

Genesee CHORALE

Laud to the Nativity



Friday, December 13, 2019

7:00 PM

Grace Baptist Church
Batavia, NY

Sunday, December 15, 2019

4:00 PM

The Grove UMC
Medina, NY

Program

**Lauda per la Natività del Signore
(Laud to the Nativity)**

Ottorino Respighi

*Mary Wojciechowski, Soprano
Mariami Bekauri, Mezzo-Soprano
John Clayton, Tenor*

~ Brief Intermission ~

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

arr. Dan Forrest

Doug Hanson & Howard Spindler, Pianists

Gesù Bambino (The Infant Jesus)

Pietro A. Yon

Jennifer Neroni-Trupo, Soloist

Rise Up, Shepherd

arr. Philip Kern

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

Craig Courtney

Silent Night

arr. Dan Forrest

Angels We Have Heard On High

arr. Peter Anglea

Lauda per la Natività del Signore

Lauda per la Natività del Signore (Laud to the Nativity) — Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936) was an Italian composer and conductor born in Bologna, Italy. He began his musical career in 1900 as principal violist with the Russian Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg, where he studied with Rimsky-Korsakov – who was musically famous, among other things, for his treatise on orchestration. Respighi's most famous works include his orchestral tone poems: *Pines of Rome* and *Fountains of Rome*. He was also a devoted scholar of 16th, 17th, and 18th century Italian music and published editions of works by Monteverdi and Vivaldi. His seldom-heard *Laud to the Nativity*, for soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor soloists and mixed choir, is a pastoral cantata published in 1930 that reflects his affinity for early Italian music. Its simplistic charm utilizes Respighi's unique orchestral color and subtle harmonic nuance characteristic of early 20th century Italian music. The soaring musical lines celebrate Jesus' birth and Mary's infinite wonder as she beholds her Holy Child. *Laud to the Nativity* is exceptional for its complicated rhythms and vocal harmonies interspersed with simple medieval choral tableaux. The Genesee Chorale is singing the English translation of *Lauda per la Natività del Signore* (*Laud to the Nativity*) below, which is an interpretation of the original Italian text.

The Angel (to the Shepherds) — Fear not, ye shepherds abiding here on the hillsides of Judea's regions, Lo, I bring you a tiding: Joy to mankind, chanted by angel legions. Born in the city of David to a virgin is the Savior the Anointed, Christ Jesus, whom God appointed to come from heaven, from heaven that ye might be saved.

Chorus (Angels) — And this Child, pure and holy, sent by the Lord against evil to battle, lies in a stable lowly within a manger, among the sheep and the cattle. To shield Him from the breezes, Mary in bands of linen gently bound Him; His blanket, the hay

around Him. Thus art Thou come down to earth, blessed Jesus.

The Angel and Chorus — Fear not, ye shepherds abiding here on the hillsides of Judea's regions, Lo, I bring you a tidings: Joy to mankind, sung by the angel host.

(Chorus) — And this Child, pure and holy, sent by the Father, lies in a stable within a manger bed lowly.

The Shepherd (to the Angels) — O Lord, Thou hast descended to earth from heaven, angels sang in chorus. Thou must be sore offended to lie thus in a stable rude before us. Poor is the preparation which we have made to welcome thine incarnation.

Chorus (Shepherds at the manger) — Ah, how rude is the stable where fast asleep the infant Lord we discover! His mother was not able to find a bed, nor a blanket Him to cover. Here Joseph also lies asleeping, too old and weary for to aid the mother. Thus she alone is keeping watch over the babe, fairer than any other.

The Shepherd — O Lord, Thou hast descended to earth from heaven, angels sang in chorus. Thou must be sore offended to lie thus in a stable rude before us.

Mary — My child, sweet is your slumber. Though Thou must lie poor here in a manger, bright angels without number hover around Thee, guarding Thee from danger. My son, with what affection I gaze upon Thee! Filled with awe on Thy birth I ponder! Beholding Thy perfection, I am removed far from poverty and sadness. My heart is filled with gladness, for joy far greater than my joy maternal comes from Thee, Child of Wonder!

Chorus (Shepherds at the manger) — O fountain of joy eternal, lying upon the hay here we behold Thee, here we behold Thee.

Mary — How blest am I who bore Thee! Alas, how poor the arms which now enfold Thee!

Chorus (Shepherds at the manger) — Take our cloaks for the

baby.

Mary — As Lord we worship and adore Thee, Thou art descended from on high to save us. Though poorly we now receive Him, though naked He lies in the hay it will not grieve Him, if we only believe on Him, this heavenly infant whom the Father gave us.

Chorus (The Shepherds to Mary) — O Blessed Mary, that sheltered thus He may be. Our flocks unguarded stand, we cannot tarry. Now no longer care we for the cold: we have beheld Him, the Infant Jesus.

Chorus (The Angels) – Praise to Thee, honor unto Thee, Thine be glory, Father in heaven, God Almighty.

Shepherds (Trio) – O Savior, of God begotten and born of a Virgin in humiliation, give light to every nation, that by man Thy birth may never be forgotten.

Chorus (Shepherds at the manger) — Happy would we hasten back to our hillsides and our flocks, could we but touch Him; yet we dare not ask this favor. Unclean shepherds, we are fearful that we might smutch Him. Contented would we hasten back to our hills and flocks, could we but touch Him.

Mary — That you may go rejoicing, men of the fields, draw nearer and kneel before Him. Touch Him and adore Him. Thus blest by Him, go forth, your praises voicing.

Chorus (Shepherds at the manger) — Glory, praise and honor and glory to Thee. Glory, praise and honor to Thee, Father on high, Thou God Almighty. Glory to God in the highest! And on earth peace among all men of good will.

Chorus (The Shepherds with The Angel and Mary) — To save the world from evil thou came in pity, to save the world from sin Thou came in pity, it was not Thy duty, O Child of heavenly beauty. Laud we Thy name, extol Thee, Lord of all majesty, Father

everlasting. Glory be unto God in heaven. Peace on earth, good will toward men of good will. Amen.

Angel (with Chorus and Mary) — Glory be unto God in heaven. For born is the promised Messiah!

Mary (with Chorus and Angel) — Upon me God bestowed His favor, and I shall cease to laud and praise Him never. I bore to men a Savior Who shall be King of earth and heaven for ever. I bow in humble devotion o'er the child Who has come to save us from error. No rose was ever fairer... His beauty fills my soul with pure emotion. My thoughts I cannot capture...my spirit lifts in rapture...it soars ever higher.

Instrumentalists

Flute

Fran Woodworth

Pamela Wentworth

Oboe

Shannon Prescott

English Horn

Meagan Prewitt

Bassoon

Jeanette Sheliga

Ruth Warner

Piano

Doug Hanson

Howard Spindler

Mary Wojciechowski

As a versatile performer, Mary has had experience in musical theater, opera, jazz, and classical voice. She has produced and starred two jazz concerts: "The Songs of Fred Astaire," a concert that told the life of Fred Astaire, and "Jazz and Desserts," a concert sponsored by local bakeries. Mary has been featured with the Brockport Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Allentoff, performing original arrangements and world premiere compositions by the conductor. She has also performed with the Brighton Symphony Orchestra and the Rococo Project. She has performed with Gateswingers Big Band and the Rochester Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra and has performed at such venues as Rochester's Downstairs Cabaret Theater, Wegman's Concert Series at the Charlotte Gazebo, the Stardust Ballroom, and the MuCCC Theater. On the stage, she's performed such roles as Adele in *Die Feldermaus*, Sister Angelica in *Sister Angelica*, and the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*.



Mariami Bekauri

Mezzo-soprano Mariami Bekauri has been praised for her “warm” and “handsome” tone. This November, she made her debut in the titular role of Rossini’s *La Cenerentola* with Buffalo Opera Unlimited. In December she will appear as the mezzo-soprano soloist with the BPO for their Holiday Concerts at Hilbert College and the M&T Gold Dome.



Her recent roles include Barbarina and Marcellina (*The Marriage of Figaro*), and Berta (*The Barber of Seville*) with Geneva Light Opera. Other role highlights include the Second Lady (*The Magic Flute*), Cecilia March (*Little Women*), Mrs. Nolan (*The Medium*), Maria (*Maria de Buenos Aires*), and Mad Margaret (*Ruddigore*). Her solo credits include Vivaldi’s *Gloria*, Salieri *Mass in D major*, Bach *Magnificat*, *BWV 147: Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, *BWV 79: Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Copland’s *In the Beginning*.

Bekauri received her M.M. in Voice Performance from the Fredonia School of Music. She holds an M.S. in materials science engineering from Brown University, and a B.A. in physics and music from Wellesley College. Ms. Bekauri currently teaches in the Music Department at Buffalo State College, at Houghton College Buffalo, and the Fredonia School of Music.

John Clayton

Tenor John Clayton is making his mark in the realm of classical music throughout Western New York and around the country. He has been described as a gallant singer with the ability to “put the audience in standstill” (New Brunswick Herald) and “One of Buffalo’s top vocalists” by the Buffalo Philharmonic orchestra. John is known for bringing unique and dynamic interpretations to roles as a *leggiero* tenor.



John is a recognizable face on the Buffalo stage, having appeared in over a dozen operas with Nickel City Opera, Opera Sacra, and Buffalo Opera Unlimited. Most recently in Buffalo Opera Unlimited’s production of Rossini’s *Cinderella* and as a featured ‘All-Star’ in Nickel City Opera’s All Star Concert at Buffalo’s historic Saturn Club. In addition to opera John often appears as a recitalist or concert soloist with various choruses for works such as Handel’s *Messiah* and Orff’s *Carmina Burana*. He enjoys presenting music in fun, non-traditional ways as well like the sold out ‘Echoes of Opera’ recital series with Metropolitan bass Valerian Ruminski, which uses the acoustics of an abandoned grain silo as a concert stage.

Mr. Clayton made his Italian debut in 2016 as Don Ottavio in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* and as the tenor soloist for Rossini’s *Stabat Mater* under maestro Romolo Gessi. Mr. Clayton also participated in master classes with Paolo Bellocci of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in Florence.

John is planning a series of solo recitals in 2020 featuring a range of musical styles and will be featured in concerts as part of opera week celebrations and opera Galas. He will also appear as a soloist for the fourth installment of the Masterworks a la carte series, featuring several of Bach’s most beloved Cantatas.

The Genesee Chorale

Ric Jones, Music Director
Doug Hanson, Accompanist

Soprano

Jessica Brandt
Dorothy Carrigan
Marsha Coy*
Phyllis Draycott
Syd Dziewa
Joan Ellison
Janine Fagnan*
Merry Lou Holley+
Janus Mary Jones
Joanne Kachelmeyer
Sharon Larsen*
Heather Lovelace
Veronica Michels
Dialne Ohlson
Barbara Pierce
Pamm Seifert
Rachel Sovocool*
Sharon Stanley
Monica Stocum
Peggy Thomas*

Bass

Mark Christensen+
Jim Ellison*
Charles Gould
George Graham
Chuck Herman
Richard Heye
Robert Holley
Harold Long
Darrel Oakes
R. Francis Thomas*
Dan Warner*

Alto

Cecelia Allchin
Marie Barcomb
Patti Bartz
Jessica Beal
Jane Chirstensen
Odiha Coffta
Deborah Davis
Patty Drew+
Lindsay Edwards*
Linda Fry
Marianne Garigen
Julie Graham
Nancy Hoag
Karen Jones
Elizabeth Kerwin
Amanda Konopa
Vicki Long
Bonnie Madden
Regina Marker
Kathy Meloon
Jennifer Neroni-Trupo
Amy Perl
Cathryn Preston*
Laura Schoonover
Anne Stevens
Ginny Tiede
Lilo Townsend

Tenor

Alan Barcomb+
Beth Boyce
Carl Schoonover
Deborah Starr
Eric Zwieg

+ Section leader

*Genesee Chorale Board Member

With Gratitude

Go ART!

For your continual support of The Genesee Chorale and all culture in Genesee and Orleans counties. Without your support our 48 years of bringing choral music to Batavia and surrounding communities would not be possible.

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For generously allowing us to perform in your beautiful church.

THE GROVE UMC

For your generosity in allowing us to perform in your wonderful church.

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

We are proud to call St. James Episcopal Church our h o m e .
Thank you for your generosity, patience, and hospitality.

THE GENESEE CHORALE BOARD MEMBERS

For their time commitments and incredible dedication to our organization.

PAUL MELOON

Thank you for your handling all of our sound, lighting and set-up needs.

BONNIE SUTCH

For all of your help in making our performance at The Grove a possibility.

OUR RISER CREW

Joe Nugent & Noah Pencille

DOUG HANSON

For all your efforts and assistance to prepare for this season's performances.

JANINE FAGNAN & MERRY LOU HOLLEY

Thank you for all of your extra efforts in running sectionals.

go Art!

This program is made possible with funds from the Decentralization Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council of the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and administered by the Genesee-Orleans Regional Arts Council.