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THE
Rogue Valley Chorale

Celebrating the Joy of Singing

Presents

Spring Splendor



**Saturday, April 26, 7:30 PM &
Sunday, April 27, 3:00 PM, 2014**

**Laurie Anne Hunter
Artistic Director/Conductor**

* * *

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Spring Splendor

PROGRAM

Stabat Mater

(The mother stood sorrowing by the cross)

Joseph Haydn

Quis est homo

What man would not weep if he saw the Mother of Christ in such torment?

Quando Corpus Morietur

Mandee Light, soprano; Jana Hogan, alto; Ralph Dady, tenor; Dan Gibbs, bass

When my body dies, let my soul be given the glory of paradise. Amen.

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden – BWV 230

Johann Sebastian Bach

*Praise the Lord, all nations, and praise Him, all peoples!
For His grace and truth rule over us for eternity. Alleluia!*

For the Beauty of the Earth

John Rutter

All Things Bright and Beautiful

John Rutter

This Is the Day

John Rutter

Let the People Praise Thee, O God

William Mathias

INTERMISSION



Spring Splendor

Rise up, My Love, My Fair One

Healey Willan

Go, Lovely Rose

Susan White, soprano; Ralph Dady, tenor

Eric Whitacre

I Am Not Yours

Text by Sara Teasdale

David Childs

To-night

Text by Sara Teasdale

Jodi French

Long Road

Southern Oregon University Chamber Choir, Dr. Paul French, conductor

Bailey Snelgrove, soprano; Michaela Nuss, alto

Eriks Esenvalds

Cloudburst

Rogue Valley Chorale and Southern Oregon University Chamber Choir

Sharise May, soprano; Dan Gibbs, baritone

Eric Whitacre

The rain...

Eyes of shadow-water

eyes of well-water,

eyes of dream-water.

*Blue suns, green whirlwinds,
birdbeaks of light pecking open
pomegranate stars.*

But tell me, burnt earth, is there no water?

Only blood, only dust,

Only naked footsteps on the thorns?

The rain awakens...

We must sleep with open eyes,

we must dream with our hands,

we must dream the dreams of a river

seeking its course,

of the sun dreaming its worlds,

we must dream aloud,

we must sing till the song puts forth roots,

trunk, branches, birds, stars,

we must find the lost word,

and remember what the blood,

the tides, the earth, and the body say,

and return to the point of departure...

Octavio Paz, 1914-1998

(Adapted by Eric Whitacre, Translation by Lysander Kemp)

The Beatles in Revue

Julia Curiel, Kenne Horton, Joan Davidson, Eric Smith, soloists

Arranged by Ed Lojeski



Spring Splendor

Program Notes

Stabat Mater Joseph Haydn is justly celebrated for his groundbreaking symphonies and string quartets. He played a greater role than anyone else in establishing them as the centerpiece of modern orchestral and chamber music concerts, respectively. But vocal music comprised at least half of Haydn's output, and he was justifiably proud of his operas, oratorios, masses, and lieder. With the death of Gregor Werner in 1766 (Prince Esterhazy's music director for almost forty years), Haydn became responsible for all the sacred music at the royal court. A devout Catholic, he now began to compose large-scale sacred compositions for the prince, beginning with the *Missa Cellensis* in 1766 and the oratorio *Stabat Mater* in 1767. "Quis est homo" opens with a dramatic slow introduction, leading to a choral fugue. Haydn's rich harmonic palette surfaces in the remarkably chromatic introduction "Quando corpus" and in the more extensive choral fugue on "Paradisi Gloria" which provides the glorious conclusion to the oratorio.

Lobet den Herrn The authenticity of "Lobet den Herrn" remains in dispute. There are no documents or manuscripts linking it to Bach, and the first edition was published in 1801 – over 50 years after his death. Furthermore, none of the other authentic Bach motets feature independent instrumental parts, yet "Lobet" includes a continuo part independent from the voices. While instruments often accompanied the performance of Bach's motets, they simply doubled the vocal parts. However, the work certainly seems written in Bach's style. Both the first two phrases appear in extensive choral fugues, and are then loosely combined. A more homophonic setting of "denn seine Gnade" provides contrast, before another imitative section on the same text leads to a closing "Alleluia" in triple meter. The [Oxford Companion to Bach](#) says it best: "The musical quality of the work makes Bach's authorship plausible." And the absence "of any compelling reason to attribute it to anyone else" means that for now, it still remains in the canon of Bach's motets.

For the Beauty of the Earth John Rutter wrote wrote this piece in 1983, on a 19th-century text by F. S. Pierpoint. The light and easy-going style celebrates, as the title says, the many pastoral beauties of the earth. But the refrain at the end of each verse provides the sacred text that Rutter so often seeks. Though the refrain setting varies slightly from verse to verse, Rutter draws upon the same basic music and text: "Lord of all to thee we raise our joyful hymn of praise." He reinforces that message at the end, changing to 3/8 meter for the first time, and dwelling on that text to end the piece.

All Things Bright and Beautiful Born in 1945, John Rutter's light classical choral music has made him one of the most popular composers of his generation. He's also active as a conductor and arranger. His many Christmas recordings with the Cambridge Singers (an ensemble he founded) remain especially popular, and *All Things Bright and Beautiful* reflects that same light touch. Rutter features the women's voices first, then the men, and finally the full choir celebrates the same message of sacred purpose ("The Lord God made it all") in the midst of earthly treasure.



Spring Splendor

Program Notes: *continued*

This is the Day John Rutter was among the prominent British composers chosen to help celebrate the 2011 wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton in music. He chose the text of "This is the Day" from five different psalms. Famous for the warmth and gentleness of his writing, this style prevails throughout. And listen especially for the sophisticated, almost jazz-like harmonies in the *a cappella* passages near the end.

Let the People Praise Thee, O God Thirty years earlier, William Mathias wrote this anthem for the 1981 wedding of Prince William's parents, Prince Charles and Princess Diana. This wide-ranging Welsh composer wrote orchestral music (symphonies and concerti), chamber music (string quartets, violin sonatas), and an opera. But choral music remained the special focus of his career, with over a hundred sacred compositions. In typical fashion, Mathias grabs your attention immediately with a bright opening (so appropriate on this festive occasion), soon followed by some striking choral harmonies. He offers a contrasting middle section in softer dynamics and duple subdivisions for the setting of "God be merciful," before the glorious 6/8 return of the opening text and music.

INTERMISSION

Rise Up, My Love, My Fair One One of the most celebrated of all Canadian composers, he joined the music faculty of the University of Toronto in 1914. After being named music director of St. Mary Magdalene Church in 1921, that Toronto cathedral became one of the most important centers for sacred choral music in North America. He became the first non-British composer to be awarded the prestigious Lambeth Doctorate by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The text celebrates not only the arrival of Spring, but (as in so much of the Song of Solomon) romantic love as well. Healy wrote it in 1928, and creates its sweetly lyrical and harmonic effects without a single chromatic pitch.

Go, Lovely Rose This composition touches all seasons, but as it begins and ends with the flower blossoming in the Spring, it seemed destined for today's concert. Edmund Waller wrote the poetry in the 1620s, and it soon became "one of the most famous lyric poems in English literature (Webster's [Encyclopedia of Literature](#))." It finds an appropriately luscious setting at the hands of Eric Whitacre. He's written some prominent band and orchestral works, but his special gifts as a prolific choral writer continue to win him worldwide acclaim. Whitacre's particular penchant for dividing each voice part, and holding some members of the chord while others move, creates lovely and sophisticated harmonic effects. These rich tonal harmonies help document the seasons of Summer's full blossom, Fall, death in Winter – and rebirth with a return to the tonic key and opening melody heralding a new Spring at the end.



Spring Splendor

Program Notes: *continued*

I Am Not Yours American poet Sara Teasdale included this poem and over seventy others in her 1917 collection *Love Songs*. In 1918 these poems received the first Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. Webster's [Encyclopedia of Literature](#) states that she wrote poems of "short, personal lyrics that were noted for their classical simplicity and quiet intensity." The New Zealand composer David Childs (now living in America) wonderfully captures that spirit in his musical setting for women's voices. His primarily soft, recurring themes and gentle setting effectively convey the plaintive wish to fall in love with your suitor – but sadly failing to find that mutual joy. The frequent return of motives from these understated themes heightens the intensity of perhaps the loveliest piece on today's program.

To-night The hyphen in the title speaks volumes. It immediately differentiates the piece from Leonard Bernstein's lively and triumphant *Tonight* from *West Side Story*. The quiet intensity of this Jodi French composition is quite different, once again reflecting the quality of its poet, Sara Teasdale. Her brief two-stanza poem seemingly consists of lovely descriptions of the moon and night sky, but at the end it becomes a celebration "Eternity was made for them [but] tonight is for us." French creates a mood of restraint matching the poetry. She saves most of the chromaticism for the surprising final cadences in this gently nocturnal setting.

Long Road Eriks Esenvalds takes the opposite perspective than the earlier song *I Am Not Yours*. Now we hear from the suitor, who revels in the full bloom of love, but cannot reach his/her beloved's heart. The road is too long. Esenvalds is a Latvian composer, with a Masters Degree in Composition from the Latvian Academy of Music. He fashions some of the most evocative choral textures of the entire concert, with rich chords in primarily homophonic, chordal writing for the choir accompanied at times by wordless vocalese passages (sometimes for all four voice-parts), and high soprano descants. And the striking effects in the middle section of the piece - with harmonically rich additive second chords again in vocalese, as accompaniment to light improvisations on various instruments – briefly return at the end. Another very effective setting of love unfulfilled.

Cloudburst If *Go Lovely Rose* revealed Eric Whitacre's more traditional style, *Cloudburst* revels in his penchant for imaginative fantasy. He offers striking, untraditional chords and harmonies, frequent meter change, and chance effects – and all that just in the opening phrase! When the instruments enter later in the piece, he re-introduces the aleatory (chance) effects, coupled with indeterminant notation for wind chimes and hand bells. The thunder sheets and bass drum reinforce the unpredictable, sudden and shocking power of nature that Whitacre seeks with his title *Cloudburst*. The randomness continues through the end; though it is soft, he offers no sense of conclusion. Instead, his non-traditional harmony leaves us up in the air, yet another manifestation of the haunting beauty often found in this piece.

Spring Splendor

Program Notes: *continued*

Beatles in Revue The Beatles' popularity remains unmatched. Their songs from the early 1960s reflected the usual teenage angst of all rock groups from that era: *I Want to Hold Your Hand*, *Can't Buy Me Love*, and *She Loves You* among so many others. Yet at that same time, they also wrote extraordinary ballads of adult love and loss, such as *Michelle* and *Yesterday*. And just a couple years later they changed styles completely, with the haunting *Eleanor Rigby* (all the lonely people – where do they all come from), or the complicated sentiments of *The Long and Winding Road*. Jazz musicians still love the Beatles tunes – and how many other 60s rock groups are performed by contemporary musicians? This delightful medley contains all those songs and more, covering the entire spectrum of the Beatles output, bringing the concert to a lively close.

Program notes by Ed Wight



Spring Splendor



Laurie Anne Hunter – From the Director

At the time I was hired to succeed Lynn Sjolund as Artistic Director of the Rogue Valley Chorale, the program titles for this season had already been chosen. Finding material to fit in with the theme of *Spring Splendor* was not difficult. What was difficult, was narrowing it down to what would fit on a single concert program!

The Stabat Mater of Haydn is relatively new to me. I borrowed a score of the piece last year to study one of the arias that I had been asked to accompany on the piano. This just happened to coincide with my audition for the Chorale, for which I was asked to conduct one piece chosen by the search committee and one piece of my own choosing. I wanted a classical piece to contrast the other selection I had been given and I was drawn to *Quis est homo* for the amount of drama that it packed into a few short pages. The text fits in with the season of Spring as the time of Passover and Easter, and the glory of Paradise (*Paradisi Gloria*) is always appropriate, especially when set with sparkling coloratura!

During the six years I lived in Winnipeg, I was fortunate to perform all six of Bach's motets. I was studying at a Mennonite college there at a time when many of my friends and teachers had grown up speaking German. The wealth of sacred choral and vocal works in German by Bach thus became the foundation for much of my musical studies. I chose *Lobet den Herrn* for this concert (perhaps somewhat naively), since it was the shortest of the motets and its theme of praise fit nicely into our theme. I was quickly reminded during our preparation of the piece, that short is by no means simple!

For a short period of time in my life, I lived in Santa Cruz, California, where my parents had retired, and I went there to be a caregiver in their final years. Naturally, one of the first things I did when I got there was to audition for a choir! At this particular audition, after the director listened to me sing, he asked if I would sight-read a piece on the piano for him. It was a choral piece that he had wanted to do but did not have anyone in his group who could play it. That was my first introduction to John Rutter's *For the Beauty of the Earth*. Rutter's music is enjoyable both for the listener and the singer. For that reason, I chose to present a group of anthems by Rutter, including his lovely setting of *All Things Bright and Beautiful* and *This is the Day*, which was composed for the Royal wedding in 2011 of Prince William and Catherine Middleton. We close our first half with another Royal wedding piece from 1981, *Let the People Praise Thee*, composed for Prince William's parents, Charles and Diana.

From the Director: *continued*

Spring is a time for love, beauty, flowers and (we hope), rain. We celebrate all of those in our selections for the second half of our concert. I had the great fortune last summer to attend a reading session with composer David Childs. A number of his compositions brought tears to my eyes singing through them for the first time. His setting of the Sara Teasdale text, *I Am Not Yours* was one. I had a similar reaction when I first sang Jodi French's setting of Teasdale's *To-night*. Jodi is a dear friend and esteemed colleague and I am grateful for this opportunity to share some of her fine compositional work with a new audience.

I have been fortunate to witness the marvelous work that Dr. Paul French has done over the years as director of choral and vocal studies at Southern Oregon University. He has been very supportive of my work as well and when I found out that he was also planning to perform Eric Whitacre's *Cloudburst* at the university this year, it seemed fated that we should collaborate on the piece. It is with great pleasure that I introduce the work of the Southern Oregon University Chamber Choir to those of you who have not yet heard them.

As my debut season with the Rogue Valley Chorale draws to a close, I look back with pride on what we have accomplished this year. But I am also mindful that it is the vision of Lynn Sjolund who, through his incredible forty-year tenure, put this group on the map, so to speak. I am honored to add my congratulations to him on becoming our Director Emeritus.





Laurie Anne Hunter **Artistic Director/Conductor**

A native of Pasadena, California, Laurie Anne Hunter is a graduate of the University of Winnipeg and the Juilliard School in New York. She spent five seasons as an Assistant Conductor and Vocal Coach with the New York City Opera, becoming the fourth woman ever to conduct there when she made her Lincoln Center debut with Marc Blitzstein's *Regina* in 1992. Guest conducting appearances followed with the New England Lyric Operetta, Skylight Opera Theatre in Milwaukee, and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony.

She was Associate Conductor of *Phantom of the Opera* in Toronto and *Showboat* on Broadway. She has served as Assistant Conductor and Vocal Coach for the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Augusta Opera, Mobile Opera, Boston Concert Opera and the Metropolitan Opera Guild's educational productions. She was also head of the music staff for two years at the Banff Centre's Music Theater program in Canada. She worked with American Musical Theater of San Jose and the Seattle Opera before the Oregon Shakespeare Festival brought her to Ashland as Musical Director and Pianist for *Enter the Guardsman* in 2001. She has also served as Musical Director for the Oregon Cabaret Theater and Southern Oregon University's Department of Theater Arts.

She has been on the faculty of the Hartt School of Music, the Israel Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, the Musicians Club of America summer Opera and Lieder Institutes in North Carolina, and is currently on the adjunct faculty at Southern Oregon University. She took up the harp while earning her certification from the "Music for Healing and Transition Program" and for the last twelve years has played therapeutic harp music for Providence Cancer Center and Hospice in Medford.

Locally, she remains active with many other musical groups, including Brava! Opera Theater and James M. Collier Young Artist Program, Rogue Opera, the Rogue Valley Symphony, Southern Oregon Repertory Singers, and is the music director at the First Presbyterian Church of Ashland.

Biographies: *continued*



Andrea Brock

Andrea Brock, is in her twelfth season as pianist for the Rogue Valley Chorale. She is co-director of choirs at South Medford High School, where she has taught since 1996. She has also been Musical Director for many productions including *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat*, *My Fair Lady*, and *Guys and Dolls*.

She first attended the University of Colorado in Boulder and then the University of Oregon, where she received both a Bachelors and Masters degree in music education and served as accompanist for the University Singers. Post graduate work included a course in collaborative piano with Eastman piano faculty in Lyon, France. She taught at Joseph Lane Junior High School in Roseburg, Oregon from 1991-1996 and was honored in 1996 with the prestigious Max Reisinger Award for music education.

She has been seen throughout the community as pianist in concerts and local productions. She accompanied the All-State and All-Northwest choirs on four separate occasions. She was the accompanist for the Oregon Bach Festival's Youth Choral Academy in Eugene under the direction of Anton Armstrong. Recently, she helped raise funds to provide South Medford High School with new pianos, as well as a Steinway piano for the newly renovated Sjolund Theater at North Medford High School. She resides in Medford with her husband, tenor Andrew Brock, and their three children, Keenan, Molly and William.

Dr. Paul French

Paul French has extensive experience as singer, conductor and teacher. Ensembles under his direction have performed to acclaim at prestigious six-state conventions such as the American Choral Directors Association Northwest Convention (1994, 2002), the American Guild of Organists Northwest Convention (1997) and the Oregon Music Educators National Conference (2002). In 2003, French made his National Public Radio debut with the Southern Oregon Repertory Singers performing on "West Coast Live" for an estimated one million households nationally and internationally. In 2006, French conducted the West Coast premiere of the Robert Levin completion of Mozart's great "Mass in c minor" and toured Mexico with the SOU Chamber Choir.

In demand as a clinician and adjudicator, French has adjudicated the Oregon Music Educators National Conference state voice and choir competitions many times, the Oregon National Association of Teachers of Singing competition, as well as MENC sponsored competitions in California and Alaska. He has conducted numerous Honor Choirs and regional All-State Choirs in California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska and Nevada; and served as Artistic Director of the SOU/Britt Festival Vocal Arts Institute.

As a tenor soloist, French has performed a varied repertoire from Handel's *Messiah*, to Vaughan Williams' *Mass in G* for organizations such as Jefferson Baroque Orchestra and Northwest Bach Ensemble, and at music festivals such as the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival and the Chelan Bach Festival.



Members of the Rogue Valley Chorale performing in this concert

SOPRANO

Donna Barrett	Beth Gibson	Phyllis Skinner
Shirley Blanchard	Natalie Goodeill	Deanna St. Martin
Dee-Marie Broyles	Kathy Gordon	Maureen Vega
Jennifer Bynum	Jan Jacobs	Susan White
Diane Combs	Mandee Light	jean j Zwang
Janet Dolan	Sharise May	
Ruth Engle	Alice Nykreim	
Connie Fisher-Crooks	Gay Pollard	
Karen Foster	Laura Rich	

ALTO

Andrea Armstead	Susan Franks	Cheryl Nicholson
Mary Jo Bergstrom	Barbara Hewitt	Marjorie Overland
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Joan Davidson	Nancy Mason	Sue Ward
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Charleen Fike	Diane Newland	
Pat Franks	Kelly Nuss	

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John Blackhurst	Terry Faulkner	Scott Meeds
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Scott Calvert	Michael Quirk	
Ralph Dady	Jim Martin	

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The empty chair and bouquet of flowers in the Bass section are in honor of our dear friend, John Hunter, who blessed the Chorale with his voice, his hands, and his smile for many years. Oh, how we miss you John!

**Members of the
SOU Chamber Choir
performing in this concert**

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Colleen Bremner
Natalie Horton
Grace Peets
Cassie Pinnard
Muriel Sadleir Hart
Kea Seaman
Bailey Snelgrove
Amber Traver

ALTO

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Surya Nagaraja
Michaela Nuss
Mikaeli Rhodman
Firenze Rodriguez
McKenzie Smith
Kathryn Springer

TENOR

Colin Campbell
Brian Carpenter
Jon Hays
Cody Mathai
Eoghan McDowell
Conor Quinn
Daniel Rodriguez
Nolan Sanchez
Luke Smith

BARITONE/BASS

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In Memoriam

*Eric Overland
& John Hunter*

The Rogue Valley Chorale is grateful for the many donors who made contributions in memory of our beloved members, Eric & John. Their names are included above.



Joy of Singing Anniversary Celebration

On March 16th the Rogue Valley Chorale and Rogue Valley Youth Choruses held the first Stakeholder's Fundraising Celebration. We were overwhelmed with the outpouring of support from our community. We wish to thank our many donors for supporting choral music in Southern Oregon.

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In May 2013 the Chorale launched the Sjolund Endowment Fund, named in honor of Conductor Emeritus Lynn Sjolund and Youth Choruses founder Doris Sjolund. We thank the many donors who contributed to provided assurance that choral music will have a lasting place in our community.

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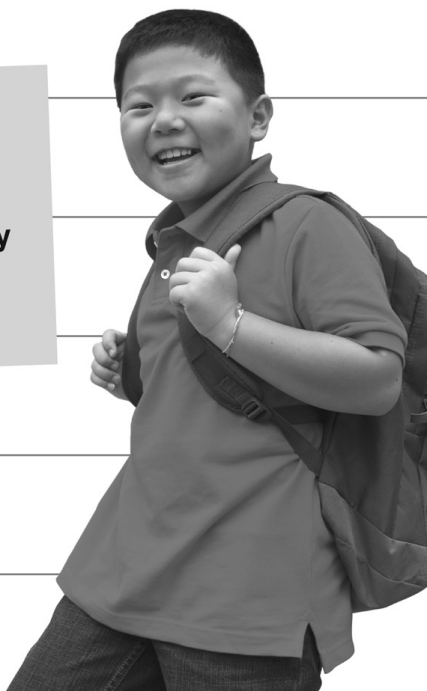


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