

Pittsburgh's
Mendelssohn choir
presents

Bach

Mass in B Minor

Betsy Burleigh
Conductor

*The
transcendent
culmination
of Bach's
life work in
sacred music.*



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Bach

Mass in B Minor

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Funding for this concert was provided by the R.P. Simmons Family Charitable Trust of the Pittsburgh Foundation.



Welcome!

Welcome to the beginning of our second century of choral performance! You're in for another exceptional choral experience as The Mendelssohn Choir presents Johan Sebastian Bach's *Mass in B Minor*. This monumental and virtuosic work was not commissioned and was too large to be used in a church service. You can decide for yourself if Bach's motivation was for the glory of God alone or to leave a compendium of his accomplish-

ments in sacred choral music. Whatever your decision, your spirit will be mightily enriched.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors for providing support, long-term strategies, and direction to our efforts. They are ambassadors of the Choir to the community and I appreciate their dedication. I would also like to thank our sponsors and donors. You make it possible for us to make music.

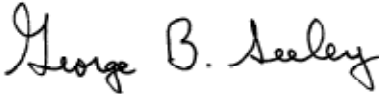
Many thanks to our staff—both artistic and administrative—for their hard work. This season has been somewhat tumultuous with the impact of the G-20 Conference postponing our collaboration with the Pittsburgh Symphony on Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* from September to June. An addition of a repeat performance of Video Games Live and additional performances of Beethoven's Ninth and Mahler's Third caused more scheduling adjustments. In her fourth year as Music Director of the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, Betsy Burleigh has had to adjust rehearsals (sometimes 3 works in one rehearsal!) so that the premiere quality of the choir could come through. Mary Colleen Seip is in her first year as Choir Manager and has already won the affection and respect of the singers. Eric Menendez has served well in a new position as Communications Manager but will be leaving us at season's end as he relocates to Washington, D.C. Matt Borkowski has provided valuable marketing expertise required to produce this concert. I would be remiss not to thank Kim Graham for her assistance with graphic design and arranging this program. All of these activities made excessive time demands yet these individuals carried out their responsibilities with smiles and cheerful attitudes. The Mendelssohn owes them a great deal of gratitude.

Reflecting on our recently passed centennial year, I have to say we accomplished a lot. Starting with our *Elijah* Centennial kickoff concert at Carnegie

Message from the Board President

Music Hall, under the baton of our Musical Director Emeritus, Robert Page, I think one would agree the drama of the work “shone forth” admirably. Then there was the extremely moving *Vespers* concert last May in St. Paul Cathedral that also attracted a large audience. In between these bookend performances, was a year of 7 productions and 24 performances of the highest choral quality, a newly commissioned work and a Junior Mendelssohn production. I don't know of another organization in the area that could have pulled this off. The Mendelssohn Choir is truly a remarkable treasure for Pittsburgh and the region.

I would like to thank all the Mendelssingers. They contribute long hours of rehearsals, often after lengthy commutes, and practically live in one hall or another during a concert week. Finally, a big thanks to you, our audience. Without your attendance, today's performance would just be another rehearsal. Enjoy!



George B. Seeley, Board President

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ARTS

The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh thanks the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts for their support.

The Mendelssohn receives state arts funding through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency.



Betsy Burleigh

is celebrating her fourth season as Music Director of the 102 year-old Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, which includes leading the Men-

delssohn in their own concert productions as well as preparing the choir to sing with the Pittsburgh Symphony. Most recently she conducted the group in a critically acclaimed performance of Rachmaninoff's *Vespers* in Pittsburgh and took the Mendelssohn Chamber Singers, a select sub-group of 32, to sing on a concert series at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

This year Ms. Burleigh is making her debut as Music Director of Boston's Chorus pro Musica, which premiered Poulenc's *Gloria* with the Boston Symphony and sang America's first performances of Britten's *War Requiem*. She served as Assistant Director of Choruses for The Cleveland Orchestra from 1998 until 2009, and for five years was the Chorus Master for Cleveland Opera. She is on leave from her position of

The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, a largely volunteer choir of 115 voices including a 20-voice professional core, is renowned for its versatility, singing oratoria, opera, Broadway, folk and symphonic repertoire. Founded in 1908, it holds the distinction of being Pittsburgh's oldest continuously performing arts organization.

The Mendelssohn has performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony under the baton of some of the world's greatest conductors, including Lorin Maazel, Mariss Jansons, Raphael Fruhbeck de Burgos, Michael Tilson Thomas, Claudio Abbado, Mstislav Rostropovich, Leonard Slatkin, Charles Dutoit, Andre Previn, Sir Neville Marriner, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Helmut Rilling, Ingo Metz-macher, Richard Hickox, Zdenek Macal, and Sir Andrew Davis. Performances of the the Choir with the Symphony are heard locally over WQED-FM (89.3) and distributed nationally by PRI.

The Choir has numerous commissions and premieres to its credit, including works by Ned Rorem, Nancy Galbraith and Derek Bermel. The Mendelssohn's artistic partners have included the Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, River City Brass Band, Children's Festival Chorus and

Coordinator of Choral and Vocal Music at Cleveland State University.

Ms. Burleigh is an active conductor, and has led the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Akron Symphony, and the Canton Symphony Orchestras in the choral/orchestral repertoire. Musical theater engagements have included the music direction of Viktor Ullman's opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* with Cleveland Public Theater, which received the 2000 Northern Ohio Live Achievement Award for best classical/opera performance. She also led critically acclaimed Opera Cleveland performances of *A Little Night Music*. Further credits include conducting the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus on an Emmy award-winning benefit concert for the 9/11 Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. Active as a guest conductor of choral festivals and

workshops, she most recently led Cincinnati's October Festival Choir in Haydn's *Theresienmesse*.

Ms. Burleigh has prepared choruses for Manfred Honeck, Rafael Frúbeck de Burgos, Jan Pascal Tortelier, Leonard Slatkin, Sir Andrew Davis, Christoph von Dohnanyi, Anton Coppola, Jane Glover, Jahja Ling, Nicholas McGegan, John Nelson, Yuri Temirkanov, and Franz Welsler-Möst, among others.

Her career began in Boston, where she was Music Director of The Master Singers, the Longy Chamber Singers, the Cambridge Madrigal Singers, and held teaching positions at Tufts University, Clark University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She holds a master's degree in choral conducting from New England Conservatory and a doctorate from Indiana University.

the Duquesne University Tamburitzans.

The Mendelssohn is a member of CHORUS AMERICA, the American Arts Alliance, the Pennsylvania Arts Coalition and the Pittsburgh Arts Advocacy Council. The MCP is a Steinway Artist, the only chorus holding that designation.

The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh spring audition dates for the 2010-2011 season

New Volunteer Singers
April 28th, 2010 at Heinz Hall

Paid Professional Core
May 14-16, 2010 | 3rd Presbyterian Church
Must submit a resume prior to being scheduled

Junior Mendelssohn Choir
of Pittsburgh
May 1, 2010 | Westminster Presbyterian Church

*Auditions by appointment only.
Contact Mary Colleen Seip*

(724) 263-5259 | mcseip@themendelssohn.org

Bach

Mass in B Minor

Betsy Burleigh, conductor

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison

Christe eleison

Kathy Linger & Amelia Baisley

Kyrie eleison

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis

Et in terra pax

Laudamus te

Marietta Metze

Gratias agimus tibi

Domine Deus

Katy Williams & Jonathan MacDonald

Qui tollis peccata mundi

Qui sedes ad dextram Patris

Bethann DiLeone

Quoniam tu solus sanctus

Tim Marquette

Cum Sancto Spiritu

Intermission

Symbolum Nicenum (Credo)

Credo in unum Deum

Patrem omnipotentem

Et in unum Dominum

Nancy Klimcheck & Lauren Pickett

Et incarnatus est

Crucifixus

Et resurrexit

Et in spiritum sanctum Dominum

Confiteor

Et expecto

Sanctus

Osanna

Benedictus

Joseph Gaines

Agnus Dei

Valerie Vernon

Dona nobis pacem

From the Music Director

Every time I encounter Bach's B Minor Mass I am both exhilarated and humbled. My first exposure to the work was as a 19-year-old chorister; quite honestly I was overwhelmed trying to learn the plethora of notes. At that point I sensed more than understood the astonishing structures, and only later learned why this piece, perhaps more than any other, deserved the designation "masterwork". But I was hooked, and this has become my 'desert island piece'—if I were stranded with only one piece of music, this would be it.

Why? Well, first because it's Bach, but not just any Bach. The B Minor Mass was not written for the church or for a patron; it seems Bach assembled this work in the last years of his life to show what he had accomplished in the art of sacred vocal music. After composing more than 300 cantatas, all written with German texts for the Lutheran service, Bach turned to the universal words of the Latin mass, creating music that wouldn't be limited to a specific church since this text was recognized by Lutherans and Catholics alike. The B Minor is Bach at his finest.

In the Mass Bach uses almost every imaginable combination of voices and instruments, seemingly to demonstrate everything Bach could do. There are choruses of 4, 5, and 6 parts and a double chorus as well. There are solos for five different vocal types, and a variety of duets. Instrumentation ranges from a full Baroque orchestra playing in the latest concerted style to accompaniments by the continuo alone (cello, double bass & keyboard). There are intimate chamber music combinations, including the astonishing bassoon duet with horn solo of the Quoniam. Styles range from opera-influenced solos, to stile antico choruses, those Bach wrote in his version of the Renaissance style. You will hear a lot of the wonderful oboe d'amore, an instrument mid-way between an oboe and an English horn, what a player friend of mine calls the "just right" oboe, neither too high nor too low.

Earlier I said Bach "assembled" this great work. Much has been written about how Bach re-cycled earlier pieces in the B Minor, re-setting the music to the Mass text. The vast majority of the B Minor Mass originally existed in some other form. It's important to note, however, that Bach painstakingly recomposed each parodied section to reflect the exact meaning, emotionally and theologically, of the Mass. Though he may have wanted to save some of his better compositions from earlier years, he also transformed them into something completely new. Each movement personifies both essence and the detail of its new text. Most astonishing is the fact that the B Minor as a whole is not simply a pastiche of assembled movements, it's a carefully structured, balanced and unified whole. The Symbolum Nicenum or Credo is a case in point—its exact musical center consists of three choruses—the Et incarnatus est, Crucifixus, and

Et resurrexit—the central tenets of the Creed (God became man, was crucified and rose again). This center is flanked on both sides by solo movements accompanied by oboe d’amore, and the whole is started and finished symmetrically by paired choruses that begin in the old style with minimal accompaniment and finish with the dazzling orchestral and choral writing of the stile moderno. The Gloria section has a similar symmetry and balance. It’s arguable whether one can truly hear these grand spans, but I think on some deep level one senses the order created by these architectural symmetries.

Without a patron or a liturgical use, the B Minor may have been written truly Soli Dei Gloria—to the glory of God alone--words Bach inscribed at the end of the score, as he did all his sacred works. Certainly the Mass is woven through with theological meaning and representation. To give just two examples (and there are hundreds)—the second Kyrie, is written in the antico style, and the first four notes of its chromatic subject are often analyzed as a musical representation of the cross. According to Isaiah the Seraphim that sang “Holy, Holy, Holy” had six wings, and Bach set the Sanctus for 6 voices.

This is music to be experienced as well as pondered. Every movement is laden with not only with meaning, but also with emotion. The grand opening bars of the first Kyrie are like walking through a gate, or ‘hearing’ the first letter of an illuminated manuscript, and each successive movement is a wonder. The charming *Christe* is a duet in the Baroque operatic style, and though no doubt Bach’s choice of this form was meant to symbolize the second person of the Trinity theologically (2nd person—two singers, modern style—the Son as opposed to the Father), it cannot fail to please on its musical values alone. No matter how one looks at or experiences this work—theologically, analytically, or simply as beautiful music—it provides an astonishing wealth or riches. Enjoy!

—*Betsy Burleigh*



Allegheny Regional Asset District

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy on us

Christe

Christ have mercy on us

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy on us

Gloria in excelsis

Glory to God in the highest and on earth
peace to men of good will.

Laudamus te

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore
Thee, we glorify Thee.

Gratias agimus tibi

We give Thee thanks for thy great glory

Domine Deus

O Lord God, heavenly King, God the
Father almighty. O Lord Jesus Christ, the
only-begotten Son! O Lord God, Lamb of
God, Son of the Father,

Qui tollis peccata mundi

Who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us. Who takest away
the sins of the world, receive our prayer.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris

Who sittest at the right hand of the Fa-
ther, have mercy upon us.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus

For Thou only art holy. Thou only art
Lord. Thou only, O Jesus Christ, art
most high,

Cum sancto spiritu

together with the Holy Ghost in the glory
of God the Father. Amen.

Symbolum Nicenum Credo

I believe in one God,

Patrem omnipotentem

the Father almighty, maker of heaven
and earth, and of all things visible and
invisible.

Et in unum Dominum

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-
begotten Son of God, born of the Father
before all ages, God of God, light of

light, true God of true God; begotten,
not made. Who for us men, and for our
salvation, came down from heaven;

Et incarnatus est

and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, of
the Virgin Mary; and was made man.

Crucifixus

He was crucified also for us, suffered
under Pontius Pilate, and was buried.

Et resurrexit

And the third day He rose again accord-
ing to the Scriptures; and ascended into
heaven. He sitteth at the right hand of
the Father; and He shall come again with
glory to judge the living and the dead;
and His Kingdom shall have no end.

Et in spiritum sanctum Dominum

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and
giver of life, Who proceedeth from the
Father and the Son, Who together with
the Father and the Son is adored and glo-
rified; Who spoke by the Prophets. And
in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

Confiteor

I confess one baptism for the remission
of sins.

Et expecto

And I await the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest

Benedictus

Blessed is he the cometh in the name of
the Lord.

Osanna

Hosanna in the highest.

Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins
of the world, have mercy on us.

Dona Nobis Pacem

Grant us peace.

Guest Soloist



Joseph Gaines
Tenor

Joseph Gaines is a highly versatile and increasingly sought-after operatic and concert artist. His stage experience includes roles from *Madama Butterfly*, *The Magic Flute*, *Falstaff*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Orpheus in the Underworld*, *I Pagliacci*, *Abduction from the Seraglio*, *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *Euridice*, *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and *Eugene Onegin*, among others.

A favorite of critics and audiences on the concert stage, he has been a featured soloist with some of the finest American orchestras, including The Detroit Symphony, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and a number of chamber and baroque ensembles in the United States and abroad. His concert repertoire includes works of Mozart, Britten, Handel, Bach, Rameau, Scarlatti, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, as well as contemporary works. His performances have been broadcast domestically and internationally by NPR and Public Radio International, most recently with live excerpts of Alessandro Scarlatti's music on Houston Public Radio, and Handel's "Ode for Saint Cecilia's Day," performed with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and broadcast by Minnesota Public Radio.

For a busy 2009-10 Season, Gaines returns to The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra to perform in *The Rake's Progress* (Sellem) with Edo de Waart conducting, Indianapolis Opera (Scaramuccio in *Ariadne auf Naxos*), and Central City Opera (Goro in *Madama Butterfly*), and reprises Handel's *Messiah* with New York's famed St. Thomas Church Fifth Avenue (Gaines is the featured soloist on St. Thomas's 2007 recording of the same piece). Other concert performances include Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and the Mozart *Requiem*, Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*, Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings* and Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers*, performed in this its 400th anniversary year. Notable debuts include Pittsburgh Opera (Caius in *Falstaff* and Basilio/Curzio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*) and New York's Teatro Grattacielo (Cicillo in Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's *I Gioielli Della Madonna*).

Choir Soloists



Amelia D'Arcy Soprano

Praised by Opera News as having “a compelling vocal quality”, Amelia D’Arcy has sung with orchestra, chamber ensemble, in recital and concert, and on the opera stage. A versatile and well-accomplished musician, D’Arcy was a soloist with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra at age 15. She attended The Juilliard School and Columbia University, from which she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree magna cum laude and where she was elected to Phi Beta

Kappa. She garnered awards from the Tanglewood Institute, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts and the Rosa Ponselle Foundation.

In 1997 she made her professional debut as Lida in the New York Grand Opera’s Central Park production of Verdi’s *La Battaglia di Legnano*, with Vincent La Selva conducting. The New York Times wrote “a splendid performance...her voice invariably sounded lithe and alluring”. As part of an unprecedented effort to chronologically present Verdi’s complete operas, she later sang the title role in *Luisa Miller* and the role of Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* with Maestro La Selva. A frequent artist in recital at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall, D’Arcy also appeared in numerous other New York City venues, singing new music, art song and opera.

In 2004 she moved with her husband from New York to Pittsburgh, the city of her birth, to raise their children. She has sung professionally with the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, featured in performances of Haydn’s *Heiligmesse* and Bellini’s *Norma* with the River City Brass Band. In 2009 she was a soloist with the choir at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., and recently she sang with the Edgewood Symphony in a concert performance of Bizet’s *Carmen*. A winner of the Pittsburgh Concert Society competition, she was presented in recital in 2008 at the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium at the University of Pittsburgh.



*B*ethann Dilione
Mezzo-Soprano

Bethann Dilione is pleased to be in her first season in the Mendelssohn Choir. She has a degree in Vocal Performance from Kutztown University, and enjoys singing with several groups in the Pittsburgh area, including The Pittsburgh Camerata, the choir at the First Presbyterian Church of Downtown Pittsburgh, as well as having performed with the Pitts-

burgh Opera company. Bethann would like to thank her family and friends for their unending support and love.



*M*arietta Fischesser-Metze
Soprano

Marietta Fischesser-Metze was born in Wiesbaden, Germany and is a graduate of Musikakademie Wiesbaden and Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Frankfurt am Main.

She worked as an oratorio singer in Germany and was a featured soloist for *Matthäus Passion* (Telemann), *Gloria* (Vivaldi), *Messiah* (Händel), *Magnificat* (Bach), *Requiem* (Mozart), *Die Schöpfung* (Haydn), Schubert masses, *Hör mein Bitten* (Mendelssohn-Bartholdy), *Weihnachtsoratorium* (Saint-Saëns), *Petite Messe solennelle* (Rossini), *Magnificat* (Rutter), and many more.

She was a member of the Chamber Choir of Europe (conducted by Nicol Matt) and a soloist for the Festivalchor der Schlossfestspiele Ludwigsburg (conducted by Wolfgang Gönnerwein). She was the vocal trainer of Domchor Limburg, Chor der St. Hedwigs Kathedrale Berlin and Idsteiner Kantorei. She also worked as a choir conductor of several prize-winning choirs, and was the leader and conductor of Kantoreischule Potsdam.

She moved to Pittsburgh in 2009, where she works as a soprano soloist, and as a voice, flute and piano teacher. She played Herself in the Microscopic Opera Company production of *The Proposal* (Milton Granger) in March 2010.

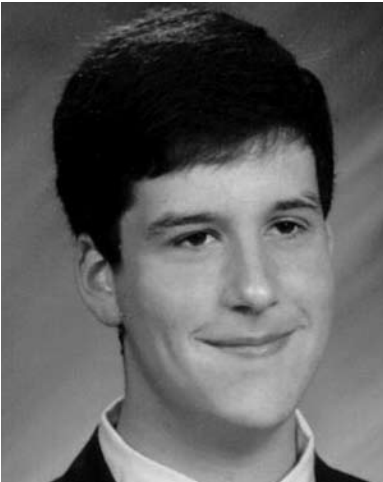


*N*ancy Klimcheck
Soprano

Nancy M. Klimcheck has been a member of the professional core of the Mendelssohn Choir for 17 years. She graduated from West Virginia University with both Bachelor of Vocal Performance and Master of Music Education degrees.

In 2005, Nancy was the featured Soprano soloist in the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra performance of Haydn's *Mass in Time of War*. Nancy currently teaches Voice at Washington and Jefferson College, teaches Voice for Point

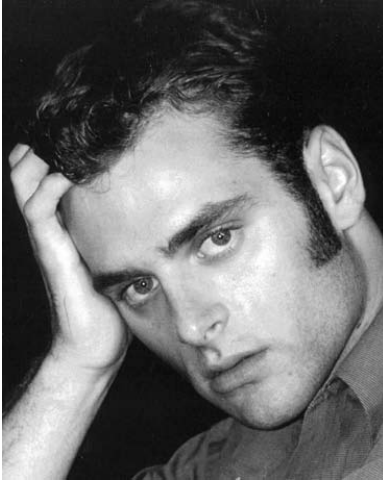
Park University's Summer program, and has her own studio in Bethel Park. In October 2009, Nancy appeared as "Eulalie", the Mayor's wife, in Marvin Hamlisch's *Music Man* starring Shirley Jones.



*J*on MacDonald
Tenor

Jonathan MacDonald is in his debut season with The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh. An active member of local community and church choirs, he is a cantor and soloist at Church of The Assumption in Bellevue. While at Assumption, he has had the opportunity to perform solos from many major choral works, including Handel's *Messiah*, Saint Saens' *Christmas Oratorio*, *Holst's Christmas Day*, *Bach's*

Christmas Oratorio, *Bach's Mass in B Minor*, *Mozart's Coronation Mass*, and *Faure's Requiem*. Mr. MacDonald is also involved in local theater organizations. He has performed with The Pittsburgh Savoyards in *The Gondoliers*, *Yeoman of the Guard*, *The Sorcerer* and *Pirates of Penzance*, and he has participated in tech crews for The Pittsburgh Savoyards, Stage 62, and North Catholic High School, his alma mater.



Tim Marquette Tenor

Tim Marquette is a native of Pittsburgh and received his Bachelor of Music in vocal performance from the University of Evansville (summa cum laude, 2001). His musical theatre credits have taken Tim to New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, Las Vegas, and back to Pittsburgh with shows including *Footloose* (Ren McCormick), *Oklahoma* (Will Parker), *Grease* (Danny Zuko), *Godspell* (Jesus), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Fyedka), *West Side*

Story, *Chicago*, *Lil' Abner*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Evita*, *Gypsy*, *Big Annie*, *Victor/Victoria*, and *George M!*. He has also performed classically here in Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh Opera Chorus and The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh) and around the world including St. Petersburg, Russia (Mozart's *Requiem* at the Glinka Capella) and Rome, Italy (Operafestival di Roma). Outside of performing, Tim is an avid traveller. His travels have taken him around Europe, Asia, Russia, and South Africa. He spent two years living in Rome where he worked on the direction of *La Vedova Allegra* and *Il Flauto Magico* with the Operafestival di Roma as well as teaching English as a foreign language. He spent a year teaching English and drama in Japan, and works every summer in London at a school for refugee children where he leads a month-long music and theatre workshop. Tim is currently the Director of Musical Theatre at his alma mater, Pine-Richland High School, and works in Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts.



Scott O'Neal
Bass

Scott O'Neal graduated from the University of Houston in 1995 with a double major in History and Music. He participated in the University Concert Chorale, Chamber Singers, Collegium Musicum, and Opera Theater, where he was involved in ten productions, including *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Lakei), *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Luther), and *The Consul* (Assan). Mr. O'Neal sang in the Houston Symphony Chorus, Houston Masterworks Chorus, Collegium

Mysterium, UH Collegium Musicum, and Ensemble Mariposa.

Mr. O'Neal joined the Mendelssohn Choir in 2001 and has been part of its Professional Core since 2005. He served as a section leader at Westminster Presbyterian Church for four years, performing solos in Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and *Cantata No. 62*, Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Britten's *Cantata Misericordium*.



Lauren Pickett
Mezzo-soprano

Lauren Pickett, a Pittsburgh native, is a core member of the Mendelssohn Choir and was the alto section leader for the Junior Mendelssohn choir this past fall. This is her first year in the Mendelssohn Choir. Pickett also currently sings at her church, Providence Presbyterian. She holds a Bachelor and Masters degree in Vocal Performance from the prestigious Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. She studied with

Patricia Stiles and Mary Ann Hart, and coached with Gary Arvin. At The Jacobs School of Music she performed in multiple operas including *Susannah* (Mrs. Gleaton), *The Magic Flute* (Pamina), *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (Nun of the convent), and *The Ballad of Baby Doe* (Mary).



*K*athy Linger
Soprano

Originally from Parkersburg, West Virginia, soprano Kathy Linger graduated from the University of Illinois in 2003 with a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in vocal performance. Concentrating on Baroque performance practice, she completed her dissertation on “The Sacred Cantatas Judith and Suzanne of Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre: An Analysis of Vocal Ornamentation with Application to French Baroque Performance Practice.”

Singing repertoire spanning baroque to 21st-century music, her passion for early music has brought critics to hail her voice as “a singular talent that brings the music to life with clarity, sensitivity and thrilling coloratura.” While attending the University of Illinois, she performed as soloist with orchestras including the Baroque Artists of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois (Handel *Messiah*, Bach *St. Matthew Passion*, Bach *St. John Passion*, Mozart *Mass in C Minor*, Mozart *Alleluia*, Bach *Weinacht’s Oratorium*, Monteverdi *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, Purcell *Dido and Aeneas*), the University of Illinois Oratorio Society and Orchestra (Bach *Mass in B Minor*, Orff *Carmina Burana*, Villa-Lobos *Bachianas Brasillieras*), and University of Illinois Opera (Poulenc *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Madame Lidoine). This recent Lenten season, she performed newly published motets of Clérambault, and the Troisième Leçon de Ténèbres of Couperin with the Baroque Artists of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.

Under the musical direction of Donald Nally, she has appeared five seasons at the Il Festival dei Due Monde, Spoleto, Italy working with world-renowned 20th century late composer, Gian Carlo Menotti. Spoleto main stage productions included *Wozzeck*, *Carmen*, *Les mamelle de Tirésias*, *The Saint of Bleeker Street*, *Die Tote Stadt*, and *Eugene Onegin*.

Now in her fourth season with the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, she was a soloist in their production of Fauré’s *Requiem* in 2009. Dr. Linger has taught on the voice faculties of Illinois Wesleyan University, Murray State University in Kentucky and Youngstown State University, Ohio and currently maintains a private studio.



Valerie Vernon mezzo-soprano

A mezzo-soprano with a broad tessitura and versatile style, Valerie Vernon has been a member of the Mendelssohn Choir since 1998. As a featured soloist with Mendelssohn under Director Betsy Burleigh, she performed Mendelssohn's motet *Aus Tiefer Noth* at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. in 2009 and was Alto soloist in Rachmaninoff's *Vespers* at St. Paul Cathedral in Pittsburgh during the same year. Valerie has also appeared

here at East Liberty Presbyterian as a liturgical soloist and, previously, with Mendelssohn Choir as a soloist in the Haydn *Heiligmesse* with the Academy Chamber Orchestra of Pittsburgh. At Heinz Hall, she was chosen as a choral soloist in the Gospel Hallelujah Chorus for the 2006 Holiday Pops series as well as for the Video Games Live concerts. If you attended this past season's *The Music Man* at Heinz Hall, you would have spotted Valerie among the cast of townspeople, as directed by Robert Page and Marvin Hamlisch.

A former oboist, she was a member of the Greenville symphony, and also played for the Mercer County Band. During the summer of 2009, she premiered as a soloist for the Mercer Band, performing a Richard Rodger's Medley and operatic favorites. A current resident of Grove City, Pa., Valerie was a highlighted soloist during the Christmas season for the Olde Town Extravaganza. Throughout western Pa., she has appeared as a liturgical soloist and is recognized for her warm timbre and accomplished repertoire. Valerie is a native of Greenville, Pennsylvania where she now teaches Latin and English at Thiel College. She resides in Grove City with her husband and two daughters.



Katy Shackleton Williams Lyric Coloratura Soprano

Katy Shackleton Williams has gained local popularity in the community with successful organizations such as Pittsburgh Symphony, Pittsburgh Opera, Mendelssohn Choir, River City Brass Band and Pittsburgh Concert Chorale.

Ms. Williams is a frequent featured soloist for the Pittsburgh Symphony Holiday Pops concert series and special guest artist in the Fiddlesticks Children's concerts. She has been the guest narrator for the PSO's

Tiny Tots concert and the school time concerts. She made her Pittsburgh Symphony Mellon Grand Classics debut in September 2005 with Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Nights Dream* and was a featured soloist the 2008-09 season in the Mahler 2 Symphony.

She has frequently toured as a featured soloist with the River City Brass Band, the Pittsburgh Concert Chorale and the North Eastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic with Larry Loh. She has also performed with the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC, and has sung the National Anthem at Three Rivers Stadium.

Operatic roles include 'Adina' in *Elixir of Love*, 'Adele' in *Die Fledermaus*, 'First Mother' in *Dead Man Walking*, 'Love' in *Orfeo and Eurydice* and 'Barbarina' in *The Marriage of Figaro*. She has appeared in the chorus on tour and main stage productions with Pittsburgh Opera, Opera Theater Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon Opera, Chautauqua Institute and Spoleto Festival, SC.

Notable solo engagements include performances of Honegger *King David*, Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, Vaughan Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Handel *Messiah*, Bach *St. John's Passion*, and Cantatas 74, 51 and 202, Dubois *Seven Last Words of Christ*, Barber *Prayers of Kirkegaard*, Holst *Christmas Day*, Archer, Brahms, Durufle, Faure, Mozart and Rutter Requiem, and Poulenc, Rutter and Vivaldi Gloria. She has recorded Leonardo Balada's Encenas Borrachones with New World Records and his recent release, *La Muerte de Colon*, directed by Robert Page, under the Naxos label.

Currently, Ms. Williams is on the voice faculty of Washington and Jefferson College, member of the professional core for the Mendelssohn Choir, chorister in Pittsburgh Opera and music specialist at Jewish Community Center, South Hills. She is the soprano soloist at Rodef Shalom, Oakland and is the vocal artist in residence at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Mt. Lebanon. Ms. Williams is an honors graduate of Carnegie Mellon University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Vocal Performance.

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