



BACH CHOIR OF PITTSBURGH

For Immediate Release
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Bach Choir of Pittsburgh presents PEACE 400 years, 12 composers, one plea

On **March 24 & 25**, the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh presents **PEACE**, joined by exiled Syrian poet Osama Alomar and local peace advocates. The Bach Choir's 2017-18 journey, which has taken audiences through musical explorations of WAR and HOPE, culminates with an exploration of the universal desire for PEACE through the voices of 12 composers spanning 400 years. The performance is presented in partnership with **Union Project**.

The program includes settings of the simple but powerful text "Dona Nobis Pacem" (Grant Us Peace), which display varied styles and textures in the Western music tradition. The composers, including Caccini, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Bernstein and others, interpret the plea for peace in different ways, reflecting their own unique style and the influences of the time.

Dona Nobis Pacem, part of the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) at the end of the Mass liturgy, has been included in musical settings of the Mass from Gregorian chant through contemporary renditions. More recently, some composers have interpreted the text as stand-alone pieces in response to tragic events such as 9/11.

The performance will feature readings by **Osama Alomar** (currently a Writer-in-Residence at **City of Asylum**), whose works bring striking context and urgency to the sentiment expressed in the music. Alomar will be joined by: Sister Anna Marie Gaglia, principal of Holy Sepulcher

Catholic School in Butler, who was instrumental in establishing the Sisters of St. Joseph Peace Camp¹³; and Robin Mungo, one of only 11 African-American women state troopers in Pennsylvania, who is actively involved in helping minorities overcome barriers to pursuing a career in law enforcement, especially in the age of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Artistic Director Thomas Douglas said:

“In addition to the 70 beautiful voices of the Bach Choir, our PEACE concert includes guests Osama Alomar, Anna Marie Gaglia, and Robin Mungo to give context to the music and help us understand the price of peace in real time. Conflict is all around us. Perhaps filling the world with beautiful sounds will promote harmony beyond the concert hall. Leonard Bernstein’s famous quote expresses in words what we sing with our hearts, ‘This will be our reply to violence: to make music more intensely, more beautifully, more devotedly than ever before.’”

The audience will be invited to join voices with the Choir in a rendition of the traditional *Dona Nobis Pacem* canon.

Concert information:

Who: The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh
with special guests Osama Alomar, Sr. Anna Marie Gaglia, & Robin Mungo
Thomas W. Douglas, Artistic Director

What: Choral versions of *Dona Nobis Pacem* spanning 400 years
by Caccini, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Bernstein and others

When: Saturday, March 24th @ 8:00pm
Sunday, March 25th @ 4:00pm

Where: Union Project, 801 N Negley Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Tickets are available in advance at bachpgh.showclix.com or at 1-888-718-4253

And at the door on the day of performance.

Prices range from \$12.00-\$30.00

More info at www.BachChoirPgh.org

About Bach Choir of Pittsburgh

Founded in 1934, the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh is an 80-member chorus, known for presenting re-imaginings of great choral works, as well as premiering new work. Under the leadership of Conductor and Artistic Director Thomas W. Douglas, the Bach Choir has been critically acclaimed for its innovative, precise, and entertaining concert experiences that captivate arts-loving audiences across the Pittsburgh region.

About Union Project

Union Project uses the arts to bridge gaps between communities. Union Project is a historic space that is community restored and maintained; the space itself transformed as a creative solution to a community problem. We've come a long way since 2001, but our work still centers on the power of arts to transform. We believe that art can create change, and help us build a more inclusive, empathetic, and just community.

You are valued for your experiences, for your creative expression and talents. Positioned at the literal intersection of some of Pittsburgh's most racially and economically diverse urban neighborhoods, Union Project is a community hub and common ground for everyone.

unionproject.org

About Osama Alomar

Born in Damascus, Syria in 1968 and now living Pittsburgh via Chicago, Osama Alomar is one of the most well-respected Arabic poets writing today, and a prominent practitioner of the Arabic *al-qisa al-qasira jiddan* the "very short story." He is the author of *Fullblood Arabian* in English, and three collections of short stories and a volume of poetry in Arabic. Alomar's first full-length collection of stories, *The Teeth of the Comb*, was published by New Directions in April 2017. His short stories have been published by Newyorker.com, Noon, Conjunctions.com, The Coffin Factory, Electric Literature, and The Literary Review. Osama Alomar travels with his translator, Christian Collins.

About City of Asylum

City of Asylum creates a thriving community for writers, readers, and neighbors. We provide sanctuary to endangered literary writers, so that they can continue to write and their voices are not silenced. We offer a broad range of literary programs in a variety of community settings to encourage cross-cultural exchange. We anchor neighborhood economic development by transforming blighted properties into homes for these programs and energizing public spaces through public art with text-based components. cityofasylum.org

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