



GEORG FRIEDRICH HANDEL  
**Israel in Egypt**



**FRIDAY, MAY 12, 2023**

**8:00 P.M.**

**SANDERS THEATRE, CAMBRIDGE**





Philippe L'Esperance, tenor, is replacing Benjamin Maines in tonight's performance.

Tenor **Philippe L'Esperance**, New England Regional finalist and Boston District Winner of the 2021–2022 The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, is a recent graduate of The New England Conservatory, where he received his Artist Diploma in Opera. He is also recently awarded an Emerging Artist Award from the Opera Index. As a first-year apprentice at The Santa Fe Opera, L'Esperance will be covered the role of Marc in *M. Butterfly*.



He will be returning to Santa Fe Opera this summer to cover the role of the First Shepherd in *Orfeo* by Monteverdi. Recent projects include Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* (New England Conservatory), Alessandro in *Il Re Pastore* (New England Conservatory), scenes from *La Cenerentola* and *Die Fledermaus* in Back Home Through the Stage Door: A Virtual Project (Merola Opera Program), and Lucano in *The Coronation of Poppea* (Opera Theatre of Saint Louis).

On the concert and recital stage, L'Esperance performed as the tenor soloist in *Carmina Burana* (New England Conservatory), tenor soloist in *A Serenade to Music* (Carnegie Hall), Featured soloist for *Love at the Crossroads* (Caramoor/New York Festival of Song), featured soloist in NYFOS at North Fork (New York Festival of Song), and tenor soloist in *Lélio* (New Jersey Symphony Orchestra). A native from Grafton, Mass., L'Esperance also holds degrees (M.M, P.C) from the Manhattan School of Music and The Hartt School of Music in Hartford, Conn.



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## From the Board President

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This evening's performance of Handel's *Israel in Egypt* closes an exciting 2022–2023 season comprised of concerts led by three talented guest conductors. The Chorale Board thanks Anthony Trecek-King (tonight's conductor), Emily Isaacson (*To the Hands* in March, 2023) and Jonathon Mott (*In Beauty may I Walk* in October, 2022 and *A Boston Christmas* in December, 2022) for their inspirational leadership in preparing and conducting these concerts.

Our Music Director search committee, comprised of four Board members, four Chorale singers, Executive Director Susanne Powers, and chaired by Board member Jim Farmer, has worked diligently to identify four finalist candidates, one of whom will become our next permanent Music Director. The Board thanks this committee for conducting the national search leading to this outcome. Later in this program booklet, Susanne Powers will introduce these four individuals, along with the respective dates when they will conduct the concerts comprising our 2023–24 season. We expect to appoint our new permanent Music Director shortly after our May 2024 concert, which will again occur here in Sanders Theatre.

The Bridges community engagement mission of the Back Bay Chorale continues to thrive under the leadership of community engagement coordinator, Corey Hart. Corey leads a Bridges chorus comprised of approximately 20 students of English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), plus several regular Chorale singers in weekly rehearsals at the main branch of the Boston Public Library. Over the current concert season, the Bridges ESOL Chorus has performed at the annual Boston Public Library Gala, our two Christmas concerts, and two new citizen naturalization ceremonies. In June, they will be performing at Compass on the Bay in South Boston. We continue to seek new venues for Bridges performances.

My final term as president of the Back Bay Chorale Board will end on June 30, 2023. I'm especially grateful for the wonderful collaboration of Lynd Matt, whose term of Board service as our Vice President also ends on June 30. Lynd, who is not a singing member of the Chorale, has given countless hours of his time along with his wise counsel to promote good governance of the Chorale. I'm also especially grateful to another non-singing Board member, Jim Farmer, for chairing our Strategic Plan development and implementation committees, as well as the two search committees that led to the hiring of our first full time Executive Director, Susanne Powers and selected our four finalist Music Director candidates. Thanks to our entire Board, our staff, and our singing members for fulfilling our mission which is to 'share the power of voice, advancing the spirit of community.' Finally, all of us thank you, our loyal audience, for coming to our concerts and for spreading the word about the Back Bay Chorale as we look forward to an exciting 2023–2024 concert season.

Michael Baum



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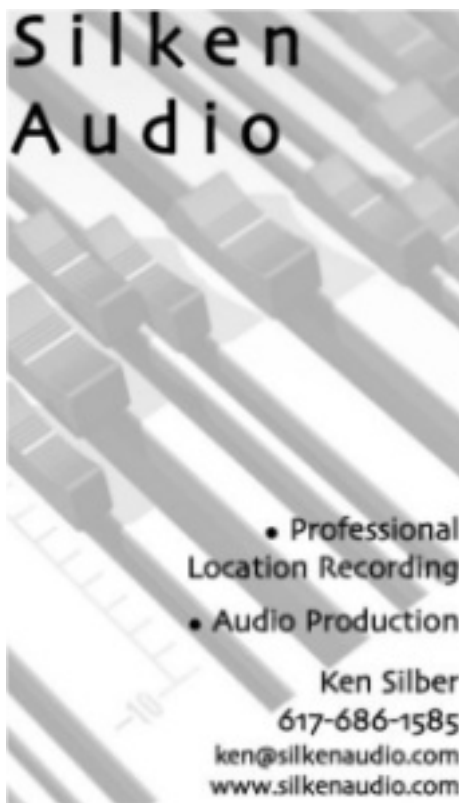
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# From the Executive Director

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Dear esteemed audience,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to our concert today. As the season comes to a close, I want to take a moment to express how incredibly proud I am of the singers, staff, and Board of the Directors of the Back Bay Chorale. Together we have presented a wonderful season of music, filled with terrific concerts that have brought joy and inspiration to our community. Our audiences have been blown away by our performances, and the support and love we've received has been truly heartwarming. We had the great privilege to work with three guest conductors, who made us grow and laugh, and delighted our audiences. It was a season to remember in all the best ways, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Jonathan Mott, Emily Isaacson, and Anthony Trecek-King.

During the last nine months, we have been working hard to identify the best possible candidates to fill the role of music director, and we are pleased to announce that we have narrowed the search down to four highly talented individuals. Each candidate will have the opportunity to spend nine weeks in rehearsal with us, present their creativity through their artistic programming, and work with the singers in weekly rehearsals to craft that special BBC sound. Individually, each finalist brings a unique perspective and approach to music, and we are confident that any of them would be a fantastic addition to our organization. We hope you will be part of this outstanding next season to experience the new ideas and energy that they will bring to our programs.

As we live in a world increasingly shaped by technology and artificial intelligence, it is more important than ever to remember the power of human connection and relationships. Live music has the power to bring people together, creating a shared experience that transcends language, culture, and social barriers. It allows us to connect with others on a deeper level, to feel the energy and emotion of a performance in real time, and to experience the joy and catharsis that only music can provide. Let us continue to support and celebrate live music and its power to remind us of our shared humanity.

On behalf of the Back Bay Chorale, I want to express my deepest gratitude to all of our supporters who have made this season possible—our audience, our generous donors and sponsors, and tireless volunteers. Your continued support helps us to bring world-class choral music to our community, and we are grateful for your generosity.

We hope that you enjoy today's concert and that it inspires you as much as it has inspired us. Thank you for being a part of our choral community, and we look forward to seeing you next season.

Susanne Powers



## Israel in Egypt

Friday, May 12, 2023 • 8:00 p.m.

Sanders Theatre • Cambridge, Massachusetts

### Back Bay Chorale and Orchestra

Jennifer Burks, soprano I

Mara Riley, soprano II

Matthew Shifrin, countertenor

Benjamin Maines, tenor

Yihe Wang, baritone I

Benedict Hensley, baritone II

Anthony Trecek-King *conducting*

Georg Friedrich HANDEL **Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline, HWV 264**  
(1685–1759)

### HANDEL **Israel in Egypt, HWV 54** Part II

1. Recitative (tenor): Now there arose a new King
2. Solo (alto) and Double Chorus: And the children of Israel sighed
3. Recitative (tenor): Then sent he Moses
4. Chorus: They loathed to drink of the river
5. Aria (alto): Their land brought forth frogs
6. Double Chorus: He spake the word
7. Double Chorus: He gave them hailstones
8. Chorus: He sent a thick darkness
9. Chorus: He smote all the first-born of Egypt
10. Chorus: But for his people
11. Chorus: Egypt was glad
12. Double Chorus: He rebuked the Red Sea
13. Chorus: He led them through the deep
14. Chorus: But the waters overwhelmed
15. Double Chorus: And Israel saw that great work
16. Chorus: And believed the Lord

### Part III

17. Double Chorus: Moses and the children of Israel
18. Double Chorus: I will sing unto the Lord
19. Duet (2 sopranos): The Lord is my strength
20. Double Chorus: He is my God
21. Chorus: And I will exalt Him
22. Duet (2 basses): The Lord is a man of war



23. Double Chorus: The depths have covered them
24. Double Chorus: Thy right hand, O Lord
25. Double Chorus: And in the greatness
26. Double Chorus: Thou sentest forth Thy wrath
27. Chorus: And with the blast of Thy nostrils
28. Aria (tenor): The enemy said
29. Aria (soprano): Thou didst blow
30. Double Chorus: Who is like unto Thee
31. Double Chorus: The earth swallow'd them
32. Duet (alto, tenor): Thou in Thy mercy
33. Double Chorus: The people shall hear
34. Aria (alto): Thou shalt bring them in
35. Double Chorus: The Lord shall reign
36. Recitative (tenor): For the horse of Pharaoh
37. Double Chorus: The Lord shall reign
38. Recitative (tenor): And Miriam, the prophetess
39. Soprano and Double Chorus: Sing ye to the Lord

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# Text

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## Israel In Egypt

Georg Friedrich Handel (1685– 1759)

### Part II

#### 1. Recitative (tenor)

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph; and he set over Israel taskmasters to afflict them with burthens, and they made them serve with rigor.

*(Exodus 1: 8, 11, 13)*

#### 2. Alto Solo and Double Chorus

And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and their cry came unto God. They oppressed them with burthens, and made them serve with rigor; and their cry came up unto God.

*(Exodus 2: 23)*

#### 3. Recitative (tenor)

Then sent He Moses, His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen; these shewed His signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

He turned their waters into blood.

*(Psalm cv: 26, 27, 29)*

#### 4. Chorus

They loathed to drink of the river. He turned their waters into blood.

*(Exodus 2: 18, 19)*

#### 5. Air (alto)

Their land brought forth frogs, yea, even in their king's chambers.

*(Psalm cv: 30)*

He gave their cattle over to the pestilence; blotches and blains broke forth on man and beast.

*(Exodus 11: 9, 10)*

#### 6. Double Chorus

He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies and lice in all quarters.

He spake; and the locusts came without number, and devoured the fruits of the ground.

*(Psalm cv: 31, 34, 35)*

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### 7. Double Chorus

He gave them hailstones for rain; fire mingled with the hail ran along upon the ground.

*(Psalm cv: 32; Exodus 9: 23, 24)*

### 8. Chorus

He sent a thick darkness over the land, even darkness which might be felt.

*(Exodus 10: 21)*

### 9. Chorus

He smote all the first-born of Egypt, the chief of all their strength.

*(Psalm cv: 36, 37)*

### 10. Chorus

But as for His people, He led them forth like sheep: He brought them out with silver and gold; there was not one feeble person among their tribes.

*(Psalm lxxviii: 53; Psalm cv: 37)*

### 11. Chorus

Egypt was glad when they departed, for the fear of them fell upon them.

### 12. Double Chorus

He rebuked the Red Sea, and it was dried up.

*(Psalm cvi: 9)*

### 13. Chorus

He led them through the deep as through a wilderness.

*(Psalm cvi: 9)*

### 14. Chorus

But the waters overwhelmed their enemies, there was not one of them left.

*(Psalm cvi: 11)*

### 15. Double Chorus

And Israel saw that great work that the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord.

*(Exodus xiv: 31)*

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### **16. Chorus**

And believed the Lord and His servant Moses;  
and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord.

*(Exodus xiv: 31)*

## **Part III**

### **17. Double Chorus**

Moses and the children of Israel sung this song  
unto the Lord, and spake, saying:

### **18. Double Chorus**

I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed  
gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown  
into the sea.

*(Exodus xv: 1)*

### **19. Duet (soprano 1 & 2)**

The Lord is my strength and my song; He is  
become my salvation.

*(Exodus xv: 2)*

### **20. Double Chorus**

He is my God, and I will prepare Him an  
habitation; my father's God,

*(Exodus xv: 2)*

### **21. Chorus**

And I will exalt Him.

*(Exodus xv: 2)*

### **22. Duet (bass 1 & 2)**

The Lord is a man of war: Lord is His name.  
Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into  
the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in  
the Red Sea.

*(Exodus xv: 3, 4)*

### **23. Double Chorus**

The depths have covered them: they sank into  
the bottom as a stone.

*(Exodus xv: 5)*

### **24. Double Chorus**

Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in  
power; Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in  
pieces the enemy.

*(Exodus xv: 6)*

### **25. Double Chorus**

And in the greatness of Thine excellency Thou  
hast overthrown them that rose up against Thee.

*(Exodus xv: 7)*

### **26. Double Chorus**

Thou sentest forth Thy wrath, which consumed  
them as stubble.

*(Exodus xv: 7)*

### **27. Chorus**

And with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters  
were gathered together, the floods stood upright  
as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the  
heart of the sea.

*(Exodus xv: 8)*

### **28. Air (tenor)**

The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I  
will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied  
upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall  
destroy them.

*(Exodus xv: 9)*

### **29. Air (soprano)**

Thou didst blow with the wind, the sea covered  
them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

*(Exodus xv: 10)*

### **30. Double Chorus**

Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods.  
Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in  
praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out Thy  
right hand:

*(Exodus xv: 11)*

### 31. Double Chorus

The earth swallowed them.

(Exodus xv: 12)

### 32. Duet (alto and tenor)

Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth Thy people  
which Thou hast redeemed; Thou hast guided  
them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation.

(Exodus xv: 13)

### 33. Double Chorus

The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall  
take hold on them: all the inhabitants of Canaan  
shall melt away: by the greatness of Thy arm they  
shall be as still as a stone; till Thy people pass  
over, O Lord, which Thou hast purchased.

(Exodus xv: 14, 15, 16)

### 34. Air (alto)

Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the  
mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O  
Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in,  
in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have  
established.

(Exodus xv: 17)

### 35. Chorus

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

(Exodus xv: 18)

### 36. Recitative (tenor)

For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots  
and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord  
brought again the waters of the sea upon them;  
but the children of Israel went on dry land in the  
midst of the sea.

(Exodus xv: 19)

### 37. Double Chorus

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

(Exodus xv: 18)

### 38. Recitative (tenor)

And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron,  
took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women  
went out after her with timbrels and with dances.  
And Miriam answered them:

(Exodus xv: 20, 21)

### 39. Soprano Solo and Double Chorus

Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed  
gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown  
into the sea.

(Exodus xv: 21, 18)



# Israel In Egypt

**“Handel understands effect better than any of us; when he chooses, he strikes like a thunderbolt.”**

**–Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

**G**EORG FRIEDRIC HANDEL WAS BORN in 1685 in Halle, Saxony, to middle-class parents. He exhibited an early aptitude for music, which his father—who had hoped his son would grow up to be a lawyer—reportedly attempted to discourage. According to an early biographer, when Handel was a child, his father banned musical instruments from the house, and the boy was forced to practice secretly on a clavichord hidden in the attic. When Handel was nine, however, the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, who had been impressed by Handel’s organ playing, persuaded Handel’s father to give the boy a musical education.

Handel went on to study both law and music at Halle University, but he soon determined that he was more skilled in and passionate about music. In 1703, at age 18, Handel became second violinist in the Hamburg opera orchestra. At age 19, he began composing operas for the Hamburg opera house. In 1706, when he was 21, he left for Italy, where he continued to compose, writing operas and other pieces for a variety of patrons.

In 1710, Handel traveled north to Hanover and was appointed *Kapellmeister* to the Elector of Hanover. It was in this capacity that he first visited London, where Italian opera was increasingly popular. Soon, he was writing new Italian operas for English audiences. Queen Anne granted Handel an annual stipend of £200 in the hope of keeping him in England as court composer. At some point after this first visit, Handel decided to settle in London, although he continued periodically throughout his life to travel on the continent. Any conflict with the Elector of Hanover over the decision to move to England was mitigated when, following Queen Anne’s death in 1714, the Elector himself ascended to the throne of England as King George I. In 1725, Handel took a lease on a house in London, where he lived for the rest of his life. In 1727, he became a naturalized English citizen and anglicized the German spelling of his name.

Very soon after his arrival in London, Handel became a vital part of that city’s burgeoning 18th-century music scene. He had a natural aptitude for theater and was involved in managing a number of opera companies. Although he composed for many

instruments, Handel is best known for his vocal music, particularly his Italian-style operas and English oratorios. Between 1719 and 1752, he composed and produced quite a number of both for several different patrons and theaters. In the early 1750s, however, Handel's eyesight had begun to deteriorate, and by 1753 he was blind. Composition became more difficult as his vision faded, but he managed to continue to supervise the production of his oratorios and to perform public organ concerts. Handel died in 1759.

We know little of Handel's personal life, as he left few letters or other writings. He appears to have been a private man, dedicated to his art above all else. Although there were some rumors of a brief affair or two with female opera singers while he was in Italy, he never married. He appears from contemporary depictions to have been hard-working, practical, and independent, though somewhat rough around the edges. Charles Burney, who played violin in Handel's concerts in the 1740s, describes an unpretentious, serious man with a deep capacity for humor:

"He was impetuous, rough, and peremptory in his manners and conversation, but totally devoid of ill-nature or malevolence; indeed, there was an original humor and pleasantry in his most lively sallies of anger or impatience, which, with his broken English, were extremely risible. His natural propensity to wit and humor, and happy method of relating common occurrences, in an uncommon way, enabled him to throw persons and things into very ridiculous attitudes. . . . Handel's general look was somewhat heavy and sour; but when he did smile, it was his sire the sun, bursting out of a black cloud. There was a sudden flash of intelligence, wit, and good humor, beaming in his countenance, which I hardly ever saw in any other.

Handel is credited with creating and establishing the English oratorio form. Oratorios are concert pieces involving orchestra, soloists,



and chorus, usually on a sacred theme, but without action, costumes, or spectacle. Beginning in the 1730s—perhaps in response partly to a ban on operas during Lent and more generally to changing English musical tastes—Handel began to shift his focus away from producing Italian-style operas and towards writing oratorios. His oratorio *Esther*, performed at the King's Theatre in 1732, is generally agreed to be the very first oratorio written in English. Between 1732 and 1757, Handel presented more than 20 oratorios to London audiences, including, most notably, *Messiah* in 1742, *Samson* in 1743, *Judas Maccabaeus* in 1747, and *Jephtha* in 1752.

### Israel in Egypt

Handel's oratorio *Israel in Egypt* was originally performed in 1739, in the same season as the premiere of his oratorio *Saul*. Unlike *Saul* and Handel's other early oratorios, however, *Israel in Egypt* is almost entirely a choral piece, with relatively few arias for soloists interspersed among the choruses. Rather than unveiling a plot that is driven by individual passions and actions, it

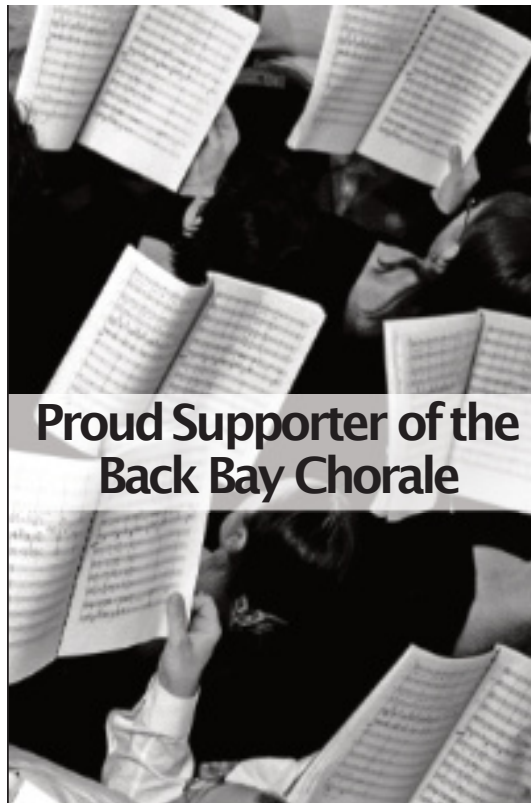


presents and celebrates the story of a people. That is perhaps why, although it is now one of Handel's most popular works, *Israel in Egypt* was not well received by its 18th-century London audience. It was performed only twice more in the 1739 season, after Handel had revised it by deleting the first of its original three sections and adding additional arias, but it still failed to elicit an enthusiastic response.

It was not until the 19th century, when choral societies and amateur music festivals began to flourish in England, that *Israel in Egypt* attained the level of popularity it has today. In fact, one of the earliest recordings of the piece still extant is of a June 29, 1888, performance at the Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace in London. The 4,000-voice chorus was recorded from 100 feet away, and the sound of the wax-cylinder recording has greatly degraded, but it is still wonderful to hear the faint, soaring sounds of singers exulting in this beautiful piece almost 125 years ago.

Since its revival, *Israel in Egypt* has been performed without its original first part (not performed by Back Bay Choral), "Lamentation of the Israelites on the Death of Joseph." The original second part, "Exodus" has become the first, employing texts from Exodus and Psalms to depict the story of the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt.

Part Two (as performed by BBC) draws its text from Exodus and from several psalms. It begins with



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the Israelites' bondage in Egypt, followed by descriptions of the plagues that Moses calls down upon the Egyptians to persuade the Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Eventually, the Pharaoh is persuaded and the Israelites are led out of Egypt, only to be pursued by the Egyptian army shortly thereafter. Part Two culminates in the parting of the Red Sea, the destruction of the Egyptian army, and the Israelites' acknowledgment of the power of their God.

Part Three is largely an extended celebration of the victory described in Part Two, presented in various forms through large choral compositions contrasted with relatively quieter duets and arias. It begins in a ceremonial style indicated by the orchestra's dotted rhythms and is followed by a solemn chorus. The subsequent double chorus's grand fugal anthem "For He hath triumphed gloriously" perfectly embodies the joyful feeling of the second half of the oratorio, and Handel repeats it again at the end of the piece. Though some gentler prayerful feeling is evoked by the women's duet "The Lord is my strength" and by the chorus's "He is my God," the majority of this section rings with martial triumph.

While Moses and Miriam are mentioned in the text, the oratorio lacks any defined individual characters or conventional plot. The dramatic movement of the piece is embodied in and through the music. In order to achieve these dramatic effects, Handel made use of "every choral texture in his repertory—fugues, *cantus firmus* themes with moving counter-melodies, antiphonal double choirs, thunderous choral homophony and so on."

Moreover, the oratorio is replete with word painting, where the sound of the music imitates the imagery of the text. Handel's evocation of the plagues, for example, is particularly effective, beginning with the eerie, jagged chromatic lines of

***Israel in Egypt* was not well received by its 18th-century London audience. It was performed only twice more in the 1739 season, even after Handel revised it**

"They loathed to drink." We sense Handel's humorous touch in the leaping violin lines that mimic the hopping frogs described in "Their land brought forth frogs." The contrast between the chorus' authoritative "He spake the word" and the following frenetic orchestration of "there came all manner of flies" calls to mind onslaughts of buzzing insects. Pelting hail and running fire are manifested in the double choral rhythms of "He gave them hailstones." The relatively simple but powerful choral recitative "He sent a thick darkness" calls forth the image of dark clouds, settling down on the land. And finally, in "He smote all the first-born of Egypt" the audience can hear both the violence of the blows and the lamentation of the Egyptian people.

Other examples of Handel's effects occur in the music's mimic of the movement of the waters in Part Three's "And with the blast of thy nostrils" and in the fading lines predicting the "melting away" of "all the inhabitants of Canaan" in "The people shall hear." But it is the infectious, galloping rhythm of "the horse and his rider" in the opening and closing portions of Part Two that will most probably linger in the listener's ear, well after the oratorio has ended, recalling the pure physical joy evoked by Handel's final triumphant anthem.

– Nina Anne Greeley, *reprinted with permission*

# Anthony Trecek-King

GUEST CONDUCTOR

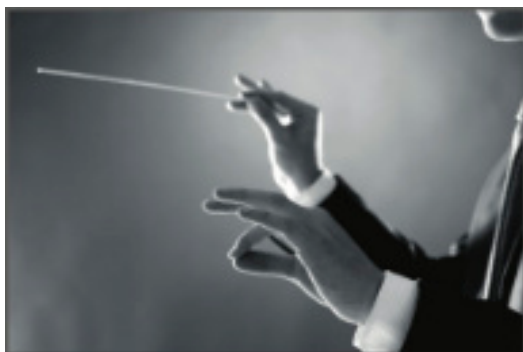


**O**VER THE PAST 20 YEARS, DR. ANTHONY Trecek-King has cultivated an international reputation as a choral conductor, scholar, pedagogue, and media personality.

Dr. Trecek-King is passionate about cultivating artistically excellent ensembles that explore socially relevant issues through emotionally immersive programs, challenging both artists and audiences to feel and think. He has recently been appointed as both an Associate Professor of Choral

Music and Director of Choral Activities at The Hartt School, University of Hartford and is a Resident Conductor with the Handel and Haydn Society.

Trecek-King's performances have been heralded as "moving" and possessing a "surprising range of dynamics and depth of expression." He enjoys cultivating all levels of vocal and instrumental musicians, from youth through professional, using a collaborative rehearsal style. His skill lies in bridging the gap between high art and



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humanity, drawing audiences into deeply moving performances through acute shaping, expression, and stagecraft, all without compromising sonic quality.

As a conductor and clinician Trecek-King has worked with a variety of artists and ensembles including Leslie Odom Jr., Melinda Doolittle, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Seraphic Fire, Keith Lockhart, John Williams, Simon Halsey, Yo Yo Ma, Roomful of Teeth, Cindy Blackman-Santana and NFL star Patrick Chung. He has led performances in world-renowned venues including Boston Symphony Hall, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Carnegie Hall in New York City, Royal Albert Hall in London, and the Sydney Opera House. Ensembles under his direction were integral to projects that have won a Pulitzer Prize (*Madam White Snake*, Zhou Long), received a GRAMMY Award® (*Fantastic Mr. Fox*, Boston Modern Orchestra Project), and earned the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award from Presidential Committee on the Arts (Boston Children's Chorus).

Trecek-King has earned international recognition working with choirs and orchestras throughout the world, including the University of Cologne Chamber Choir, the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, members of the Schola Cantorum

de Venezuela, the Juvenil Schola Cantorum, the University Simón Bolívar, and Polifonija, a state chorus of Lithuania. He spent a semester in residence at the Technische Universität Braunschweig in Germany as a guest conductor of both the choir and orchestra. In 2005 and 2006, Trecek-King was the only American selected to participate in both the Eric Ericson Masterclass (Netherlands), and the Eric Ericson Award, an international conducting competition (Sweden).

In addition to Trecek-King's conducting work he is currently the host of the classical radio show "The Silent Canon" which airs on KNVO 90.7. Previously he hosted the choral music radio program "Together in Song" which aired on WCRB Classical New England and WQXR radio in New York City and he has presented two talks and performance (2012 & 2014) for TEDx Boston. He is best known as host and coach for the Emmy nominated WGBH television series "Sing That Thing", which can be watched online.

He holds a B.M. in Cello Performance from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, an M.M. in Orchestral Conducting from the Florida State University, and a D.M.A. in Choral Conducting from the Boston University. He currently lives in the Boston area with his partner Melanie (of Thinking is Power) and their cat.

---

## HENRY WEINBERGER

### REHEARSAL PIANIST

**H**ENRY WEINBERGER HAS ACCOMPANIED singers, instrumentalists, and choruses in concerts and recitals in the Boston area for many years. This is his fourteenth year as rehearsal pianist for the Back Bay Chorale. Former positions include accompanying the MIT Chorus under the direction of Bill Cutter, and working with Betsy Burleigh and the Master Singers of Lexington. Weinberger received

a Master of Music in Piano Performance at the New England Conservatory, where he studied with Leonard Shure and Lorna Cooke DeVaron. His other principal teachers were Victor Rosenbaum at



Brandeis University and John Moriarty, with whom he studied operatic repertoire and under whom he worked as staff accompanist at the Boston Conservatory of Music and assistant conductor at Central City Opera in Colorado.

Weinberger has played rehearsals under the batons of Seiji Ozawa, Arthur Fiedler, and Kurt Masur, among others. He also performed with the Boston Pops under the direction of John Williams and played one of the piano parts of Carl Orff's

*Carmina Burana* at Carnegie Hall. He has served on the faculty of the Longy School in Cambridge, where he was the music director of the opera department and taught classes in vocal repertoire and diction for singers. Weinberger made a career change in 1989, when he became a nurse. He worked at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates for twenty-four years, where he specialized in the care of people with HIV, hepatitis C, and other infectious diseases.

## SOLOISTS

### JENNIFER BURKS

#### SOPRANO

Known for her "lovely, gleaming soprano voice" and "effortless virtuosity," Jennifer Burks enjoys a versatile repertoire including baroque, chamber music, and opera. Recent performances include Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* with the New England



Conservatory (2023) and her *Messiah* debut with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra as a winner of their annual College Competition. Previous seasons include performances in the chorus of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (New England Conservatory), Alto Shepherdess in John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (Cambridge Chamber Ensemble), First Spirit in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (Arapahoe Philharmonic), the Princess in Montsalvatge's *Puss in Boots* (Boulder Opera Company), Boulder Bach Festival (Fellowship Artist: Bach's *B Minor Mass*), Boulder Symphony Chorus (*La Traviata*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *La Bohème*), as member of Boston's premier recording choir Vox Futura, Colorado Masterworks Chorale (Soloist: *Israel in Egypt*), and others.

Burks is a graduate student at the New England Conservatory of Music, studying under Lisa Saffer and Dr. Ian Howell and will be graduating in May of 2023. She holds a B.M. in Vocal Performance from the University of Arkansas. Jennifer maintains an active private voice studio in the Boston area and loves sharing her passion for singing with others. She is so excited to be performing with the Back Bay Chorale for the first time.

### MARA RILEY

#### SOPRANO

Mara Riley strives to perform musically and authentically within every genre, though she feels especially drawn to Baroque and art song repertoire. She is currently pursuing a double MM in flute and vocal performance at the New England Conservatory with Paula Robison and Lisa Saffer. In 2020, she completed a double BM at the University of Colorado-Boulder.



Particularly intrigued by concert work and oratorio, Riley is grateful for every opportunity to

sing within the genre. Most recently, she was the soprano fellow with Emmanuel Music's 2023 Bach Institute. In December 2021, she appeared as the soprano soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the Boulder Bach Festival. The previous year, she was featured in the Boulder Bach Festival's virtual concert series. In 2018, she sang with the Colorado Saints Chorale and Orchestra as a soloist (Martha) in Rob Gardner's oratorio, *The Lamb of God*, and was invited back the following year.

Also interested in opera, Riley has been fortunate to sing some amazing roles over the course of her educational career. Favorites have included: Flora in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw*, Mary Bailey in Heggie's *It's a Wonderful Life*, Belinda in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and Héro in Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict*.

When not practicing, Ms. Riley loves to be outside (bonus points if the sun is out) and can often be found hiking in her home state of Colorado. Her goal in life is to meet as many dogs as possible.

## MATTHEW SHIFRIN COUNTERTENOR

Blind since birth, Matthew Shifrin is passionate about making the world more engaging for disabled people. Frustrated that he couldn't read comics or play video games, Shifrin founded Project Daredevil, a start-up that's creating virtual reality experiences for the blind, using 3D sound, and a motion simulating helmet that tricks the vestibular system. Project Daredevil participated in the MassChallenge start-



up accelerator, and won the MIT \$15K Creative Arts Competition.

Unable to build Lego sets on his own, Shifrin created a system of text-based instructions that explains where and how each piece should be placed, and convinced Lego to incorporate his accessible instructions into their new sets. His work with Lego has been featured in *The Washington Post*, *Forbes*, *Fast Company*, *Reuters*, and can be seen on NBC.

Realizing that Lego bricks were a portable and effective way to convey information to blind people, he created a Lego-based music notation system that lets blind people quickly and easily write down music.

While rock-climbing, Shifrin was at a disadvantage, since he couldn't see the wall before climbing to plan his moves. So he devised a Lego-based route-mapping system that blind climbers can use to feel a route before they climb it, resulting in better technique and more efficient motion. His rock-climbing system was featured on CBS.

Noticing that there weren't any blind people in mainstream podcasting, he started *Blind Guy Travels*, a podcast published by Radiotopia, chronicling his adventures. The podcast premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival, and was Fourth on Spotify's list of the best podcasts of 2021.

Shifrin is a classically-trained countertenor and accordionist, and made his acting debut playing a blind musician in Mark Turtletaub's "Puzzle," which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and is distributed by Sony Pictures.

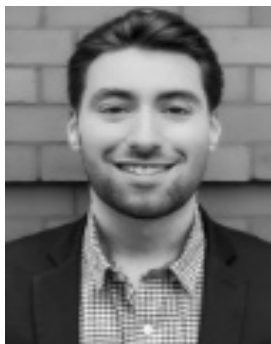
He completed his Bachelors in contemporary Improvisation at the New England Conservatory in 2021, studying singing with Michael Meraw, and Accordion with Hankus Netsky, earning the Chadwick Medal, the conservatory's highest honor for an undergraduate student.



Shifrin is continuing his studies at the New England Conservatory pursuing a Master of Music in singing, and hopes to continue building technologies to help disabled people engage with the world around them.

## **BENJAMIN MAINES** **TENOR**

Benjamin Maines is an American tenor who has been praised for his "attractive tone" and "rich color." Ben is a native of East Lansing, Mich. and received an undergraduate degree from Michigan State University. This season, Maines has sung both Peter Quint in Britten's *Turn of the Screw* and Monostatos in NEC's Jordan Hall production of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. Maines will receive his master's degree from The New England Conservatory in May and currently studies with Bradley Williams.



## **YIHE WANG** **BARITONE**

Originally from Heilongjiang Province, China, Yihe Wang is a baritone and Graduate Diploma student at New England Conservatory, studying vocal performance with MaryAnn McCormick. He received his Master of Music degree from New England Conservatory and has a Bachelor of Music degree



in vocal performance from Xi'an Conservatory of Music. Yihe's operatic repertoire includes Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* and Le fauteuil in *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*. Wang has appeared in NEC's Perkin Opera Scenes as Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore*, Conte in *Il matrimonio segreto* and Ping in *Turandot*. He has also been a soloist in the Liederabend Song Series at New England Conservatory.

## **BENEDICT HENSLEY** **BARITONE**

Originally from Massachusetts, Benedict Hensley is pleased to be back in New England completing a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance at New England Conservatory under the tutelage of Ms. Carole Haber. Hensley completed his Bachelor of Music at the Bienen School of Music studying under Theresa Brancaccio.



Hensley recently sang as the bass soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra. He has performed with Boston-based opera companies such as The White Snake Project and The Cambridge Chamber Ensemble. His most recent operatic roles include Doristo in *L'arbore di Diana* and Jim in Jack Perla's *An American Dream* at New England Conservatory. Benedict has also had the privilege to study and perform under the tutelage of William Lewis and John McGuire at the Austrian American Mozart Academy.

# Back Bay Chorale

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## **SOPRANO**

Catherine Backer  
Madeline Bennetti  
Maya Bloom  
Carolina Cooper  
Camille Croll  
Catherine Cushenberry  
Jennifer Daley  
Theresa Ekinci  
Maryanne Fenerjian  
Alison Geyer  
Melissa Haber  
Meredith Hall  
Cynde Hartman  
Rebecca Hayden  
Jennifer Hermann  
Alison Hickey  
Alexandra Houck  
Becca Kornet  
Monica Krishna  
Kristin Kulash  
Judith Marie  
Kelly McMullin  
Sarah Milt  
Sarah Monahan  
Claire O'Connor  
Dottie Pitt  
Kim Reid  
Alexandria Risbeck  
Janet Stewart  
Brenda Ulrich  
Nicole Werther  
Cynthia Young

## **ALTO**

Elizabeth Chicares  
Deborah Dumaine  
Judy Foreman  
Betsy Groves  
Shelby Holden  
Wendy Horgan  
Debbie James  
Emily Kealy  
Shannon Kolenik  
Molly McCleary  
Ludovica Mottura  
Joan Regan  
Polly Scannell  
Ellen Scerbo  
Mary-Margaret Segraves  
Barbara Siftar  
Beverly St. Clair  
Sarah Stone  
Kaylee Wallace  
Mary Wendell  
Elizabeth Williams  
Janet Wolfe

## **TENOR**

Christopher Addis  
Thomas Barber  
Luke Ciancarelli  
Don DiSalvo  
Christopher Grills  
Jared Hackworth  
John Kornet  
Benjamin Kulas

Paul Lewis  
Claye Metelmann  
Andrew Northrop  
Paul Rabin  
Jonathon Read  
Joseph Reid  
Larry St. Clair  
William Tuttle  
Michael Wagner

## **BASS**

David Auerbach  
Michael Baum  
Justin Buie  
Christopher Elliott  
Tyler Etzel  
Amar Goodman  
Irvin Heifetz  
Craig Hughes  
Jim Johnson  
Matthew Kulas  
Manny Lim  
Jonathan Litt  
Jayson Madara  
Paul McLean  
Nicholas Reichert  
Abby Reichlin  
Sam Riordan  
Norman Roye  
Martin Ryan  
Peter Smith  
Geoffrey Wieting  
Wayne Wilkins



The Back Bay Chorale is a proud member of the Greater Boston Choral Consortium, a service organization for choruses across southern New England.



# Back Bay Chorale Orchestra

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## **Violin I**

Heather Braun, Concertmaster  
Joshua Addison  
Paula Oakes  
Elizabeth Whitfield  
Paola Caballero  
Edward Wu

## **Violin II**

Rose Drucker  
David Rubin  
Deborah Boykan  
Amy Rawstran  
Annabelle Tirado

## **Viola**

Lauren Nelson  
Nathaniel Farny  
Joy Grimes  
Emily Rideout

## **Cello**

Guy Fishman  
Nicole Cariglia  
Colleen McGary Smith

## **Bass**

Nancy Kidd  
Robb Aistrup

## **Flute**

Vanessa Holroyd  
Jessica Lizak

## **Oboe**

Jennifer Slowik  
Catherine Weinfield-Zell

## **Bassoon**

Jensen Ling  
Adam Smith

## **Trumpet**

Dana Oakes  
Richard Watson

## **Trombone**

Alexei Doshovsky  
Robert Hoveland  
Philip Hyman

## **Harpsichord**

Ian Watson

## **Organ**

Justin Blackwell

## **Timpani**

Robert Schulz

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Annual donors of \$1,500 or more become members of the **Larry Hill Society** in recognition of their generous support. Named in honor of the Back Bay Chorale's founder and first conductor, the **Larry Hill Society** ensures the Chorale's future through leadership giving. Thanks to these thoughtful and forward-looking donors, the Chorale will continue to thrive and grow, sharing the joy of music with our concert audiences and beyond.

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Jane Kite  
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Tim Parolini  
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# Back Bay Chorale is looking for New Board members.

We are looking for people who want to be part of a dedicated and engaged Board of Directors for our dynamic and forward-thinking organization at a pivotal time in our 49-year history.

It's an exciting time at Back Bay Chorale, as we feature each of our four Music Director finalists throughout our 2023–2024 season and prepare to celebrate our 50th anniversary.

If you are passionate about choral music and would like to lend your experience and talents to helping us continue to advance the spirit of community through the power of voice, please contact:

**Abby Reichlin**

Chair, Nominating Committee

[Areichlino1@gmail.com](mailto:Areichlino1@gmail.com)

or

**Susanne Powers**

Executive Director

[spowers@bbcboston.org](mailto:spowers@bbcboston.org)



# Our Music Director Finalists

You won't want to miss a concert next season. Each Music Director finalist will

## Robert Duff

"La Dolce Vita"

October 28

St. Leonard's Church, North End, Boston

Dr. Robert Duff is in his eighth year at Brandeis University as Professor of the Practice of Choral Music. At Brandeis University he oversees the choral and vocal program, conducts the Brandeis choral ensembles, teaches conducting and choral methods, and serves as the Performance Track advisor for vocalists. Duff also serves as the Director of Music at Saint Cecilia Church in Boston and is the conductor emeritus of the Handel Society at Dartmouth College. A strong proponent of new music, Duff has given several world premieres of works for both orchestral and choral forces. He previously served as Council to the New Hampshire Council on the Arts and has served on the faculties of Pomona College, Claremont Graduate University and Mount St. Mary's College. He holds degrees in conducting, piano, and voice from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Temple University, and the University of Southern California.



## Stephen Spinelli

A Boston Christmas: Bright Star

December 15, 7:30 pm

December 16, 4:00 pm

Old South Church, Boston

Dr. Stephen Spinelli recently joined the Boston Conservatory faculty as director of choral studies, having previously served as the assistant director of choral programs at Cornell University. He has held additional appointments at Thomas Jefferson University, Moravian College, Villanova University, and Syracuse University. Spinelli has sung with some of the country's leading vocal ensembles, including The Crossing and Roomful of Teeth. He is co-founder and director of ONEcomposer, a non-profit organization dedicated to research, publication, performance, and recording in celebration of historically excluded musical voices. Spinelli's scholarship has earned him a Beinecke Library and Special Collections Research Fellowship at Yale University, where he focuses on the collaborations between Margaret Bonds and Langston Hughes. He is a graduate of Williams College, Temple University, and Northwestern University.



# and 2023–2024 Season Dates!

curate a concert for the 2023–2024 season, and we'll be asking for your feedback.

## Emily Isaacson

"The Outer Edge of Youth"

March 2, 4:00 pm

The Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, Boston

Dr. Emily Isaacson is fiercely committed to reimagining classical music for today's audience. She is founder and artistic director of Classical Uprising, a performing arts collective that serves over 6,000 musicians and music-lovers through its programs: Oratorio Chorale, a symphonic chorus and professional orchestra; Portland Bach Experience, an immersive music festival; and Horizon Voices, a youth choral program for singers K-12. Isaacson was named the 2018 "Maine Artist of the Year" by the Maine Arts Commission. In 2008, she helped to launch Roomful of Teeth, a GRAMMY Award®-winning new vocal music ensemble. She is also a past winner of the American Prize in Conducting and has taught at Clark University, Bowdoin College, and the University of Illinois. Isaacson holds a master's degree in musicology from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland; a master's degree in conducting from the University of Oregon; and a doctorate in conducting from the University of Illinois.



## Caron Daley

*To be announced*

May 10, 2024, 7:30 pm,

Sanders Theatre, Cambridge

Dr. Caron Daley is Director of Choral Activities and Associate Professor of Music at the Mary Pappert School of Music at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pa. Under her direction, Duquesne choirs have performed



across the Northeast and Canada, including collaborations with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Caron has held past conducting appointments with the National Youth Choir of Canada, Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, University of Toronto, St. Michael's Choir School, and Salem Academy and College. In 2012, she founded the Halifax Choral Conducting Institute, which inaugurated a Women's Conducting Intensive in 2019. Caron holds degrees in Choral Conducting from the University of Toronto, Choral Conducting and Vocal Pedagogy from The Ohio State University, Music Education from Western University, and a diploma from the Royal Conservatory of Canada. She serves as National Chair for College and University Choirs with the American Choral Directors Association.

# Back Bay Chorale shares the power of voice, advancing the spirit of community.



Led by our community engagement coordinator, Corey Dalton Hart, our Bridges program is once again partnering with the Boston Public Library to provide a musical experience to help Boston area residents develop their English speaking skills. The Bridges ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) Chorus provides participants with an opportunity to make vocal music, improve their English language skills, and develop friendships with singers—within the ESOL community as well as with Back Bay Chorale members.

Our program helps immigrants, refugees, and others to become integrated with the Boston community. These in-person classes are FREE for all participants. No previous music skills are required, and all English learners are welcome. Since fall, the Bridges ESOL Chorus has performed at the Boston Public Library Fund's annual donor appreciation celebration, our Christmas concerts, and most recently, at a Naturalization Ceremony for new U.S. citizens at Faneuil Hall.

**To learn more, visit [bbcboston.org/bridges/esol](https://bbcboston.org/bridges/esol)**







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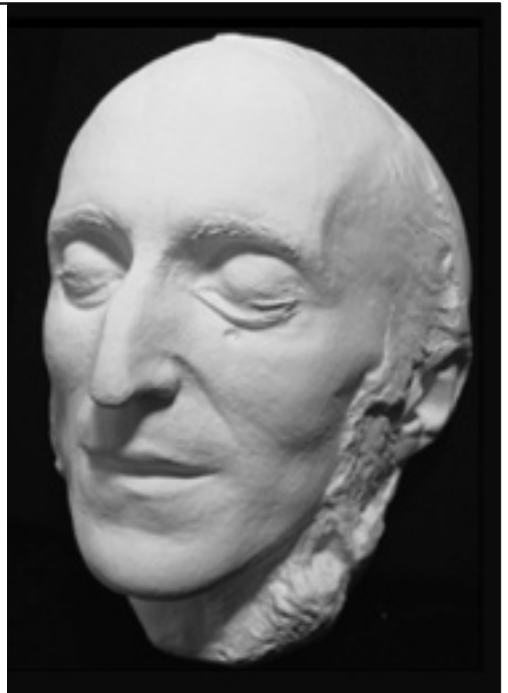
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- Expand programming to engage a growing, diverse audience of all ages;
- Attract and retain the most talented musicians.

Donors to our Annual Fund will provide a predictable source of funding for continued musical leadership. Your donation ensures our financial stability and allows us to plan for the future.

With strong board and executive leadership, dedicated staff, and talented musicians, the Back Bay Chorale is one of Boston's treasured artistic institutions. We look to you to ensure the Chorale's artistic growth. We respectfully invite you to consider making a gift towards our Annual Fund goal of \$120,000.

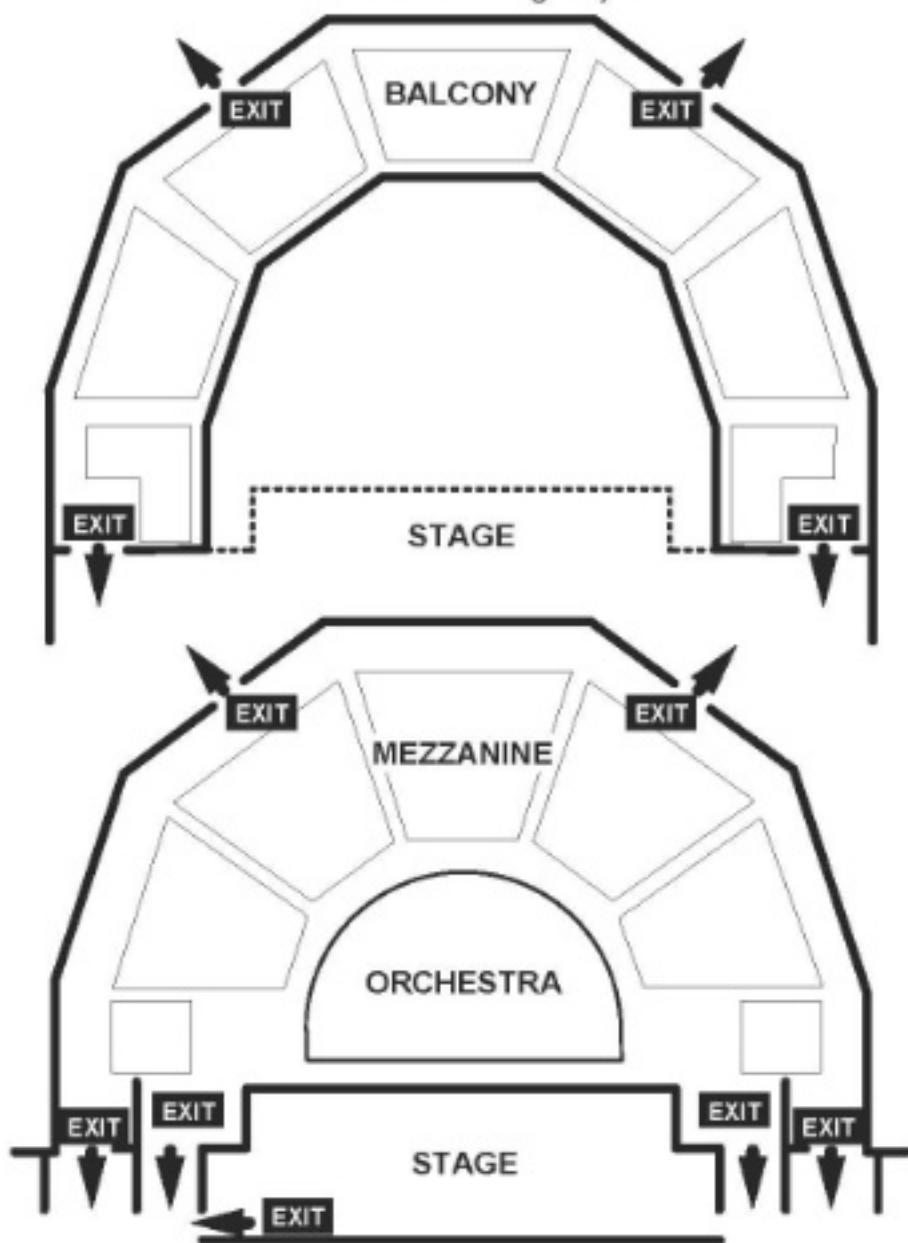
Scan the QR code below to give instantly, or contact Susanne Powers, Executive Director, to discuss your gift options: [spowers@bbcboston.org](mailto:spowers@bbcboston.org).

**For more ways to make a financial gift, visit [bbcboston.org/give](https://bbcboston.org/give)**



## Sanders Theatre Exit Plan

For your safety, please note the location of the nearest emergency exit.



Celebrating the spirit of community and  
the impact of collaboration since 1992.



Our consultants are proud to  
support the Back Bay Chorale!



Thank you **Back Bay Chorale** for filling our world  
with beautiful music!



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# Proud to sponsor Back Bay Chorale

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# SAVE THE DATES

2023-2024 Season

## *"La Dolce Vita"*

Saturday, October 28

St. Leonard's Church, North End, Boston

Robert Duff, Music Director Candidate

## *A Boston Christmas: Bright Star*

Friday, December 15, 7:30 pm

Saturday, December 16, 4:00 pm

Old South Church, Boston

Stephen Spinelli, Music Director Candidate

## *"The Outer Edge of Youth"*

Saturday, March 2, 4:00 pm

The Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, Boston

Emily Isaacson, Music Director Candidate

## *To be announced*

Friday, May 10, 2024, 7:30 pm

Sanders Theatre, Cambridge

Caron Daley, Music Director Candidate

**BACKBAYCHORALE**

THE POWER OF VOICE



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