



BACH CHOIR
OF PITTSBURGH

GREAT OPERA CHORUSES

with 4 guest soloists

OBSESSIONS

Maverick Hotel, JUNE 3 + 4

Thomas W. Douglas
Artistic Director



BACH CHOIR
OF PITTSBURGH

2425 Liberty Ave., Pgh, PA 15222 **WEB** bachchoirpittsburgh.org **PHONE** 412-241-4044



BACH CHOIR OF PITTSBURGH

presents

OBSESSIONS

Great Opera Choruses

Thomas W. Douglas

Artistic Director and Conductor

Jon Erik Schreiber

Associate Conductor

James Burns

Piano

Guest Soloists

Charlene Canty, *Soprano*

Zuly Inirio, *Soprano*

Michael Vallikappil, *Tenor*

Miles Wilson-Toliver, *Bass-Baritone*

Maverick Hotel

120 S Whitfield Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

JUNE 3 + 4



OBSESSIONS

A Note from our Choir Member

Erica Shadowsong

The healing power of singing with a choir is truly special; there is something about expressive vocal music that sends electric chills through the body. The songs we are singing this evening range in period, language and style. *Porgy and Bess*, *La Traviata*, *Carmen*—and many others.

To begin to understand this, pay special attention to *The Promise of Living* from Aaron Copland's opera, *The Tender Land*. Copland captured the early American folk spirit by transforming folk songs into art songs. This particular piece makes me tear up every time we sing it, not so much because of the words but because of the music itself. Perhaps you will hear why tonight.

We need art more than ever now as one of the ways to heal and move forward from the difficulties of the past several years. We need beauty, peace, and the expression of things that have become impossible to express. This is the idea behind the Bach Choir's 2021-22 concert season, the first since the choir returned from the isolation of the pandemic. Our concerts this year have been special indeed, particularly as powerful containers of healing energy.

As we move forward toward next year's season, may we all find beauty, grace and healing in music and in each other. We hope tonight's concert will bring you a step closer to this place.

Erica Shadowsong
Soprano, The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh

about the



BACH CHOIR
OF PITTSBURGH

The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh was founded in 1934 to perform works of Johann Sebastian Bach exclusively. Under the leadership of Conductor and Artistic Director Thomas W. Douglas, the choir continues to evolve from a narrowly-focused ensemble to a larger, more inclusive choir that performs major choral works by composers from the Renaissance through the present.

Mission

The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh presents unique and moving interpretations of choral works to engage and captivate arts-loving audiences across the Pittsburgh region.

DONATE



A Sneak Peek into the

2022-2023 Season

THE ROYAL FLUSH JUBILEE

KINGS

HANDEL: Coronation Anthems
with Orchestra

JACKS

P.D.Q. BACH: Peter Schickele
with Orchestra

QUEENS

QUEEN: Freddie Mercury
with Band



Come sing with us!

WHO: Open to the community! No auditions necessary!

WHAT: A low commitment—high enjoyment choral experience. Summer Sing is a wild experience—a cross between an open rehearsal of a choral masterwork and a reading session with singers of all levels of training and experience. This year, we'll be exploring Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, reading by sight and making what music we can within two Tuesday evening rehearsals. The second rehearsal concludes with a run-through of the full piece—sung in the round with the participants/ourselves as the only intended audience. It is always joyful but exhausting, magical and a little bit messy. Mostly, it's just good choral fun!

WHERE: Rodef Shalom Congregation, 4905 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

WHEN: It will be held on both JUNE 21 and JUNE 28, 2022 from 7:00-10:00PM. You may attend one session or both dependent on your comfort level with the piece.

REGISTER AT: www.BachChoirPittsburgh.org/Tickets

PROGRAM

THOMAS W. DOUGLAS, Conductor
JON ERIK SCHREIBER, Associate Conductor
JAMES BURNS, Piano

Charlene Canty, Soprano
Zuly Inirio, Soprano
Michael Vallikappil, Tenor
Miles Wilson-Toliver, Bass-Baritone

Va Pensiero from Nabucco, Giuseppe Verdi

Brindisi from La Traviata, Giuseppe Verdi

Ms. Canty
Mr. Vallikappil

Habanera from Carmen, Georges Bizet

Ms. Inirio

Porgy and Bess, George Gershwin

I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'

Mr. Wilson-Toliver

Gone, Gone, Gone/Overflow

Ms. Obuzor
Ben Filippone

Summertime

Ms. Canty

It Ain't Necessarily So

Mr. Vallikappil

Dido and Aeneas, Henry Purcell

Dido's Lament

Ms. Inirio

With Drooping Wings

Awake the Trumpets Lofty Sound! from Samson, George Frideric Handel

Chorus from Noye's Fludde, Benjamin Britten

Matt Dooley, The Voice of God

Here I Stand from The Rake's Progress, Igor Stravinsky

Mr. Vallikappil

The Promise of Living from The Tender Land, Aaron Copland

PROGRAM *Continued*

Intermission

Easter Chorus from Cavalleria Rusticana, Pietro Mascagni
Ms. Canty

Anvil Chorus from Il Trovatore, Giuseppe Verdi

Ritorna Vincitor from Aida, Giuseppe Verdi
Ms. Inirio

Humming Chorus from Madama Butterfly, Giacomo Puccini

Susannah, Carlisle Floyd

Revival Scene

Mr. Wilson-Toliver

Ms. Canty

The Trees on the Mountain

Ms. Canty

En Fermant Les Yeux from Manon, Jules Massenet
Mr. Vallikappil

Vous qui faites l'endormir from Faust, Charles Gounod
Mr. Wilson-Toliver

Mefistofele, Arrigo Boito

L'altra notte in fondo al mare

Ms. Inirio

Final Chorus

Erich Stein, Mefistofele



OBSESSIONS

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BIOS



THOMAS W. DOUGLAS *Artistic Director*, is a compelling and passionate conductor having performed more than 250 opera, oratorio, orchestral and musical theater productions. As the Artistic Director of the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh he regularly receives accolades for innovative, creative and dramatically provocative productions. He was also the music director of the Newton Symphony in Kansas. Career highlights include conducting Webber's *Phantom of the Opera* in Basel, Switzerland, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, the Pittsburgh premiere of the classic silent films

The Passion of Joan of Arc, with live orchestra and chorus, the U.S. premiere of David Chesky's *The Agnostic*, the rousing *Carmina Burana Africana*, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and *Don Giovanni* and a production of *Ain't Misbehavin'* in Malaysia.

Douglas works regularly as Musical Director at Music Theater Wichita where he has done many productions including *Smokey Joe's Café*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Ragtime*, *Hairspray*, *The Full Monty*, *Miss Saigon*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Les Misérables* among many others. He has also conducted the Anchorage Opera, San Diego Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Des Moines Symphony Pittsburgh Symphony, at the City Theater, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, Canton Symphony, Wichita Symphony, Dallas Symphony and the River City Brass Band. In addition, Douglas has conducted classical guitarist and Latin Grammy winner Berta Rojas, Tony winner Kelli O'Hara, and Leslie Odom Jr., Tony winner for his role in *Hamilton*.

Thomas has enjoyed the stage roles of Amonasro in Elton John's *Aida*, Caiaphas in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. He has been a vocal soloist with the River City Brass, Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh Symphony, Canton Symphony, the Children's Festival Chorus and sings frequently with jazz legend Joe Negri in his *Mass of Hope*. Douglas is the Director of Opera Studies and also Choral Activities at Carnegie Mellon University. This is his 18th season with the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh.

BIOS *Continued*



JON ERIK SCHREIBER *Associate Conductor*, is a teacher, singer and conductor with a background in vocal pedagogy, choral and solo song literature, and has experience in musical theater, folk and popular styles. With over two decades of experience directing high school choirs, church and community choirs, Schreiber is grateful for the rich and varied experiences leading and collaborating with all sorts of musicians young and old, challenged

and gifted, small groups and large. In addition to serving the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh as Associate Conductor, Schreiber teaches music and directs the Chorus at Pittsburgh Allderdice High School. He is the founding Artistic Director and Conductor of the Indiana Community Choir at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), and also maintains an independent studio of voice students. Above all, he is thankful for the opportunity to serve his family as a father and husband.



JAMES BURNS *Accompanist*, has been a frequent performer with groups such as the Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater and the Mendelssohn Choir. As a pianist for the Civic Light Opera he has performed in over 100 musical theater productions. He has had the pleasure of bringing music to young students through his work with educational outreach programs for Gateway to Music and the Pittsburgh Opera. Burns holds piano

performance degrees from Oberlin Conservatory of Music, the Julliard School and a Masters degree in Sacred Music from Duquesne University. He is the organist at Westminster Presbyterian Church and Temple Emanuel.

ADD US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

FaceBook / Instagram / Twitter: **BachChoirPGH**

Guest Soloist



CHARLENE CANTY, Soprano has been acclaimed for her “sumptuous voice” and “beautiful tone”, as well as her musicality and ability to create “gorgeous interweaving vocal lines” that move from “nuanced soft passages” to “bright and powerful while never being forced or strident.” An accomplished performer of operatic and sacred works, she is also in demand as a concert soloist and recitalist. Her various operatic performances include roles in *Madama Butterfly*, *Porgy & Bess*, *Norma*, *The Ring Cycle*, *Don Giovanni*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *The Magic Flute*, and *La Bohème* with such companies as Pittsburgh Festival Opera,

Long Beach Opera, Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh, Neighborhood Opera Company, Opera Western Reserve and Undercroft Opera.

A regular performer of sacred music, Ms. Canty has been featured as a soloist in *Carmina Burana*, Vaughn Williams’s *Dona Nobis Pacem*, the requiems of Mozart, Brahms, Verdi, Faure and Rutter and various oratorios such as Handel’s *Messiah*, and J. S. Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* and *St. John Passion* with the Warren Philharmonic Orchestra, Beit Benedict Festival Orchestra, Youngstown Musica Sacra Orchestra and the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra.

An avid interpreter of contemporary music, Ms. Canty collaborated with Resonance Works performing the World Premiere of *Gitanjai #35* for soprano and chamber ensemble by Jorge Sosa. Other notable premieres include the World Premieres of *A Gathering of Sons* and *Just Above My Head* with Pittsburgh Festival Opera and Opera Theater Pittsburgh, the World Premiere of *Eli Tamar’s Ave Maria* as well as the orchestral premiere of *Eli Tamar’s Canticum Fratris Solis* with the Edgewood Symphony Orchestra. She is also featured in recording on Efrain Amaya’s *Phantasmagorilla? No! Phantasmagoria* which was released by Albany Records and her most recent collaborative recording, *Laudato Si: In the Spirit of St. Francis of Assisi* was released by Navona Records.

Ms. Canty has been featured in recital with oboist Scott Bell for Pittsburgh’s ‘Music in a Great Space’ concert series; she has collaborated as a soloist with various organizations such as the Pittsburgh Girls’ Choir, The Edgewood Symphony Orchestra, Resonance Works Pittsburgh Festival Opera and the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh. She also enjoys performing with the Pittsburgh Camerata as well the Pittsburgh Opera as a part of the chorus. She is currently a soprano soloist and section leader at Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church.

A recipient of numerous awards and honors, Charlene Canty was awarded the Homer Wickline and Conrad Seaman Memorial Fund award and twice received the Sylvia & Sydney Croan Memorial Fund for outstanding performers in the EPCASO summer program in Oderzo, Italy. She is also a previous winner of the Pittsburgh Concert Society Major Auditions and the Irma M. Cooper Vocal Competition. Ms. Canty graduated with honors from the Dana School of Music at Youngstown State University where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Performance. She holds a Master of Music degree with honors from Duquesne University.

Guest Soloists *Continued*



ZULY INIRIO, Soprano Afro-Latina soprano Zuly Inirio has appeared as a soloist throughout the US and Europe. She actively pursues bringing awareness to Afro-Latinidad in classical music with her 'Afro-Latinx Song and Opera Project' whose goal is to commission musical works that tell the stories of the Afro-Latinx community in the United States while creating performance opportunities for that community and diversifying the classical music canon. Through her artistry and activism, she works toward representation and equity for BIPOC.

She was one of Pittsburgh Concert Society's Major Artist Competition Winners in 2020 and has collaborated with the Incidental Chamber Players. Ms. Inirio has performed Jake Heggie's *Natural Selection* where she worked with the composer directly and was the soprano soloist Verdi's *Requiem* in Munich, Germany under the baton of Massimiliano Murralli. She has sung the role of the High Priestess and covered the title role in Verdi's *Aida* in Sicily, Italy and was most recently featured as a recitalist in Austin Opera's *Concerts at the Consulate*.



MICHAEL VALLIKAPPIL, Tenor is a native of Houston, TX. He is a graduate from The Oberlin Conservatory of Music (2016) where he received his BM in Vocal Performance and studied under baritone, Timothy LeFebvre. After receiving his degree from Oberlin, Michael worked as an artist in residency with The St. Petersburg Opera Co. in Florida. During his residency, Michael went on to cover the role of Jack in St. Petersburg Opera Co.'s production of *Into The Woods* by Sondheim (2017). In 2020 Michael covered the role of *Bénédict* in Carnegie Mellon University's production of *Béatrice et Bénédict*. Last year at Carnegie Mellon University, Michael performed the role of *Count Belfiore* in Carnegie Mellon University's production of *La Finta Giardiniera* by Mozart (2021) under the baton of Thomas Douglas. Michael

has received his masters in Vocal Performance from Carnegie Mellon (2022) and will be returning in the fall for an Advanced Musical Studies certificate. He is currently studying with Maria Spacagna.

The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh is thankful to be performing alongside such a talented group of individuals. We thank our soloists for joining us in this season's last performance!

Guest Soloists *Continued*



MILES WILSON-TOLIVER,
Bass-Baritone is an award-winning opera singer, arts advocate and voice instructor. His Operatic debut, *A Gathering of Sons* 2017, won a New York Film Festival Award for “Best Opera Dealing with Social justice.” He specializes in 21st-century operas, world premieres, new-works, and operas dealing with social justice, Cincinnati Opera (*Blind Injustice* 2019) Cincinnati Opera (*Castor and Patience* 2019), *Walterhoope* (13th & Republic 2020), Pittsburgh Festival Opera (*Rusalka: A Mermaid’s Tale* 2020). Offstage, he is the Executive Director of Miles & Friends Mentorship Programme, Curator at Redeemers AME Zion Church and he is the Founding Director of “Voices of Hartford Ensemble.”

the **PITTSBURGH CAMERATA**
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Sandra Gibson
Beth Jacobs *
Mary Jeffries
Tracy Keys

Ceinwen King-Smith
Takako Kiyota-Petek
Joanna Obuzor
Cynthia Pratt
Erica Shadowsong

Polly Swanson +
Rebecca Symms *
Nicole Tascarella *
Andrea Walczak

ALTOS

Wendy Arons
Tybe Brett
Claudia Broman
Joan Cosgrove
Elizabeth Criss

Joan Devine
Julie Galati *
Keren Gifford
Nancy Long *
Joy McNally

Polly McQueen
Penny Morel
Sue Phillips
Mary Sabol

TENORS

Peter Carras
Brian Filtz

Kane Karsteter-
McKernan
Jon Erik Schreiber *

Rob Schwartz +
George Spencer *

BASSES

Randal Bryant
Matthew Dooley *+
Nick Eustis
Ben Filippone *
Albert Flasck

Stephen Fuegi
George Libby
Shane Michael
Dan Reese *
Andrew Sabol

Erich Stein *
James Storch
Steven Suarez
Paul Tellers
Carter Wellons

Bach Choir Soloists

Joanna Obuzor, Soprano

Erich Stein, Bass

Matthew Dooley, Bass

Ben Filippone, Bass

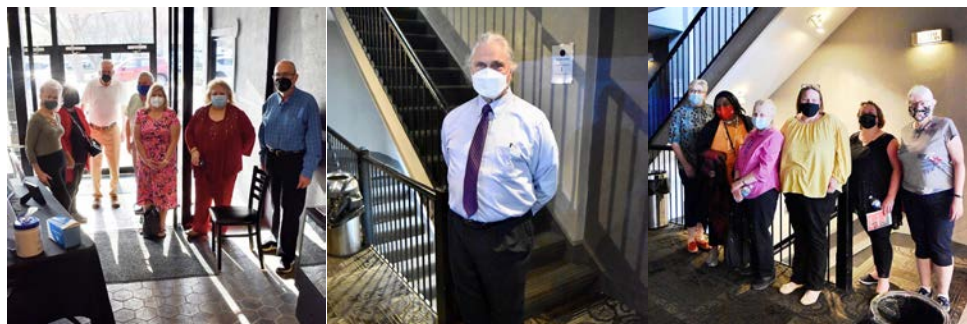
* Professional Core
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attendance and support!*



2021-2022 Season

A very special *thanks* to the many volunteers
who make our performances possible!



CONTRIBUTORS

Thank you

to those who have given gifts to our mission

Individual contributors to the Bach Choir are truly the lifeblood of our organization. Without the generous support of many people, we would simply not be able to perform for you. We are honored and grateful to this year's contributors who helped us not only to reach our goal for individual contributions, but to surpass it!

We are currently hard at work setting up a reliable system for keeping track of all of you and your contributions, and we want you to know that we will be sending out formal acknowledgments of your contributions very shortly. We are aware that there have been inaccuracies in recent months, and so we have chosen not to name our donors in this program book. We want our listing to be 100% accurate!

Please stay tuned for a roster of current donors to come out in the next couple of months, and please know that we remain careful stewards of your generosity. We'll get this right soon!

With sincere gratitude,
The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh Family

A Tribute to

Jack Kerr

Back in the 1980's, I sang in the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh and joined the Board of Directors as a choir representative. It was then that I first met Arthur Jack Kerr, Jr., also a member of the Board. I remember enjoying my conversations with Jack, mostly because his love of music was so deeply held. We worked together on various projects, including an important anniversary of the Mendelssohn in 1984.

I would always see Jack at our concerts, and when I went to work at the Pittsburgh Symphony, I would see him and his dear wife Virginia there, too. We kept up our conversations, and when I began singing with the Bach Choir under Brady Allred, there was Jack in the audience. After Thomas Douglas took over as Artistic Director of the Bach Choir, I noticed Jack's attendance at our concerts was about as regular as could be.

Besides being a faithful audience member, Jack has always contributed generously, not just to the Bach Choir, but to many, many arts organizations in Pittsburgh. When I see him at church, I'm never surprised to learn that he's been to a performance the night before and is often planning to attend a matinee on Sunday and an evening performance elsewhere to round out his weekend. Such amazing energy and such a loyal attendee!

Those of us on the Board of the Bach Choir kept noticing Jack, not only for his attendance, but also for his contributions, so we created a small event this month to recognize his generosity. When Jack heard about our plan, he immediately told us he would match gifts made by individual donors up to \$3,000! – **Polly McQueen, Alto and Bach Choir President**

It is our fervent hope that you, reading this now, will be inspired by Jack's example and will make a year-end gift by June 30 to help us reach the Jack Kerr Matching Gift Challenge. If this is something you would like to do, please mail your check to the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh, 2425 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Like Jack, you, too, can be a part of something special.



BACH CHOIR OF PITTSBURGH



Thank you!

for attending and
for your support

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Associate Conductor Jon Erik Schreiber
Accompanist James Burns

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