francisco Girls Chorus.

**Voci Guest Conductor Mitchell Covington** is an accomplished choral and orchestral conductor who has led many ensembles over a 30-year career, directing choirs and orchestras in performances in the United States and throughout Europe. He led Voci as its founding director 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. Covington received a masters degree in Conducting from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, graduating with honors. At USC he studied choral conducting with Rod Eichenberger, Orchestral Conducting with Hanz Beer and Choral Arranging with Morten Lauridsen. He currently serves on the Executive Board of the American Choral Director's Association—Western Division, and is the Artistic Director of the Duruflé in Paris Choral Festival. He frequently serves as guest conductor and clinician for church and high school choirs throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, and as adjudicator and clinician for choir festivals and conferences.

## *Voci Singer Bios*

**Ella Bacon** is pleased to be singing in Voci for her first season! Ella sang with the Piedmont Choirs for 11 years, and participated in many tours, choral competitions and festivals around the world. Ella plays the viola, and enjoys singing to, and gardening with, her two young daughters.

**Tory Becker** has been singing her entire life, but her highlights were singing in choirs in high school, with the Stanford Jazz workshop, with the Women's Chorale throughout college, and show tunes with her cat. She finds music and singing to be great self care

and nourishing for her life. Tory lives in Oakland with her cat and dog, and is pursuing a graduate degree in clinical psychology. She is thrilled to be a member of Voci and excited for the seasons of music to come.

**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 join Voci and become 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. 2016–17 marks her 13th year with Voci. Elizabeth recently returned to UC Berkeley as Assistant Dean and Campus Liaison between UC Berkeley and UCSF. When she's not working or singing, Elizabeth loves being outdoors in the garden, the Sierras, or the hills of Mendocino.

**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 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 is pleased to join Voci this spring and looks forward to a 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 Voci Artistic Director Anne Hege!

She is delighted to be singing under Anne's direction again with the women of Voci. When not singing, Ayyana can be found analyzing, designing, and researching in her job as a mechanical engineer.

**Laurel Covington** has been singing all her life. Her passion for choral music was fueled in high school and continued on to San Francisco State where she earned her Bachelor of Art in Music and met her composer/conductor husband, Mitchell Covington. She served as soprano soloist/section leader at St. Mary the Virgin, sang with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Sacred and Profane, and Voci before parenthood took priority. Laurel has continued singing with her church choirs where she also spent several years at the conductor's podium with the elementary and middle school choirs. She is pleased to be singing with Voci once again this spring.

**Mishaela De Vries** is in her second 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** returns to Voci after an 11-year hiatus, during which she raised two children, did lots of laundry, and tended to her dogs—all the while longing to take her place on the risers with her sisters. So she filled her need to sing by singing to, and at, virtually everything with which she came into contact. Her children think she is nuts. During the days she engages in possibly the least musical activity on earth as an official court reporter in San Mateo, but she is a much happier person.

**Rose Hansen** has gleefully embarked on her first season of singing with Voci. 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. 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 joining Voci after a post-graduation hiatus from choral music.

**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. She lives in El Cerrito with her husband, daughter, and dog, and has a son at San Jose State (also studying music). A few of her favorite things include singing with The Dulcet Four, an a cappella jazz quartet formed with three other Voci singers, as well as two other vocal groups at San Francisco State University.

**Charlotte Martinez** has been singing all her life. Having a dad who was a singer, singing with the family was required, but made driving across country a harmonious experience! Charlotte sang in the Holy Names High School choir in the mid 60's, and with the Oakland Symphony Chorus during college. While living in New England in the 70's, she focused on songwriting, recording and performing. Since retiring from the corporate world, Charlotte has returned to her love of choirs, singing and touring in Europe with First Presbyterian Church, Berkeley, and recently with the choir at Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church. Charlotte is delighted to enjoy her first season with Voci.

**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 while working on her dissertation and raising two young children. Today she is a clinical psychologist and her daughters are adults. She also sings with The Dulcet Four, an a cappella quartet. Her husband, John, has been a long-time supporter of Voci, and often serves as Voci's box office volunteer. Terry has worked behind the scenes for Voci for 21 years and remains involved on the Board, helping to spearhead fundraising and production.

**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.

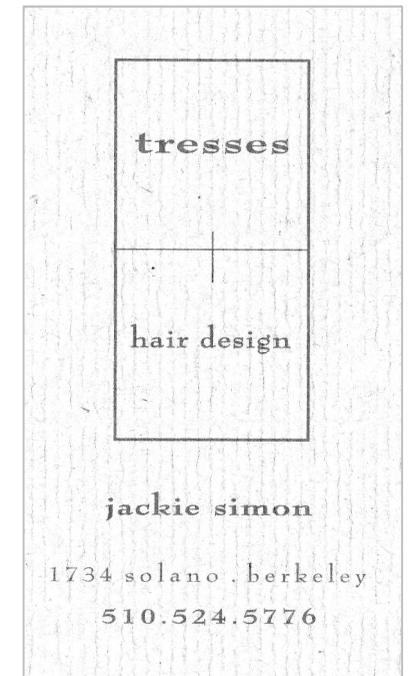
**Karla Sagramoso** is very pleased to be part of Voci, having participated in choral singing of all sorts since childhood. She is convinced that if the world's people all belonged to choirs and ate regular infusions of chocolate, they'd all be happier and healthier, though perhaps not slimmer. She especially 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.

**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 two 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, friends and family for encouraging her musical journey.

**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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## ***Voci Staff***

**Artistic Director:** Dr. Anne K. Hege

**Guest Conductor, Spring 2017:** Mitchell Covington

**Assistant Conductor:** Edna Yeh

**Accompanist:** Anne Rainwater

**Chorus Manager:** Mishaela De Vries

**Communications & Marketing:** Elizabeth Brashers, Susan Sands,  
Lezak Shallat, Rose Hansen, Nicky Reed

**Website & Graphic Design:** Edna Yeh

**Program:** Elizabeth Brashers, Mitchell Covington, Rose Hansen

**Concert Production:** Terry Meyers, Karla Sagramoso,  
Victoria Skerritt, and members of Voci

**Head Librarian:** Katherine McStravick

**Fundraising:** Terry Meyers, Nicky Reed, Board of Directors

**House Staff:** James King (Manager), John Gibbins (Box Office)

**Recording Engineers:** Brian Shiratsuki, Sean Martin

## ***Voci Board of Directors***

Susan Sands (President), Lisa Sanders (Treasurer), Elizabeth Brashers (Secretary)

Mishaela De Vries, Terry Meyers

Anne K. Hege (ex officio), Edna Yeh (ex officio)