

Una
Voce
chamber choir

“Through The Long Night”

Directed by Virgil Bozeman IV

Saturday, January 19 (7:30pm)

Sunday, January 27 (2:30pm)

Bowdoin College Chapel

unavocechamberchoir.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Choral Enthusiast:
Welcome Everyone to the first concert of Una Voce's inaugural season!

It's hard to believe that just a few short months ago Shannon Chase, the founding Artistic Director of Vox Nova Chamber Choir, announced she would step down as the leader of Vox Nova to pursue other interests. Virgil Bozeman, as a singer in the group and as a choral director for schools and community groups, saw a chance to maintain a high level choir in coastal Maine. He sensed an esprit de corps within the group that could carry the program forward so he reached out to a group of friends to explore the idea of continuing the chorus. This group decided to form a not for profit with Virg as incorporator and Artistic Director and Una Voce was born. It's hard to believe Una Voce went from idea to first rehearsal in just six weeks!



The new Board and Director wanted to continue the tradition of fine choral music established by Vox Nova and to add an educational and outreach piece so that more people in Maine could discover the pleasure of a finely tuned choral ensemble.

As a result the mission of Una Voce reflects this desire. Perhaps the education piece should not be surprising given so many of the singers are teachers themselves!

So I encourage you to follow and to support Una Voce as our plan develops. I expect exciting times to come! Until then please enjoy *Through the Long Night* and I hope to see you for many years to come!

Scott B. Miller
Board President, UVCC

MISSION STATEMENT

"UNA VOCE CHAMBER CHOIR is an auditioned chamber choir in mid coast Maine that promotes contemporary choral music by composers from various regions and cultures, including Maine. The Choir offers live concerts in southern and mid coast Maine, reaches underserved areas of the State through audio and visual technology, and provides educational programs to Maine's secondary schools and colleges."

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PROGRAM ORDER

- De Profundis (1980) Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)
Tenors and Basses
Jay Zoller, Organ
- Evening Sonata (2013) Thomas Åberg (b. 1952)
Jay Zoller, Organ
- Missa a cappella (2011) Einojuhani Rautavaara (1928-2016)
Kyrie
Gloria
Credo
Sanctus
Benedictus
Agnus Dei
Jennifer Caton, Erika Leighton, Hilary Shende, Caroline Koelker - Soprano solos
Karen Topp - Alto solo
Drew Albert, Robert Haines - Tenor solos
Dan Pendergast, Sheldon Bird, Ryan Newell - Bass solos

~ *Intermission* ~

- Sleep Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)
- Sure on this Shining Night Morton Lauridsen (b. 1950)
- Ballade to the Moon Daniel Elder (b. 1986)
Drew Albert, conductor
- White Horses Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947)
- Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda, 3rd Set (op. 26) Gustav Holst (1874-1934)
Hymn to the Dawn
Hymn to the Waters
Hymn to Vena
Hymn to the Travellers
Sopranos and Altos
- My Lord, What a Morning Traditional Spiritual
arr. Harry T. Burleigh (1866-1949)
- Lord, If I Got My Ticket, Can I Ride? Traditional Spiritual
arr. Robert Shaw (1916-1999)
Tenors and Basses
- My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord Traditional Spiritual
arr. Moses Hogan (1957-2003)

2019 UNA VOCE CHAMBER CHOIR

Soprano

Stephanie Bernier
Marsey Caswell
Jennifer Caton
Jeannie Giberson
Caroline Koelker
Erika Leighton
Denise Meiler
Susan Purcell
Julie Richard
Hillary Shende

Alto

Ashley Albert
Claire Berkowitz
Alexis Gillis
Jean Edmondson
Susan Kring
Catherine Newell
Eileen Stirling
Karen Topp
Rachel Turner

Tenor

Drew Albert
Steve Amsden
Nate Bates
Robert Gersh
Robert Haines

Bass

Sheldon Bird
John Gilmour
Jeff Hollowell
Matthew Jones
Aaron Keller
Del Leonard
Burke Long
Ryan Newell
Daniel Pendergast

Virgil Bozeman IV, Artistic Director
Drew Albert, Assistant Director
Kellie Moody, Accompanist

UNA VOCE CHAMBER CHOIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Scott Miller, President
Burke Long, Secretary
Sheldon Bird, Treasurer
Lynn Hannings
Susan Purcell
Caroline Koelker
James Caton



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Website:
www.unavocechamberchoir.org

On Facebook:
[@Una Voce Chamber Choir](https://www.facebook.com/UnaVoceChamberChoir)



MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to Una Voce Chamber Choir's inaugural concert series, *Through the Long Night*. Though this is the first concert for Una Voce, most of the performers you will see on stage this evening have been singing together for nearly a decade, myself included.

Since 2009, many of us were privileged to sing in Vox Nova Chamber Choir, an auditioned ensemble founded and led by Dr. Shannon Marsh Chase. Its vision was to promote the wonderfully varied body of contemporary choral literature through innovative programming and performances of the highest level. Under her direction, Vox Nova brought many of the great modern masterworks to life for audiences throughout Midcoast Maine. Truly, it was a decade of musical experiences and camaraderie that none of us will forget.



When Vox Nova dissolved, we wondered what the next steps in our musical journeys would look like, and whether or not we would share these experiences moving forward. Once you have dedicated yourself to the dynamic present, it is very difficult to imagine returning to the 'chestnuts' of the past, however magnificent they may be. The fact is, we weren't finished making this music together, and we were determined to build a new organization that would allow us to continue our shared mission. Una Voce Chamber Choir is the result of these labors.

I was deeply honored and beyond thrilled to be chosen to lead our new project. I have been singularly focused on recreating as much as is possible the spirit of musical adventure that brought us together in the first place. Though I sorely miss singing with our group, I am doubly rewarded to be leading such a fine, skilled and dedicated collective of musicians (and friends, old and new). I know that I speak for our singers and our Board of Directors when I express my gratitude to you for joining us tonight and at future performances. You make what we love to do possible, and we look forward with anticipation and excitement to the continued challenge of shaping the choral landscape in our beautiful State.

All Best,
Virgil Bozeman
Artistic Director

SELECTED PROGRAM NOTES

Like great composers before him who lived and worked in the Soviet era, Arvo Pärt (b. 1935) encountered great difficulty in the search for his individual voice. Access to newer compositional techniques was limited throughout the Eastern Bloc, and criticism carried with it the full weight of State sanction. However, Estonian-born Pärt managed to experiment with serial and collage techniques early in his career. He would soon jettison these methods for prolonged periods of contemplation, and in the 1970s, he uncovered a technique which he named *tintinnabuli* (Latin: little bells). In mystic fashion, he describes *tintinnabuli* as “the rule where the melody and the accompanying voice...is one. One and one, it is one - it is not two. This is the secret of this technique.”

In essence, *tintinnabuli*, combines one or more voices that move stepwise between pitches of the tonic triad, whilst one or more voices move only within the tonic triad itself. Pärt's exquisite setting of Psalm 130 (129 in the Vulgate), *De Profundis*, is a striking example. Scored for 4-part male chorus, organ and optional percussion, it begins quietly, with basses intoning the main melodic material at the very bottom of the vocal register, while the organ starts the bell-like *tintinnabulation*. Pärt introduces each part individually, then combines them (first in twos, then threes) in a quasi-factorial fashion, exploiting almost every possible pairing. This additive process, combined with gradually increasing dynamics, creates a tremendous musical tension that is finally unleashed when all four voices are heard together for the first time at *Quia apud Dominum misericordia: et copiosa apud eum redemptio*. (‘for with the Lord, there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption’). At this promise, unleashed energy gradually recedes, and the voices subside to await its fulfillment.

Unlike his Baltic contemporary, Einojuhani Rautavaara (1928-2014) suffered neither State sanction nor lack of access to contemporary currents in Western art music. When Jean Sibelius hand-picked him to attend the Juilliard School in 1955, Rautavaara became heir to the Finnish compositional tradition. He worked within the dominant compositional trends of the mid-20th century, but like Pärt, found neo-classicism and serialism to be unsatisfying. Raised in the Lutheran Church, and inspired by the church's vocal music, Rautavaara nonetheless was deeply attracted to the sights and sounds of the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions. He considered Finland to be at the crossroads of all three traditions.

It is therefore not surprising that Rautavaara began work on *Missa a cappella* (he composed the central *Credo* in 1972) around the same time that he composed his monumental *Vigilia* for the Finnish Orthodox Church. He would not complete his a

cappella Mass for nearly four decades, when he finally received a commission to do so. Given its nearly forty year gestation, *Missa a cappella* is a masterpiece of construction. He introduces melodic, harmonic and textural themes that reappear, intact or transformed, in later movements. Rautavaara creates a largely tonal and homorhythmic yet pleasantly dissonant work by coloring harmonic progression with melodic material built on hybrid modal structures, as well as with 'sound fields', a term Rautavaara used to describe tone clusters.

Thomas Åberg (b. 1952) is a Swedish organist and composer living in Stockholm. Inspired by the long summer nights in his native city, Åberg created the atmospheric *Evening Sonata*. The music evokes a waning Stockholm evening: subdued activities, beautiful sunset, murmuring sounds of a quiet harbor, and church bells. As midnight arrives, a church bell strikes twelve times, and the tones gradually fade away with the last of the harbor lights.

Born in Cheltenham, England to a musical family, Gustav Holst (1874-1934) began his musical journey inauspiciously. His father needed to borrow one hundred pounds to send Gustav to the Royal Academy of Music. When it looked as if finances would make his stay a brief one, he won a composition contest and scholarship to continue his studies with the noted composer, Charles Villiers Stanford. A year later, Holst was offered a position as trombonist and rehearsal accompanist for a touring opera company. He left the academy behind, and shortly thereafter he began a long and highly regarded career as a music educator and choir director. All the while, he composed, searching for an idiom that suited his musical ideas and absorbing influences as diverse as Wagner, Gilbert & Sullivan, English folk song and Vedic Sanskrit texts.

Widely considered his first mature works, Gustav Holst's *Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda*, Op. 26 were composed in four sets between 1908 and 1912. Because he found no translations suitable for choral rendition, Holst studied enough Sanskrit to translate the Vedic hymns himself. At the time, many composers were enthralled by the exotic sounds of Indian music. However, Holst was more attracted to the mystical ideas in the texts themselves. Except for a few references to musical scales, and occasional mixed meter and additive rhythms, Holst's *Choral Hymns*, make no attempt at sounding 'Indian'. Rather, they point to Holst's emerging compositional language - harmonic vocabulary drawn from the late-romantic and impressionist schools, and vocal writing more focused on accurate declamation than on lyricism.

In today's concert, *Una Voce* performs the third set from Holst's *Choral Hymns*, scored for women's chorus accompanied by harp or piano. Holst presents each of the four hymns in a simple and elegant formal design.

Next Concert

June 15-16, 2019

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

Yarmouth, Maine

Interested in joining Una Voce?

The choir holds rolling auditions throughout the year - visit unavocechamberchoir.org and click on "About the Choir" for more information.

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