



SPACIOUS VISION Song Project

presents

SONGS FOR THE NATIVITY

**St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Glendale, California**

Dec. 20, 2015

E. SCOTT LEVIN, bass-baritone

ARIEL PISTURINO, soprano

GERALD SEMINATORE, tenor

RON BARNETT, piano / organ

TARO WAYAMA, guitar

SELECTIONS

Johann Michael Bach In dulci jubilo *Ron*

Johann Sebastian Bach Ermuntre dich *Scott*
O Jesulein süß *Ariel*
Ihr Gestirn *Gerald*
Quia fecit (*Magnificat*) *Scott*

Thomas Mawdyke Coventry Carol (1591) *Ensemble*

Peter Warlock Balulalow *Gerald*

Lloyd Pfautsch Lute Book Lullaby *Ariel*

David Willcocks The Infant King *Scott*

Max Reger Mariä Wiegenlied *Gerald*

Michael Head Madonna's Slumber Song *Ariel*

Gaspar Sanz Canarios *Taro*

John Jacob Niles What Songs Were Sung *Gerald*
I Wonder As I Wander *Ariel*

Ralph Vaughn Williams The Oxen (*Hodie*) *Gerald*

Benjamin Britten A New Year Carol *Ariel, Scott*
The Birds *Gerald*

PAUSE

Joaquín Rodrigo

Pastorcito Santo
Coplillas de Belén

Gerald, Taro

Alfred Burt

This is Christmas
Some Children See Him
O, Hearken Ye

Ariel
Scott
Gerald, Taro

Cancionero de Uppsala

Riú riú chiu

Ensemble

Trad. Ecuador

A la nanita nana

Ensemble

Trad. Puerto Rico

Alegría, alegría

Ensemble

SING ALONG Lyric sheets will be distributed



ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

J.S. BACH

Ermuntre dich

*Take courage, my weak spirit
And endure great desire
Joyfully to embrace
A little child who is called Father!
This is the night in which he came
And took on human form
So that he might take the world
Faithfully as his bride.*

*Let praise, Lord Jesus,
Be sung to you by me
You have become my brother;
Help me value your goodness
Always in this time of grace
And so that I may in heaven
Praise you for eternity.*

O Jesulein süß

*O Jesu sweet, o Jesu mild!
You have fulfilled
Your Father's will, and have
Come down out of heaven
In the form of us poor men.*

*O Jesu sweet, o Jesu mild!
With joy you fill the world.
You are here with us on earth,
To console us in our suffering.*

Quia fecit mihi magna

*For the Mighty One
Has done great things for me.
Holy is His Name!*

Ihr Gestirn

*You stars, and planets, and
high spaces, and the brilliant
firmament, and the deep
depths, and dark ravines that
divide the sounds of thunder:
Rejoice gladly, and let your
Songs pierce the clouds!*

*Welcome, ruler of the Earth,
young Jesus!
Because we wanted to be our
own masters,
You come to us as a little boy.
You leave your high throne,
and want to live among us!*

MAX REGER

Mary's Cradle Song

*Mary sits in the rose garden,
And rocks her child Jesus.
Through the leaves,
A warm summer wind blows.*

*At her feet, a colorful bird
sings: "Sweet child, go to sleep!
Lovely is your smile,
Lovely is your joy in slumber,
Lay your tired little head
Against your mother's breast!"*

JOAQUÍN RODRIGO

Holy Shepherd Boy

Blessed shepherd boy,
Son of the dawn, where are you
Going in such cold
So early in the morning?

Since you are the morning star
You are the first to appear;
Shepherd and lamb, without hut
Or fleece, where are you going
So early in the morning?

With pearls in your eyes
And laughter on your lips,
Why must you,
Blessed little shepherd,
Rise so early?

You go forth disguised
As if to seek our souls.
Where are you going
So early in the morning?

Carols of Bethlehem

If the palm tree knew that
A star had fallen from heaven
To light a child sleeping
In a stable, it would offer
Its green leaves to fan
The baby in its cradle.

The Virgin prays and sings,
And the baby smiles sweetly.
How sorrowful the palm tree
Would be, if it knew what was
Yet to come.

Cancionero de Uppsala

Riú, riú chiu

(Chorus)

Riu, riu, chiu (a kingfisher call)
The river guards them /
God has kept the wolf away
from our lamb (the Infant).

(Verses)

The rabid wolf (the Devil)
wanted to bite her (Mary) /
But Almighty God knew
how to defend her /
He made her free from sin /
Even original sin
the Virgin did not have.

The One who is born
is the Grand Monarch /
Christ our Lord
dressed in human flesh /
He has redeemed us
by making Himself small /
Although He is infinite,
He made Himself mortal.

Many prophets foretold
that He would come /
In our time, we know it is true /
We behold God made flesh /
Man now ascends to Heaven.

A thousand angels wing above,
singing songs of praise /
Glory to God in the highest,
Peace on Earth, Jesus is born!

Trad. Ecuador

A la nanita nana

Lullaby, lulla, aye-ya!

My Jesus is sleepy,
May He be blessed!

Little spring that flows,
Clear and resonant,
The nightingale singing
In the forest weeps;
Hush while the
Cradle is rocking,
Lullaby, lulla, aye-ya!

Translations:
Gerald Seminatore

Logo / cover illustration:
The Wanderer Above The Mists
Caspar David Friederich
(Germany)

Promotional card illustration:
Announcement to the Shepherds
Henri Rivière
(France)

Trad. Puerto Rico

Alegría, alegría

(Verse 1)

Mary and her loving husband
Are on the road to Bethlehem.
They have in their company
An almighty God.

(Chorus)

Joy, joy and pleasure!
Mary and Joseph are passing
On the way to Bethlehem.

(Verses 2, 3)

Upon reaching Bethlehem,
They asked for lodging.
Nobody wanted to oblige
Because they were so poor.

Upon seeing them pass by,
The little birds of the woods
Sang melodies to them
With harmonious chirping.

MUSIC NOTES

The music of **Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685-1750) is revered by musicians and listeners around the world. As a devout Lutheran and church musician, Bach wrote many short songs for use in teaching and religious education. For publisher Georg Christian Schmelli's 1736 "Musical Songbook," Bach used pre-existing Lutheran chorale melodies and devotional poetry to create some sixty songs in the *basso continuo* style. (Three are featured on this program.) Bach's musical setting of the *Magnificat* (Canticle of Mary) is represented by the jaunty aria "Quia fecit mihi magna" (The Lord has done great things for me).

Though listed in the catalog of his famous nephew, the organ prelude "In dulci júbilo" (In sweet rejoicing) is by the elder **Johann Michael Bach** (1648-94).

Benjamin Britten (1913-76) is one of the central figures of British classical music. "The Birds" is a setting of a poem by Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953), and was dedicated by the then sixteen-year-old composer to his mother. "A New Year Carol" is derived from the Welsh folk song "Levy-Dew," with words from Walter de la Mare's *Tom Tiddler's Ground* (1931). The poem relates a New Year's Day custom of sprinkling doorways and people with water newly drawn from a well.

Alfred Burt (1920-54) is remembered for the fifteen Christmas carols he composed between 1942 and 1954. The practice of including an original carol in the family's annual holiday card had begun with his father, and Alfred continued that tradition. Burt was an officer in the United States Army, and later lived in New York City, where he worked as a jazz trumpeter, arranger, and teacher. After a diagnosis of terminal cancer he moved to California, and friends there introduced his carols to audiences and record producers. Within a few years, artists such as Fred Waring and Nat King Cole were performing Burt's carols in concert.

The "**Coventry Carol**" dates from 16th century England. The text relates the Biblical story of the Slaughter of the Innocents, in which King Herod ordered all the male infants in Bethlehem to be killed. The first printed version of this carol (1591) is for three voices, and is evocative of the period.

Michael Head (1900-76) was a British composer, pianist, organist, and singer. His compositional efforts were concentrated primarily in the art song genre, although he also composed choral and instrumental works. "Slumber Song for the Madonna" is a setting of a poem by Alfred Noyes.

John Jacob Niles (1892-1980) was an American composer and singer. He was an ardent collector of tunes from America's oral folk music traditions, particularly throughout the South. "I Wonder as I Wander" is a traditional Appalachian folk song, while the words and music of "What Songs Were Sung" are original.

Lloyd Pfautsch (1921-2003) was an American composer and a longtime Professor of Sacred Music at Southern Methodist University. The poem of "Lute Book Lullaby" is from the *William Ballet's Lute Book* (England, 17th Century).

German organist and composer **Max Reger** (1873-1916) based "Mariä Wiegenlied" (Mary's Lullaby) on the traditional folk tune "Josef lieber, Josef mein" (My dear, beloved Joseph). The poem is by Martin Boelitz (1874-1918).

The term *villancico* embraces many types of Spanish-language Christmas songs. The well-known "Riu riu chiu" is from the collection *Cancionero de Uppsala: Villancicos de diverso autores*, published in 1556. **Joaquín Rodrigo** (1901-99) composed several villancicos, including "Pastoricito Santo" (Holy Shepherd Boy) to a poem of Lope de Vega (1562-1635), and "Coplillas de Belén" (Carols of Bethlehem), to a poem by his wife Victoria Kamhi Rodrigo (1905-97). "A la nanita nana" (Infant Lullaby) and "Alegría" (Joy) are traditional villancicos known throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

Gaspar Sanz (1640–1710) was a Spanish composer, guitarist, and Catholic priest. He wrote three volumes of works for guitar. Sanz's compositions are fundamental to understanding guitar technique and style in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The cantata *Hodie* ("This Day") of **Ralph Vaughn Williams** (1872-1958) is a large work for soloists, treble and adult choirs, and orchestra. Its texts are taken from the Gospel of St. Luke, George Herbert, John Milton, and others. "The Oxen" is a poem by Thomas Hardy (1840-1928).

Peter Warlock was the professional pseudonym of **Philip Heseltine** (1894-1930), an Anglo-Welsh composer and music critic. His surviving body of work includes some 150 songs, several choral pieces, and a few instrumental works. The words of "Balulalow" are excerpted from a traditional Scottish lullaby.

David Willcocks, CBE (1919-2015) became internationally known during his long tenure as Director of Music at King's College, Cambridge. "The Infant King" is a concert setting of a traditional Basque carol.

THE ARTISTS

(alphabetically)

RON BARNETT is the Director of Music and Sacred Arts at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Glendale, CA. In addition to his work as an organist, choir director, and keyboard artist, Ron is active as a composer. His choral works have been published by GIA and Morning Star Music. His score for *A Christmas Carol* (book by Fulton Barry Kornhauser) premiered at the Fulton Theatre (Lancaster, PA) in 2001. Since its recent commercial publication, the show has enjoyed several productions across the United States. A second show, *Around the World in 80 Days* (book and lyrics by Julianne Homokay) premiered at the Fulton Theatre in 2007. Ron's new show *When Butter Churns to Gold* (book by Peter Welkin, lyrics by Randi Wolfe) had its 2015 premiere at the Northern Sky Theatre (Fish Creek, WI). Ron has also scored some two dozen shows for regional children's theatre, some of which have toured nationally. His orchestrations include the world premiere productions of *Bojangles* (music by Charles Strouse, lyrics by Sammy Cahn), *Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus* (music and lyrics by David Kirshenbaum), and *Treasure Island* (music and lyrics by Marc Robin and Curt Dale Clark). Sound Design credits include the Off-Broadway production of *All Under Heaven* starring Valerie Harper as Pearl S. Buck, and *Zelda and The Last Flapper*, which has played in Romania and Hungary.

Bass-baritone **E. SCOTT LEVIN** began his singing career in St. Louis, where he sang in over twenty productions with Union Avenue Opera. He completed graduate studies at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. Since moving to Los Angeles, Scott has performed regularly with the Pacific Opera Project, and also appeared with Long Beach Opera, Opera Santa Barbara, Celestial Opera, Center Stage Opera, and the Redlands Opera Theater. In 2015 he made his debut as the Sacristan in *Tosca* with the Townsend/Fresno Opera, and his Los Angeles Opera "Off-Grand" debut as Babayan (Bartolo) in *Figaro 90210*. He also made his Los Angeles Opera main stage debut as Spinelloccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, directed by Woody Allen. Scott is a co-founder of the Chamber Opera Players of Los Angeles.

Soprano **ARIEL PISTURINO** completed her graduate studies at the University of Southern California. She has since performed with the Long Beach Opera and other regional opera companies, in roles from *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Nixon in China*, and *The Magic Flute*. In 2015, Ariel appeared in the nationally acclaimed operatic event *Hopscotch* with the Los Angeles-based company The Industry. Upcoming roles include Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* with the Redlands Opera Theater. Ariel is a co-founder of the Chamber Opera Players of Los Angeles, and a frequent collaborator in performances of new works. She was a featured singer on the Delos Records "Terrain of the Heart" by Mark Abel, released in 2014.

Tenor **GERALD SEMINATORE** began his musical career in professional ensembles including the Handel and Haydn Society, the Boston Early Music Festival, and Emmanuel Music. He went on to complete graduate studies at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Operatic engagements in the USA have included principle and comprimario roles with the Chautauqua, Dayton, Glimmerglass, Oakland, Santa Fe, and West Bay opera companies. He made his European debut at England's Aldeburgh Festival, and then went on to become a member of the solo ensemble at the Dortmund Opera in Germany, where he appeared in over 100 performances. Gerald was also a frequent guest artist at the Frankfurt am Main Opera, the Rheinland/Pfalz Theater in Kaiserslautern, and the Bremen Opera. His concert performances have included appearances with many orchestras and choral ensembles. Gerald's singing has recognized with numerous awards, and praised in publications such as the London Times, Opera News, and San Francisco Classical Voice. He has been a faculty member at several colleges and universities as a teacher of voice, performance techniques, and acting for singers. Gerald is the founder and director of the Spacious Vision Song Project.

TARO WAYAMA is a Japanese born guitarist and composer. He was the First Prize winner in the 2003 Aron Green/American String Teachers Association Guitar Competition, and the Second Prize winner in the Thailand International Guitar Competition. As a composer, Taro received the award for "Best Original Score" at the Los Angeles Movie Awards for the independent film *Anne Jennings*. He is active as a soloist, chamber musician, and teacher, and has performed in Japan, Thailand, Canada, and the USA. Taro completed both his graduate and undergraduate degrees at the University of Southern California, where his teachers included Pepe Romero and Scott Tennant.

THANK YOU

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St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Glendale
Taso Papadakis Photography
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The **SPACIOUS VISION Song Project** is an unincorporated association of performers creating vibrant performances of art song and vocal chamber music for diverse audiences.
(Director: Gerald Seminatore, DMA)

Associates from previous Spacious Vision programs

Bernardo Bermudez, baritone
Diana Burbano, actor
Pamela Dellal, mezzo-soprano
Arnold Livingston Geis, tenor
Bianca Hall, soprano
Kristof Van Grysperre, piano
Susan Mohini Kane, soprano
Barbara Kilduff, soprano
Jonathan Mack, tenor

Katie Elizabeth Martin, soprano
Brian Moll, piano
Anthony Moreno, baritone
Ariel Pisturino, soprano
Christopher Reed, piano
Mark Salters, piano
John Seesholtz, baritone
Gerald Seminatore, tenor
Taro Wayama, guitar

Inquiries regarding artistic, financial, and volunteer support for our work are most welcome!

Our next program

(Performers to be announced)

Tōhoku Earthquake Commemorative Concert
March 13, 2016
Centenary United Methodist Church of Little Tokyo
300 S. Central Ave, Los Angeles 90013

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