



**ENSEMBLE ALTERA**

Christopher Lowrey, *director*

*a new*

**SONG**

Psalms for the Soul

**13 SEPT 2024 | 7PM**

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**14 SEPT 2024 | 7PM**

St. Paul's Parish | **Cambridge, MA**

**15 SEPT 2024 | 3PM**

Grace Episcopal Church | **Providence, RI**

**ENSEMBLEALTERA.COM**

# UPCOMING SEASON

**NOVEMBER 2024**

Ensemble Altera presents *Feminine Voices*

Featuring music for upper voices by eight women composers arrayed around Benjamin Britten's beloved *Ceremony of Carols*.

Sat 16 November at 7:00 PM, St Paul's Parish, Cambridge, MA

Sun 17 November at 3:00 PM, Blessed Sacrament Church, Providence, RI

**JANUARY 2025**

The Orchestra of St. Luke's presents *Mein Traum*

Christian Gerhaher, baritone

Ying Fang, soprano

Ensemble Altera

Raphaël Pichon, conductor

Featuring music by Schubert, Schumann, and Weber

Thu 23 January at 8:00 PM, Carnegie Hall, New York, NY

**SUMMER 2025**

*Summer Pops Concert*

Bristol, RI

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Ensemble Altera presents *The Four Elements*

Music inspired by Air, Earth, Fire, and Water

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# A NOTE *from the* DIRECTOR

2024 is a leap year and a Presidential election year, but more importantly, it's an Olympic year. I've been a devotee of the Olympic Games since tuning in to the Opening Ceremony of the 1994 Lillehammer Olympics charmed my socks off. Two years later, when the Games were staged on home turf in Atlanta - Celine Dion singing her heart out then as in Paris this year - I was well and truly hooked. Over the years, despite years of pushback and public criticism aimed at the Olympics, much of it justified, I've become borderline obsessed. Living in London during the 2012 edition, it took on a new resonance, concentrating the attention of the world on my beloved city. For all the drawbacks - profligate spending, white-elephant venues that lie dormant and disused once the world moves on, gentrification and displacement, environmental impacts - there has always been, for me, an equal and opposite list of draws: the courage and tenacity of our finest athletes rewarded on the grandest stage; the diffusion of our primal impulse for tribalism and warfare into bloodless international rivalries (what sport can do at its best); and some intangible legacy benefits, like overdue upgrades to public infrastructure so often deferred by short-term politics; younger generations inspired to take up athletic pursuits at all levels; and the precious opportunity, especially in our digital culture - now fractured into narrowcasted factions and echo chambers - to rally around a common spectacle, to tell our essential stories, and to reconnect to an unspoken, shared humanity.

Another reason I absolutely love the Olympic movement: its unabashed celebration of global excellence. What could be more exhilarating than watching the world's strongest, highest, fastest, tirelessly honing and perfecting their natural gifts to achieve new feats of performance? In recent years, our culture in the broad sense, and more specifically in the arts, has perhaps retreated from these goals. In an attempt to redress an enormous and legitimate historical wrong, exclusion, we've taken a well-meaning but pernicious detour. As chief music critic for The Times of London, Richard Morrison, recently put it, "the description of an organisation as elitist, or the observation that it is supporting elite performers, is a devastating slur...The weird reality is that although our most renowned musicians, actors, and artists have had to train as long and hard as Olympic athletes and are as talented in their respective fields, they must somehow pretend not to be exceptional at all, for fear of fostering what would be regarded as an unhealthy aura of privilege around their art-forms." Being called an elite athlete may be the highest form of praise, but to be accused of being an elite artist is slanderous.

The instinct for the arts, like sports, is a fundamentally human one, stretching back into our deep history. It has and will always play a role in our communities, our schools, our families, at the amateur and intermediate levels, where everyone can and should participate. But, perhaps we've allowed ourselves to go into denial about the essentialness of excellence, too. In an infinite sea of potential pursuits, we focus on those that bring us pleasure and meaning, but also on ones we idolize, wish to emulate, and on which strive to improve at. As someone constantly moving through different country codes and time zones, I've had the privilege to observe what many different cultures do best: American national parks, Australian coffee, Japanese hospitality, Middle Eastern airlines, British public broadcasting. These accomplishments are both eye-opening and humbling. We could repudiate the idea of excellence, yes, looking away from, downplaying, or even gainsaying it. Or, we can roll up our sleeves, discover our own ignorance, and get to work!

My ambition for Ensemble Altera was ignited by a passion for choral music, and what it can be when we devote ourselves to it with unashamed gusto and rigor. To do this, I spend countless hours listening to the best in the world, blown away by the dedication to their craft, and curious about how we can achieve the same and better. This love affair connects me with artists across the region, country, and globe, from whom I have the huge privilege of learning, and sharing with audiences right here in New England. It inspires me to seek ever higher levels of attainment in our music making, performing, touring, and recording. It demands that I create new platforms for composers who bring us into the future; that I pass on what I've learned to students through our Sing Out In Schools! education platform, that I bring the fruits of our collective labor to residents in continuing-care, right where they are. And it asks of me constantly, what can I do better? What comes next? Let's find out together.

This aspiration would come to nothing without my team: our board, led by Simon Holt, who took a chance on this dreamer; our Treasurer, Charlie Oliver, who always finds a way to make the impossible practical; our Production Manager, Tim Harbold, who enables the visits of our international artists; Michelle Caetano, who finds a comfortable bed for everyone from far away; Donna Lowrey, who patiently transcribes all of our business; Michael Garrepy, who not only writes expert choral music, but absorbs my eccentricities each day we work together on this juggernaut; Olivia Kleyla, who designs our stylish digital media and our exquisite programs; and Rachel Garrepy, who liaises with our artists to ensure that our weeklong projects go off with astonishingly few hitches for an organization of our size.

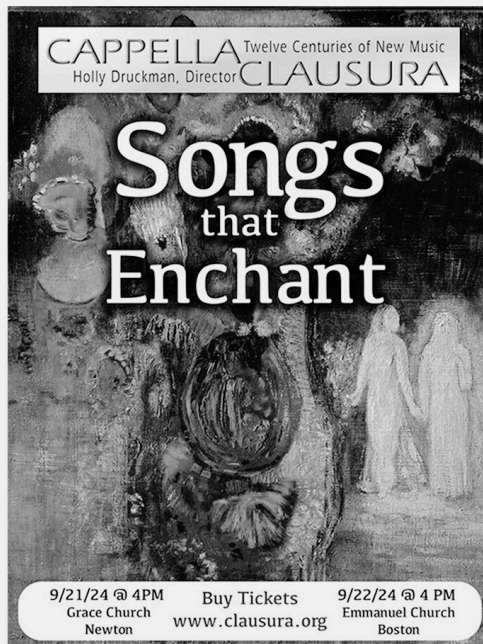
I also want to acknowledge the hospitality of our many hosts who make Alterans feel at home here in New England, all those who volunteer as ushers, our donors who sustain our vision, and you, our loyal audience who turns up to events with enthusiasm, buys our CDs, chatters about us to your friends, and shares our content online. Our world revolves around you and nothing means more than hearing from you.

Yours in Music,  
Christopher Lowrey  
Founder & Artistic Director

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### **Songs that Enchant**

September 21st, 2024 4pm @ Grace Church  
September 22nd, 2024 4pm @ Emmanuel Church

### **Music to Lighten the Darkness**

November 16th, 2024 4pm @ Grace Church  
November 17th, 2024 4pm @ Emmanuel Church

### **All About Love**

February 15th, 2025 4pm @ Grace Church  
February 16th, 2025 4pm @ Emmanuel Church

### **Visions for a Kinder World**

April 12th, 2025 4pm @ Grace Church  
April 13th, 2025 3pm Emmanuel Church

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*a new*  
**SONG**  
Psalms for the Soul

ENSEMBLE ALTERA  
Christopher Lowrey  
*director*

**soprano**

Clare Brussel  
Rachel Garrepy  
Jess Huetteman  
Katelyn Grace Jackson  
Eli McCormack  
Victoria Meteyard  
Sarah Vitale

**alto**

Rhianna Cockrell  
Olivia Kleyla  
Christopher Lowrey  
Jenna Hernandez McLean  
Caroline Olsen

**tenor**

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Brad Kleyla  
Alex Longnecker  
Nicholas Madden

**bass**

Michael Garrepy  
Nathan Halbur  
Joseph Hubbard  
Constantine Novotny  
Rupert Peacock  
Simon Whiteley

**program**

*Canticum Novum*, Ivo Antognini (b. 1963)

*Psalm 67*, Ēriks Ešenvalds (b. 1977)

*O Lord, our governor*, Piers Connor Kennedy (b. 1992)

*Psalm 12*, chant Arthur Hervey (1855-1922)

*Miserere mei, Deus*, Gregorio Allegri (c. 1582 - 1652)

*Dominus dabit benignitatem*, James MacMillan (b. 1959)

*Laudibus in sanctis*, Uģis Prauliņš (b. 1957)

**- interval -**

*Laudate Dominum\**, Ian Gabriel Corpuz (b. 1995)

*and the swallow*, Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

*Beati quorum via*, Owain Park (b. 1993)

*Os justi*, Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

*'Lord, let me know mine end' from Songs of Farewell*, Hubert Parry (1848-1918)

*All creatures of our God and King*, William Henry Draper, arr. by Michael Garrepy (b. 1990)\*\*

*\*2024 Composition Competition Winner*

*\*\*World Premiere*

# PROGRAM Notes

Western choral music as it exists today, both in its forms and repertoire, is heavily indebted to the *Book of Psalms*. Named after the Greek word meaning 'to pluck' (*psallein*), the *Psalms* are ancient hymns originally attributed to King David of Israel. David, a notorious wielder of the lyre (a handheld, seven-stringed harp), was known to provoke through his psalmody powerful emotions in the listener. An exhilarating, almost-oedipal drama dominates the biblical *Book of Samuel* - the fraught relationship between King Saul and his successor, the lowly shepherd boy David; but at the heart of it lies David's power to dispel evil through music.



*And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.*

1 Samuel: 23

David's authorship, as well as that of other Biblical figures including Asaph, the sons of Korah, and Solomon, is generally not accepted by most modern scholars of the Bible, who instead attribute the *Psalms* to various authors writing between the 9th and 5th centuries BC, the period spanning the Israelite conquest of Canaan and the return to Zion following the Babylonian exile. Their rich history arrives to us as an instructive palimpsest, with the vast majority of the *Psalms* containing superscriptions such as 'choirmaster', 'leader', 'with stringed instruments', 'on the dedication of the temple', or 'for the memorial offering', that present us with a fascinating glimpse into their purpose and practice. Many scholars of the *Psalms*, beginning with the pioneering work of Hermann Gunkel, have sought to categorize them by genre (*gattung*) into at least five, but often many more, types, according to themes such as thanksgiving, royalty, wisdom, lament, praise, imprecation, enthronement, covenant, salvation, and so on.

*Psalms* have long been the hymnal of Jewish and subsequently Christian worship. Jesus and his disciples sang the *Psalms* of the Hebrew Bible and the practice continued with Paul and other early Christians. Insofar as we can tell, Christians of the first two centuries used the *Book of Psalms* more than any other of the Old Testament. As the church continued to grow and other liturgical materials appeared (for example, the *Odes of Solomon* and hymns of Ephrem and Ambrose), the *Psalms* continued to form the basis for much Christian worship. By the fourth and fifth centuries, numerous commentaries on the theological and historical meanings of the *Psalms* were flourishing, further cementing the *Psalms* as the foundational source for Christian worship.

When contemporary Protestants and Catholics look back at how early Christians used the *Psalms*, however, they quickly notice something amiss: they seem to have been numbered differently. Not *all* of the *Psalms*, just most of them. And to confuse matters further, modern Bibles actually number them differently as well, according to various lineages and translations. The reason is that there are actually *two* ancient versions of



*Psalms*, each of which numbers them differently. A couple of centuries after the Babylonian Exile, fewer Jews living in Israel were able to read Hebrew, the language of the *Psalms*, and fewer still living outside of Palestine knew how to make sense of the language of their heritage. In response to this, a group of scholars translated the Hebrew Bible into the new *lingua franca*: Greek. This translation became known as the *Septuagint* or *LXX* (from the Latin *septuaginta*), so named for the 70 translators who worked on the project. The *Septuagint* became the default Bible for Jews living throughout the ancient Greco-Roman world, and was likely the Bible that Jesus would have read. It also served as the source for the writers of the New Testament (i.e., when the New Testament writers quote the Old Testament, they are quoting the *Septuagint* not the Hebrew).

How does all of this impact the numbering of the *Psalms*? Well, when the *Book of Psalms* was being translated from Hebrew to Greek, some of them were shuffled. For example, what were *Psalms 9* and *10* in the Hebrew were concatenated into a single *Psalm, 9*, in the Greek. Both versions eventually ended up with the same number of *Psalms* (150), but the numbering of the *Psalms* became “off” by one or two numbers. Thus, what many of us think of as *Psalm 23* (“The Lord is my Shepherd...”) was, for Christians following the *Septuagint*, actually *Psalm 22*. Subsequent versions have addressed these differences in a number of ways. Saint Jerome’s translation of the Bible in Latin, the *Vulgate*, for instance, perpetuates the *Septuagint* numbering system. For many years, Roman Catholic translations of the Bible into English used Jerome’s numbering, although more recent Catholic Bibles have reverted to the Hebrew designations. Protestant Bible translations, like the *King James Version*, have almost always followed the Hebrew numbering. The Orthodox Church, however, continues to follow the Greek system.

And how are the *Psalms* used liturgically? The Anglican Archbishop Thomas Cranmer translated and adapted the Medieval Service Books, parceling out the Psalter over a month rather than a week, as had been the custom of the middle ages. The Roman Divine Office followed suit after the Second Vatican Council. But there are other ways to apportion them. The [Alternative Service Book](#) spreads the *Psalms* to only five times a year. At other times in Christian history other permutations have been devised. In some monastic communities, the whole *Psalter* was said or sung in a single day. The *Psalms* have always been sung. When Jesus read the prophecy of Isaiah in the Synagogue (Luke 4), he probably used a form of ‘cantillation’ that a modern Jewish cantor would still recognize today. Contemporary Jewish free-rhythm chants clearly share a common ancestry to the ‘modes’ found in Byzantine and Western plainchant. All derive from a common stock. Anglican chant, beginning with the simple harmonization of plainsong by composers like John Blow and Henry Purcell, can thus be seen to be intimately related to the wider tradition of the singing of the *Psalms* by Jews and Christian alike.

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Ivo Antognini was born in Italian-speaking Switzerland, initially a student of the jazz piano. After a brief spell composing for film and television, his encounter with the Coro Calicantus persuaded him to devote most of his compositional energies to choral works, many of which have won international prizes. **Canticum Novum**, a setting of *Psalm 95, Sing unto the Lord a new song*, was written in 2013 for Stephen Layton and The Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge. The bright opening fanfare ‘Cantate Domino’ figure is followed by chanting chords on ‘canticum novum’ that repeat seven times in bars of seven. The number seven represents the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Knowledge, Fortitude, Piety, and Fear of the Lord.

Latvian composer Ēriks Ešņvalds has also benefited from a long association with Stephen Layton, for whom he has written an abundance of music, including the *Trinity Te Deum*, and his setting of **Psalm 67** for Layton's professional choir Polyphony. One detects in the work a fusion of Ešņvalds' searching harmonic style with some of the quotidian features of Anglican choral services, which he heard during his time as Fellow-Commoner at Trinity College, Cambridge from 2011-2013. The solo chant, with its quotation of psalm-tone cadences, mingles with a masterful chromaticism that many listeners - who only know Ešņvalds' more accessible works - will be unaware exists in his arsenal.

Piers Connor Kennedy, newly appointed second bass in The King's Singers, is the most-recent in a long line of singer-composers associated with the group, including Bob Chilcott, Philip Lawson, and Bill Ives. Kennedy has received commissions from The Three Choirs Festival, SANSARA, and The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge. **O Lord, our Governor** is one of six *Psalm* settings commissioned by the young vocal consort HEXAD Collective, as part of the commemorations surrounding the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth the II in 2022. The text is *Psalm 61*, verses 1 through 6 ("Queen" interpolated for "King"), with a coda - the titular first verse of *Psalm 8* - appended. Largely homophonic throughout, it bursts to celebratory life with D major cascades at "Thou shalt grant the Queen a long life." The key area and text would be expected at a coronation; but, in an eerie prefiguration of Elizabeth's death later that same year, Kennedy traverses the ambiguity between earthly and divine power in a stately final section that coalesces at "She shall dwell before God for ever."

Anglican chant forms the backbone of any evening or morning service in the Church of England. Like the plainsong that gave rise to it, these typically 7- or 14-bar chants are a practical way to give structure and intelligibility to the sometimes-prolix *Psalm* texts. The majority of the words are rhythmically chanted over the *reciting notes* in the first, fourth, eighth, and eleventh bars of the pattern, with the other notes fitted to the words at the end of each half-verse. Historically, the rhythm of non-reciting notes was quite strict; but, over time it has become more naturalistic, based on the cadence of typical speech. This gives a choir an excellent opportunity not only to communicate the text of the *Psalms* to the congregation legibly and meaningfully, but also an excellent occasion for the singers to hone aural skills so that each detail of the text is executed with unanimity of purpose. This is essential when the half verses are traded between the *decani* and *cantoris* choirs on opposite sides of the sanctuary. Frederick Alfred John Hervey was primarily known as a priest who served the British Royal Family, in his post as Chaplain-in-Ordinary to Queen Victoria and as domestic chaplain to her son, King Edward VII; but he was also a published composer of smaller sacred works, including a smattering of hymn settings and Anglican chants. Perhaps his most famous is the F minor chant associated closely with another penitential *Psalm*, 143 ("Hear my prayer, O Lord, and consider my desire"). Here, we use the chant to accompany **Psalm 12** ("Help me, Lord, for there is not one godly man left"), as it appears in the Psalter of Trinity College, Cambridge, where Hervey was educated.

More ink has been spilled on the provenance, reception, and performance practice of Gregorio Allegri's beguiling setting of *Psalm 51*, **Miserere mei, Deus** than perhaps any other subject in early choral music. Composed in roughly 1638, it was one of many *falsobordone Psalm* settings in use at the Sistine Chapel. *Falsobordone*, like Anglican chant, was a style of recitation most often employed in the singing of *Psalms* at Vespers; but could also be deployed for Passions, lamentations, reproaches, litanies, responses, and settings of the *Magnificat*. Though, unlike Anglican chant's freely composed harmonies, *falsobordoni* generally harmonized well-known Gregorian *Psalm* tones (the *Miserere* uses the *tonus peregrinus*). These harmonies are based on root-position triads, and in the *Psalms*, are divided into two sections, each containing a recitation on one chord followed by a cadence. The mystique of Allegri's *Miserere* was inflated by unwritten performance traditions and ornamentation practices, themselves closely guarded and unpublished secrets that for many years were no more than the subject of rumor. Leopold Mozart, on first hearing the work with his son, remarked that "the manner of performance contributes more to its effect than the composition itself." There is debate about how many copies were permitted to escape the Vatican, but recent scholarship indicates that the *Miserere* was being performed as far afield as London and Portugal by 1735. The most-commonly known ornamentations (called *abbellimenti*) that made the work renowned were unwritten, in-house techniques of the Sistine Choir. Eighteenth-century editions attempting to transcribe these abounded, including one made by the young Wolfgang Mozart, the English historian Charles Burney, the Roman priest Pietro Alfieri, Tommaso Bai, a tenor in the Sistine choir after Allegri's death, Felix Mendelssohn, and Franz Liszt. William Smyth Rockstro's edition, appearing in the 1880 *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, contained the now-legendary top C, resulting from a misreading of clefs in the source manuscript. Nevertheless, this "serendipitous scribal error" has become the measuring stick by which performances are measured today. My own *abellimenti* have tried to somewhat incorporate the general style of Bai's ornaments (leaving to one side his particular fascination with chromatic neighbor tones); but I've relied more heavily on the style of diminutions (e.g.: *intonatio*, *accento*, and *gruppo*) most common in the music of Allegri's contemporaries, like Claudio Monteverdi, Francesco Cavalli, and Salamone Rossi, without sacrificing the high-lying phrases that make the work what it is to contemporary listeners.

In 2005, the Dominican order took over the parish of St Colomba's in Maryhill, Glasgow, Scotland. James MacMillan, himself a lay Dominican, penned a collection of works for the choir there, the *Strathclyde Motets*, from which his setting of *Psalm 84*, **Dominus dabit benignitatem**, is drawn. It features soaring soprano lines that unfold over a pacific looping pattern in the lower voices. The final phrases are particularly striking, characterized by a sudden shift in harmonic tension that evokes a sense of epiphany. The lower voices glide back and forth between E-flat major and A major while the sopranos ride down an octatonic scale (alternating tones and semitones) from their top G. The piece concludes with a hummed melody ending on E and D, leaving the harmony suspended midair.

Latvian composer Uģis Prauliņš grew up in the ranks of the Riga Dom Boys' Choir and honed his craft at the Music Academy in Riga, while also playing in rock bands during the 70s and 80s, and simultaneously developing his interest in sound engineering and folk music. This led to a career embracing music for film and television, crossover music, and concert music. These eclectic influences feed into his musical language, which can be characterized as unfussy and direct, calling upon a vast canon of references but remaining *sui generis*. The diversity and quirkiness of his vocal scoring is best characterized in his choral cantata **Laudibus in sanctis**. In Prauliņš' imagination, "everything is possible and nothing is absolute", and his open-minded

approach can be heard in various facets of the *Laudibus*, including its ostinato folk-like rhythms and flamboyant polychoral exchanges. The short attacca movements of the piece recall a baroque work such as Purcell's *Tè Deum*, flirting with that period's filigree vocal ornamentation. The gear changes between the characterful movements may at first jar the ear, but soon reveal a unity of purpose which reflects the unceasing exultation of the words.

Ensemble Altera received 123 submissions from 32 countries and 22 US states for the fourth edition of our annual Composition Competition. The entries were of a uniformly excellent standard, yet the work of Ian Gabriel Corpuz of the Philippines stood above the rest. The young Corpuz already works on the faculty of the Centro Escolar University Conservatory of Music. In his winning piece, **Laudate Dominum**, a joyous B-flat major fanfare launches into a graceful soprano melody supported by a dancing accompaniment. A gently syncopated interlude at 'omnes gentes' (*all nations*) follows, rising to exuberant Alleluias that bridge us back to a shortened reprise of the opening material. The piece's rhythmic vitality and harmonic freshness are a fantastic representation of the work emerging from the younger generation of Southeast Asian composers.

Born in 1982 in North Carolina, Caroline Shaw was the youngest Pulitzer Prize winner, with her *Partita for 8 voices. and the swallow*, commissioned by the Netherlands Chamber Choir, was premiered at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City in November, 2017. As with *Dominus dabit benignitatem*, the title comes from *Psalms 84*, from which she sets verses 1, 2, and 3. Shaw chose the text, which references the Valley of Bakka in Lebanon, in response to the refugee crisis in that region. Quickly becoming a modern classic, the work finds a happy compromise between the stark minimalism of the previous generation of American composers, and some of the sappier trappings of her reactionary contemporaries.

While Owain Park's music can instantly be identified with the English choral tradition, it nevertheless pastiches its influences brilliantly. His virtuosically artisanal approach feels at home in so many different contexts, perhaps most acutely in music that is a self-conscious homage to or parody of an earlier work. Ironically, in setting the 'Three Latin Motets' as his forbear Stanford did, he may have found his most authentic voice. The middle motet of the set, **Beati quorum via**, was written with support from the Wells Cathedral Chorister Trust. It imitates the gracious mood of Stanford's model; but, benefiting greatly from Park's experience as a formidable choral singer in his own right (he is the founder and low bass in the vocal consort The Gesualdo Six), he finds new terrain for text painting as at *qui ambulat* (those who walk), coloristic use of consonant sounds as in the word *lege* ("law"), and shimmering harmonies that exploit the overtones of the upper voices.

One of the fixations of Anton Bruckner's choral writing is an observance of *stile antico* contrapuntal principles that recall the paradigmatic polyphony of High Renaissance masters like Palestrina and Victoria. His **Os justi** is probably his purest and most sincere expression of this style. Writing in the Old Church Lydian mode, Bruckner eschews all chromatic notes, dominant seventh chords, and second inversion chords, which were all the stock and trade of his mid-Romantic period peers; yet the music retains a firm identity, never veering into sentimental imitation. The wide dynamic range, exchanges between upper and lower voices, and climactic, unfurling chain suspensions perfectly modernize these ancient techniques.

Another master of contrapuntal style was Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, whose *Songs of Farewell*, written from 1913-15, greatly expand upon the harmonic vocabulary heard in the *Os justi*. The conclusion of the cycle, and the longest of the motets, **Lord, let me know mine end**, is a setting of verses from *Psalms 39* for double choir. The eight voices afford Parry opportunities to write in thick textures as well as antiphonally between the two choirs. His scoring varies from the soloistic to the symphonic. We are left to wonder if Parry, who at this point was suffering from a serious heart condition, was pleading with the divine when he set the final phrases “O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence and be no more seen.”

The words of the hymn **All creatures of our God and King** were initially written in 1225 by St. Francis of Assisi in the *Canticle of the Sun Poem*, a gloss on *Psalms 148*. The English clergyman William Henry Draper translated the Canticle around 1919 in celebration of his church's Whitsun (Anglican Pentecost) festivities; and his text is most typically heard, as here, to the tune of the German hymn *Lasst uns erfreuen* (also the tune most often used for *Ye watchers, and ye holy ones*). Although Ralph Vaughan Williams' arrangement remains the most famous, Ensemble Altera beckoned the expert imagination of our resident arranger Michael Garrepy, who imbued the hymn with an intrepid energy. Seeking new harmonic and metrical paths throughout, Garrepy's version offers Ensemble Altera a vehicle to show off its power and delicacy, and an opportunity to join forces with our musically attentive audience.

CL



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**2024-25 Season**

**November 9-10, 2024 - Born of Light**  
Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*  
Britten, *Ceremony of Carols*  
Lauridsen, *Lux Aeterna*

**March 30, 2025 - Annelies**  
libretto based on  
*The Diary of Anne Frank*  
**WaterFire Arts Center**

**December 15, 2024 - Messiah**  
with the RI Philharmonic  
Christine Noel conducting

**May 9-10, 2025 - Brahms, Requiem**  
with the RI Philharmonic  
Robert Spano conducting

**Concert and ticket information:**  
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Artistic Director

1.

Cantate Domino canticum novum:  
cantate Domino omnis terra.  
Cantate Domino, et benedicite nomini eius:  
Annuntiate de die in diem salutare eius.

*Sing unto the Lord a new song:  
sing unto the Lord all the earth.  
Sing unto the Lord, and bless his name:  
show forth from day to day his salvation.  
- Psalm 95: 1-2*

2.

God, be merciful unto us, and bless us, and shew us the light of his countenance, and be merciful unto us: That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let the people praise thee. O let the nations rejoice and be glad, for thou shalt judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Let the people praise thee, O God; yea, let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth bring forth her increase: and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the world shall fear him.

- Psalm 67

3.

Hear my crying, O God: give ear unto my prayer. From the ends of the earth will I call upon thee: when my heart is in heaviness. O set me up upon the rock that is higher than I: for thou hast been my hope, and a strong tower for me against the enemy.

Thou shalt grant the Queen a long life: that her years may endure throughout all generations. She shall dwell before God for ever: so will I always sing praise unto thy Name. O Lord our governor: how glorious is your name in all the world!

- Psalms 61: 1-8 & Psalm 8: 1

4.

Help me, Lord, for there is not one godly man left : for the faithful are minished from among the children of men. They talk of vanity every one with his neighbour : they do but flatter with their lips, and dissemble in their double heart. The Lord shall root out all deceitful lips : and the tongue that speaketh proud things; Which have said, With our tongue will we prevail : we are they that ought to speak, who is lord over us? Now for the comfortless trouble's sake of the needy : and because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the Lord : and will help every one from him that swelleth against him, and will set him at rest. The words of the Lord are pure words : even as the silver, which from the earth is tried, and purified seven times in the fire. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord : thou shalt preserve him from this generation for ever. The ungodly walk on every side : when they are exalted, the children of men are put to rebuke.

- Psalm 12

5.

Miserere mei, Deus: secundum magnam misericordiam tuam. Et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam. Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato meo munda me.

Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco: et peccatum meum contra me est semper.

Tibi soli peccavi, et malum coram te feci: ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis, et vincas cum judicaris. Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum: et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.

Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti: incerta et occulta sapientiae tuae manifestasti mihi. Asperges me hyssopo, et mundabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor. Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam: et exsultabunt ossa humiliata.

Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis: et omnes iniquitates meas dele. Cor mundum crea in me, Deus: et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis. Tunc acceptabis sacrificium justitiae, oblationes, et holocausta: tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.

5. cont.

*Have mercy upon me, O God: after Thy great goodness. According to the multitude of Thy mercies, do away mine offences. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness: and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified in Thy saying, and clear when Thou art judged. Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my mother conceived me. But lo, Thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly. Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness: that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice. Turn Thy face from my sins: and put out all my misdeeds. Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me. Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with the burnt-offerings and oblations: then shall they offer young bullocks upon Thine altar.*

- Psalm 51: 1-11, 20

6.

Dominus dabit benignitatem, et terra nostra dabit fructum suum

*The Lord shall shew loving-kindness: and our land shall give her increase.*

- Psalm 84: 13

7.

Laudibus in sanctis Dominum celebrate supremum: Firmamenta sonent inclita facta Dei. Inclita facta Dei cantate, sacraque potentis voce potestatem saepe sonate manus. Magnificum Domini cantet tuba martia nomen: Pieria Domino concelebrate lira. Laude Dei resonent resonantia tympana summi. Alta sacri resonent organa laude Dei. Hunc arguta canant tenui psalteria corda, hunc agili laudet laeta chorea pede.

Concava divinas effundant cymbala laudes, cymbala dulcisona laude repleta Dei. Omne quod aethereis in mundo vescitur auris Alleluia canat tempus in omne Deo.

*Celebrate the Lord most high in holy praises:*

*Let the firmament echo the glorious deeds of God.*

*Sing ye the glorious deeds of God, and with holy voice sound forth oft the power of his mighty hand. Let the warlike trumpet sing the great name of the Lord:*

*Celebrate the Lord with Pierian lyre. Let resounding timbrels ring to the praise of the most-high God, lofty organs peal to the praise of the holy God. Him let melodious psalteries sing with fine string, Him let joyful dance praise with nimble foot. Let hollow cymbals pour forth divine praises, sweet-sounding cymbals filled with the praise of God. Let everything in the world that feeds upon the air of heaven sing Alleluia to God for evermore.*

- Based on Psalm 150

8.

Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes; laudate eum, omnes populi. Alleluia.

*O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. Alleluia.*

- Psalm 117: 1

9.

How beloved is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts. My soul yearns, faints, my heart and my flesh cry. The sparrow found a house and the swallow her nest, where she may raise her young. They pass through the Valley of Bakka, they make it a place of springs. The autumn rains also cover it with pools.

- Psalm 84: 1-3, 6

10.

Beati quorum via integra est, qui ambulant in lege Domini.

*Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way: and walk in the law of the Lord.*

- Psalm 119: 1

11.

Os iusti meditabitur sapientiam: et lingua ejus loquetur iudicium. Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius: et non supplantabuntur gressus ejus. Alleluia.

*The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is just. The law of his God is in his heart: and his feet do not falter. Alleluia.*

- Psalm 37: 30-31

6.

Dominus dabit benignitatem, et terra nostra dabit fructum suum

*The Lord shall shew loving-kindness: and our land shall give her increase.*

- Psalm 84: 13

12.

Lord, let me know mine end and the number of my days, that I may be certified how long I have to live. Thou hast made my days as it were a span long; and mine age is as nothing in respect of Thee, and verily, ev'ry man living is altogether vanity, for man walketh in a vain shadow and disquieteth himself in vain, he heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them. And now, Lord, what is my hope?

Truly my hope is even in Thee. Deliver me from all mine offences and make me not a rebuke to the foolish. I became dumb and opened not my mouth for it was Thy doing. Take Thy plague away from me, I am even consumed by means of Thy heavy hand. When Thou with rebukes does chasten man

for sin thou makest his beauty to consume away like as it were a moth fretting a garment; ev'ry man therefore is but vanity. Hear my pray'r, O Lord and with Thy ears consider my calling, hold not Thy peace at my tears! For I am a stranger with Thee and a sojourner as all my fathers were. O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence and be no more seen.

- Psalm 39: 5-8, 13, 15

13.

All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing, "Alleluia! Alleluia!" Thou burning sun with golden beam, thou silver moon with softer gleam, O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong, ye clouds that sail in heav'n along, O praise Him! Alleluia! Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice, ye lights of ev'ning, find a voice, O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

And all ye souls of tender heart, forgiving others, take your part, O sing ye! Alleluia! Ye who long pain and sorrow bear, praise God and on Him cast your care; O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless, and worship Him in humbleness; O praise Him! Alleluia! Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, Three in One; O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

- Based on Psalm 148





A chamber choir of "seamless ensemble perfection" (The Boston Musical Intelligencer), **ENSEMBLE ALTERA** was founded to be the beating heart of professional choral music in the United States. Led by internationally celebrated countertenor Christopher Lowrey, the group has quickly become known for thoughtful programming, passionate performances, and tireless advocacy for the importance of ensemble singing in the broader music culture.

Recent highlights include a Carnegie Hall debut in Brahms' *Requiem* with the Orchestra of St. Lukes, *A Christmas Present*, a sumptuous collection of seasonal music written by living composers, *Dazzling Light*, an exploration of illumination in the physical and metaphysical worlds, *Sure on this Shining Night*, featuring American choral music of the last century, and a boldly reimagined chamber version of Handel's *Messiah*, co-presented with Newport Classical.

Throughout its short history, Altera has received universally rave reviews, creating "some of the best choral singing by an American choir". Upcoming projects include *Feminine Voices*, featuring works by female composers for upper voices, arrayed around Britten's beloved *Ceremony of Carols*. Additionally, in 2025 Altera returns to Carnegie Hall, to perform under the baton of Raphaël Pichon in his highly original *Mein Traum* program. Next season sees a return of our chamber version of *Messiah*, as well as the debut of a new program, *The Four Elements*.

Deeply committed to championing new works and lifting up new voices, over the past few seasons Altera has premiered works by Motshwane Pege, Toby Young, Joanna Marsh, Daniel Gledhill, Zuzanna Koziej, and Michael Garrepy. In addition to performing, Ensemble Altera undertakes an extensive education and outreach program. Such activities include clinics and interactive presentations with school students in a variety of settings, with a particular focus on opening musical horizons to those from underserved backgrounds. Additionally, Altera has a profound faith in the healing power of music both in and out of the concert hall, and is proud to offer its complete recorded music library free of charge in collaboration with select partners in music therapy.

**ENSEMBLEALTERA.COM**



Founder and Artistic Director **Christopher Lowrey** was born and raised in Johnston, RI, and trained at Brown University, the University of Cambridge, where he sang under Stephen Layton with Trinity College Choir, and the Royal College of Music. In addition to conducting, he enjoys a dynamic international solo career as a countertenor, working at some of the world's leading opera houses and concert platforms, including The Metropolitan Opera, the Royal Opera House, Philharmonie de Paris, Teatro Real, and The London Symphony Orchestra. This season he makes debuts at Lausanne Opera House, The Royal Danish Opera, Bachfest Leipzig, and sings the role of Ottone in a North American tour of Monteverdi's *Poppea*. More at [www.christopherlowrey.com](http://www.christopherlowrey.com).

A lifelong resident of Rhode Island, **Michael Garrepy** is active throughout New England as an organist, accompanist, and vocalist. He is the music director of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St Mary's Parishes, both located in historic Bristol. Michael is the artistic advisor and composer in residence for Ensemble Altera. He has arranged a number of works for the group, ranging from classics like "Amazing Grace" and "O Holy Night" to modern pop tunes. Michael is a graduate of Rhode Island College, where he studied organ and improvisation with Stephen Martorella. He received a Master of Music degree from Boston University, studying organ and continuo with Peter Sykes. He maintains a private voice studio in Rhode Island.



Mr. **Ian Gabriel Torres Corpuz** is a licensed Professional Teacher, Choral Conductor, Composer, Music Educator, and Chorister. He holds a bachelor's degree in Music Education and Choral Conducting and a Master of Arts in Music Education specializing in Music Composition at the Centro Escolar University-Conservatory of Music. Professionally, he works as a full-time faculty member at the Centro Escolar University Conservatory of Music, the Philippine Women's University School of Music, and the De La-Salle College of Saint Benilde Music Production. His influence extends beyond the classroom as a published composer under the Muziksea, a Singapore-based publishing company that champions Southeast Asian composers.



As part of his commitment and service in the Philippine choral community, he serves as the Secretary General of the Treble Choir Association of the Philippines (TCAP), founded by Dr. Maria Theresa Vizconde-Roldan and Prof. Jude B. Roldan. Furthermore, he has won various prestigious composition awards and recognitions on both national and international levels.

*a note of*  
**T H A N K S**

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**D O N ' T M I S S A N O T E**

**[WWW.ENSEMBLEALTERA.COM/SUBSCRIBE](http://WWW.ENSEMBLEALTERA.COM/SUBSCRIBE)**



# All creatures of our God and King

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Text based upon Psalm 148

arr. Michael Garrepy

verse 4

Let all things their Cre-a-tor bless, and wor-ship Him in hum-ble-ness; O\_\_

5  
praise Him! Al-le - lu - ia! Praise, praise the Fa-ther, praise the Son, and

9  
praise the Spi-rit, Three in One; O\_\_ praise Him, O\_\_ praise Him! Al - le -

13  
lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff in a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It consists of four lines of music. The first line is labeled 'verse 4' and contains measures 1-4. The second line starts at measure 5 and contains measures 5-8. The third line starts at measure 9 and contains measures 9-12. The fourth line starts at measure 13 and contains measures 13-16. The lyrics are placed below the notes, with some words under multiple notes. The piece ends with a double bar line at the end of the fourth line.

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