

Saturday, December 31

DINNER AT 7:30 PM | CONCERT AT 9 PM | GALA AT 10:30 PM

Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center for the Performing Arts

DARRIN DAVIS & MARIO GUDMUNDSSON, 2016 NYE Gala Chairs

MATTHEW DIRST

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind? Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and auld lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear, for auld lang syne, we'll take a cup o'kindness yet, for auld lang syne.

Every December 31st at midnight, millions of revelers the world over stumble through these famous words by the Scottish bard Robert Burns. A few years ago, I encountered them in New York City under glass—literally, thanks to Pierpont Morgan's eccentric collecting habits—and marveled again at their universality: in its original manuscript and the earliest prints, the song seems somehow less corny. On New Year's Eve especially we remember the past year, warts and all, while hoping for a bright future.

We're delighted you chose to spend this New Year's Eve with Ars Lyrica. With *Bachanalia* 2016 we welcome back Uncle Johann Sebastian and several favorite Ars Lyrica soloists. On the auditory menu are one cantata written for this transitional season, another that honors the legacy of an important teacher, and a bubbling concerto that encapsulates the conflicting emotions we feel at the passing of the old and the beginning of a new year. Following the program, we look forward to toasting the new year with you at our annual holiday gala in the Sarofim Hall Grand Lobby, where the champagne will be flowing freely.

On behalf of the musicians, board, and staff of Ars Lyrica Houston, a very Happy New Year and best wishes for 2017!

MATTHEW DIRST

Artistic Director

PROGRAM

Music by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Schwingt freudig euch empor, BWV 36c

Concerto for oboe d'amore and strings in A major, BWV 1055

Allegro

Adagio

Allegro

Gottlob! Nun geht das Jahr zu Ende, BWV 28

Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen, BWV 248/5/1 (from the *Christmas Oratorio*, Part V)

See texts & translations on pages 4-8.

PROGRAM NOTES

he surviving autograph score for *Schwingt freudig* auch empor, BWV 36c, suggests a 1725 Leipzig commission for a work to celebrate the birthday of a venerable though unnamed teacher. Tonight's performance is offered in a similar spirit of thanksgiving for all teachers and to mark the annual refreshment of our calendar. Bach recycled much of its music several times, as was his habit with secular cantatas since they typically served special occasions, not annual liturgical events. An Advent cantata by the same name (BWV 36) is perhaps the best-known of these variants.

In the opening movement, the solo *oboe d'amore* and accompanying strings introduce a concerto-like idea that is taken up by all four singers, whose soaring individual lines beautifully illustrate this poet's desire to "reach for the stars." A series of three recitative-aria pairs indulge the cantata's lucky recipient with various tributes, from the poignant and tender to the dancelike and joyful. The closing movement is an odd mashup of a sprightly choral gavotte with three accompanied recitative interjections, whose grandiloquent final pronouncements provide the icing on the cake. What a yummy treat this must have made for the original birthday celebration!

A cheerful mood likewise pervades the 1725 New Year's cantata *Gottlob! Nun geht das Jahr zu Ende, BWV 28*, one of several sacred works Bach wrote for this season of the year. Its libretto, by Erdmann Neumeister, combines typical year-end sentiments with two chorale stanzas, one of which Bach sets in leisurely counterpoint (movement 2) and the other quite simply, in four-part harmony (movement 6). In the opening aria, notable for its lavish orchestration, lively melodies are tossed back and forth between pairs of oboes and the upper strings as the soprano gives thanks for the end of one year and the beginning of the next. The penultimate duet movement features equally athletic lines for alto, tenor, and continuo cellist, who indulge in a little private revelry before the closing chorale.

The Concerto in A Major, BWV 1055, one of Bach's concertos for all occasions, is perhaps most familiar as vehicle for solo harpsichord, though it may have been conceived originally as a concerto for *oboe d'amore*, which is how we're playing it this evening. This instrument, one of Bach's favorites, is the alto voice of the Baroque oboe family, sounding somewhere between the standard oboe and the *oboe da caccia*, which plays in the tenor range. Bach put the haunting and rustic sound of these low oboes to good use in a number of texted works as well, including several with prominent pastoral imagery.

The *Christmas Oratorio* is actually a series of six separate cantatas intended for performance from Christmas through the New Year period, each of which borrows considerable material from older compositions of Bach. Cobbled together in 1734, according to the autograph manuscript, the oratorio relies on the same alternation of text types and musical textures as do Bach's passion settings, with Gospel narration by a tenor Evangelist, reflective arias for solo voices, and big ensemble movements leavened regularly by simple four-part chorales. Part V of this monumental work, intended for the first Sunday after the New Year, begins with a positively irresistibly chorus, one that provides a most appropriate conclusion for *Bachanalia* 2016.

© MATTHEW DIRST Artistic Director

TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS

Schwingt freudig euch empor, BWV 36c

Chorus

Schwingt freudig euch empor und dringt bis an die Sternen,
Ihr Wünsche, bis euch Gott vor seinem Throne sieht!
Doch haltet ein, ein Herz darf sich nicht weit entfernen,
Das Dankbarkeit und Pflicht zu seinem Lehrer zieht.

Soar joyfully and reach for the stars,

you wishes, until God
acknowledges you!
But not so fast! A heart need
not stray
that gives thanks and gratitude
towards its teacher.

Recitative (tenor)

Ein Herz, in zärtlichem Empfinden, So ihm viel tausend Lust erweckt, Kann sich fast nicht in sein Vergnügen finden, Da ihm die Hoffnung immer mehr entdeckt, Es steiget wie ein helles Licht Der Andacht Glut in Gottes Heiligtum, Wiewohl, der teuren Lehrer Ruhm A heart, whose tender emotions awaken countless pleasures, can hardly rest content,

since hope blesses it repeatedly.

It rises like a bright light of fervent devotion in God's sanctuary.

And yet, our beloved teacher's renown anchors this heart like a magnet, informing its wishes and desires.

Aria (tenor)

Die Liebe führt mit sanften Schritten Ein Herz, das seinen Lehrer liebt. Wo andre auszuschweifen pflegen, Wird dies behutsam sich bewegen, Weil ihm die Ehrfurcht Grenzen gibt.

Ist sein Polar, dahin, als ein Magnet,

Sein Wünschen, sein Verlangen geht.

Love leads gently those souls who love teachers. Where others wander aimlessly, this spirit moves thoughtfully, since it is bound by reverence.

Recitative (bass)

Du bist es ja, o hochverdienter Mann, Der in unausgesetzten Lehren It is you, O most-deserving one, who through regular instruction

Den Silberschmuck des Alters tragen kann. Dank, Ehrerbietung, Ruhm Kömmt alles hier zusammen, Und weil du unsre Brust Als Licht und Führer leiten mußt, Wirst du dies freudige Bezeigen nicht verdammen.

Aria (bass)

Der Tag, der dich vordem gebar, Stellt sich vor uns so heilsam dar Als jener, da der Schöpfer spricht, Es werde Licht. of the highest quality
upholds the glittery legacy of
antiquity.
Gratitude, veneration, and renown
come together here;
and because you lead our hearts
as light and guide,
you will not reject this joyful
recognition.

The day that gave you birth

as that day when our Creator said:

now seems to us as blessed

Let there be light!

Recitative (soprano)

Mit höchsten Ehren

Nur dieses Einzge sorgen wir, Dies Opfer sei zu unvollkommen; Doch wird es nur von dir, O teurer Lehrer, gütig angenommen, So steigt der sonst so schlechte Wert So hoch, als unser treuer Sinn begehrt.

Only one thing troubles us: our offering is likely imperfect. And yet, if you only, beloved teacher, kindly accept it, then its value will accrue as a reflection of our great esteem.

Aria (soprano)

Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen Verkündigt man der Lehrer Preis. Es schallet kräftig in der Brust, Ob man gleich die empfundne Lust Nicht völlig auszudrücken weiß. Even in soft, muted tones

may our teacher be praised. It resounds throughout the body, even though the pleasure cannot be fully expressed.

Recitative (tenor)

Bei solchen freudenvollen Stunden Wird unsers Wunsches Ziel gefunden, Der sonst auf nichts als auf dein Leben geht. In such joyful moments the goal of all our desires is realized, as we wish you a long and healthy life.

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Chorus and Recitatives

Wie die Jahre sich verneuen, So verneue sich dein Ruhm. Jedoch, was wünschen wir, Da dieses von sich selbst geschieht, Und da man deinen Preis, Den unser Helikon am besten weiß, Auch außer dessen Grenzen sieht. Dein Verdienst recht auszulegen, Fordert mehr, als wir vermögen.

Drum schweigen wir
Und zeigen dadurch dir,
Daß unser Dank zwar mit dem
Munde nicht,
Doch desto mehr mit unsern
Herzen spricht.
Deines Lebens Heiligtum
Kann vollkommen uns erfreuen.
So öffnet sich der Mund zum Danken;
Denn jedes Glied nimmt an der
Freude teil,
Das Auge dringt aus den gewohnten
Schranken
Und sieht dein künftig Glück und Heil.

Wie die Jahre sich verneuen, So verneue sich dein Ruhm! As the years are renewed,
may your spirit be annually refreshed.
But why wish this,
when it happens of its own accord,
and since your reputation,
which our own Helicon knows best,
is known even beyond this place?
To properly assess your merit
requires more than our humble
efforts.

Therefore we fall silent and thereby show you that we thank you not just with our voices, but rather with our hearts.

Your sacred sanctuary brings us complete fulfillment. And so our mouths open in thanks, and every limb rejoices;

the eye exceeds its normal capacity

and glimpses your future happiness and health.

As the years are renewed, may your spirit be annually refreshed!

Gottlob! Nun geht das Jahr zu Ende, BWV 28

Aria (soprano)

Gottlob! nun geht das Jahr zu Ende, Das neue rücket schon heran. Gedenke, meine Seele, dran, Wieviel dir deines Gottes Hände Im alten Jahre Guts getan! Stimm ihm ein frohes Danklied an; So wird er ferner dein gedenken

Praise God! Now the old year comes to its end, and the new one approaches. Consider, my soul, how many good things God did for you in the old year! Sound a joyful song of thanks, so that God will remember you

Und mehr zum neuen Jahre schenken.

Chorus

Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren, Was in mir ist, den Namen sein! Sein Wohltat tut er mehren, Vergiß es nicht, o Herze mein! Hat dir dein Sünd vergeben Und heilt dein Schwachheit groß, Errett' dein armes Leben, Nimmt dich in seinen Schoß. Mit reichem Trost beschüttet, Verjüngt, dem Adler gleich. Der Kön'g schafft Recht, behütet, Die leid'n in seinem Reich.

Arioso (bass)

So spricht der Herr:
Es soll mir eine Lust sein,
daß ich ihnen Gutes tun soll,
und ich will sie in diesem Lande
pflanzen treulich,
von ganzem Herzen und von
ganzer Seele.

Recitative (tenor)

Gott ist ein Quell, wo lauter
Güte fleußt;
Gott ist ein Licht, wo lauter
Gnade scheinet;
Gott ist ein Schatz, der lauter
Segen heißt;
Gott ist ein Herr, der's treu und
herzlich meinet.
Wer ihn im Glauben liebt, in
Liebe kindlich ehrt,
Sein Wort von Herzen hört
Und sich von bösen Wegen kehrt,
Dem gibt er sich mit allen Gaben.
Wer Gott hat, der muß alles haben.

and remain with you in the new year.

Praise, my soul, the Lord; whatever is in me, praise God's name! His good deeds increase always: do not forget it, my heart! He has forgiven your sins and healed your great weakness, rescued your poor life, and taken you into his realm. He has protected you lavishly and rejuvenated you, like the eagle. The King is just and protects those who suffer in his kingdom.

Thus says the Lord:
I take great pleasure
in doing them good,
and I will give them this world
faithfully,
with my whole heart and my
entire soul.

God is a fountain from which goodness flows; God is a light from which grace shines; God is a treasure that signifies

blessing; God is a Lord who embodies love and faithfulness.

Whoever loves Him faithfully honors him like a child, comprehends His word in his heart and turns from evil ways; to him God gives Himself completely. Whoever has God has everything.

Duet (alto & tenor)

Gott hat uns im heurigen Jahre gesegnet,
Daß Wohltun und Wohlsein einander begegnet.
Wir loben ihn herzlich und bitten darneben,
Er woll auch ein glückliches neues Jahr geben.
Wir hoffens von seiner beharrlichen Güte
Und preisens im voraus mit dankbarm Gemüte.

Chorale

All solch dein Güt wir preisen, Vater ins Himmels Thron, Die du uns tust beweisen Durch Christum, deinen Sohn, Und bitten ferner dich: Gib uns ein friedsam Jahre, Für allem Leid bewahre Und nähr uns mildiglich. God has blessed us in the present year with both prosperity and health.

We therefore praise Him and pray

that He will also give us a Happy New Year. We trust in His unwavering goodness and praise Him in thankful anticipation.

All your goodness we praise, Father on heaven's throne, as you reveal yourself to us through your beloved son; and we ask you further to give us a peaceful year, protect us from suffering and nourish us gently.

Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen, BWV 248/5/1

Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen, dir sei Lob und Dank bereit. Dich erhebet alle Welt, weil dir unser Wohl gefällt, weil anheut unswer aller Wunsch gelungen, weil uns dein Segen so herrlich We sing glory to you, God, and prepare thanks and praise. The whole world exalts you for our well-being pleases you; today our every wish is granted,

your blessing delights us greatly.

ARTISTIC PERSONNEL

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Matthew Dirst, Artistic Director

BACHANALIA ARTISTS

Melissa Givens	soprano	Brandi Berry &	violin
Ryland Angel	countertenor	Maria Lin	
Joseph Gaines	tenor	James Dunham	viola
David Grogan	hass-haritone	Barrett Sills	cello
Kathryn Montoya &	Baroque oboe, oboe d'amore	Deborah Dunham	violone
Anne Leek		Jeffrey Cooper	organ
Ellis Reyes Montes	Baroque bassoon	Matthew Dirst	harpsichord/ conductor

With special thanks to the Moores School of Music, University of Houston, for rehearsal space and use of its John Phillips Florentine-style harpsichord and Bennett-Guittari continuo organ for this program, and to Kate & Malcolm Hawk, Janet & Ed Hess, and Bettie Cartwright for providing accommodations to Ars Lyrica artists.

erfreut.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



American soprano **Melissa Givens** moves and excites audiences and critics alike with a rich, powerful tone, crystalline clarity, and intelligent musical interpretations. Especially noted for her expressiveness and elegance on the stage, she's been hailed as a singer whose music making is "consistently rewarding" and "a pleasure to hear." Givens is also an extremely versatile artist, regularly performing repertoire from the Baroque era through music of the 21st century.

A writer for Classical.Net marveled, "Melissa Givens has a voice you imagine coming from the goddess Erda" in a review of *Sing Freedom!*, Conspirare's 2012 recording of spirituals on the Harmonia Mundi label. Recent performances include Mahler's Symphony No. 4 with the Greenbriar Consortium, and appearances with Houston Camerata, the Sam Houston State University Symphony, the Woodlands Symphony, the Boulder Bach Festival, and the Concord Chorale.

Currently on the voice faculty of Augusta University, she remains in demand on concert series throughout the United States and abroad, and counts Ars Lyrica Houston and the Grammy® winning Conspirare: Craig Hella Johnson and Company of Voices as frequent collaborators. Her solo appearances on their major label releases have received enthusiastic reviews. She can also be heard on her solo CD, *let the rain kiss you*.



A highly energetic, vibrant, and extremely versatile singer and actor, tenor **Joseph Gaines** has been described as "such an exuberant performer you couldn't help but smile" (*The Minneapolis Star-Tribune*). He is known in the United States and abroad for beautifully sung and richly detailed interpretations of character roles. Gaines has been a regular guest artist at Opera Philadelphia, Pittsburgh Opera, Utah Opera, Central City Opera, Indianapolis Opera, and others.

An in-demand concert artist and recitalist, he has been a featured soloist with The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Detroit Symphony, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, The Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia's Lyric Fest, and The Brooklyn Art Song Society, as well as many chamber and period ensembles. Gaines joined the artist roster of The Metropolitan Opera for the first time in 2013-14, covering Caius in Verdi's *Falstaff*. Engagements in 2016 have included *Le nozze di Figaro* at Utah Opera, *La fanciulla del West* with Opera Colorado, and *Turandot* at Opera Philadelphia, as well as his debut with the Colorado Bach Ensemble. Upcoming projects over the next two years include a return to Resonance Works Pittsburgh and Opera Philadelphia, as well as debuts with Hawaii Opera Theater (2017) and a major west coast opera company in 2018.



Born on St Cecilia's day, the Grammy-nominated British counter-tenor **Ryland Angel** has built an international reputation on both the opera and concert stage, in repertoire ranging from the Baroque to new operatic commissions at major opera houses, concert halls and festivals throughout Europe and the USA. He has performed in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, Gavin Bryars's *Doctor Ox's Experiment* (English National Opera), *Fairy Queen* (Barcelona), Gluck's *Orfeo* (Koblenz),

Amadigi (Karlsruhe), Venus and Adonis (Flanders Opera), Dido and Aeneas (Opera Comique), The Play of Daniel (Spoleto), and Ballet Comique de La Royne (Geneva). Angel has sung on over 70 recordings including music of Buxtehude, Charpentier, Scarlatti, Stradella, Spears, O'Regan, Handel, Monteverdi, Purcell, Bach and on the film soundtracks of Jack Reacher: Never Go Back, Zoolander 2, Freedom, Le Petit Prince, La Peau, Henry 4th, Machete, The Mystery of Dante and the PBS TV special Heavenly Voices. Recent engagements include Doux Mensonges (Opera National de Paris), Agrippina (NYCO), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Florentine and Kansas Opera), Julius Caesar (Utah and Colorado Opera, Boston Baroque), Sant' Alessio (Paris, London, New York), Carmina Burana (Lincoln Center and Prague Proms with CNSO), St. John Passion (Saint Thomas and Worcester Chorus), Classics and Rock (Seoul Philharmonic), Tesla (Dartmouth), Striggio with Le Concert Spirituel (Edinburgh Festival), Acis and Galatea (Houston) and Messiah (Handel and Haydn Society, Masterworks Chorus, Musica Sacra). Recent recordings include The Flaming Fire (MSR), Heart and Soul (Centaur), La Sposa dei cantici (Solo Luminus) and Now Fatal Change (NMC). Ryland is a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Minnesota and has talk masterclasses around the world including some at UNT, Conservatoire of Toulouse, Princeton high school and Conspirare Youth choirs. More information on RylandAngel.com.



Kathryn Montoya teaches baroque oboe and recorder at Oberlin Conservatory and the University of North Texas. She appears with a variety of orchestral and chamber music ensembles including the internationally-acclaimed Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, Tafelmusik, the Wiener Akademie, Arion, Pacific Musicworks, and Apollo's Fire among others. Kathryn received her degrees at Oberlin Conservatory and Indiana University School of Music,

Bloomington. While at IU she was the recipient of the prestigious Performer's Certificate and was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Germany. Recent projects include the Globe's Tony award winning productions of *Twelfthe Night* and *Richard III* on Broadway, concerts and master classes in Shanghai, and tour of Steffani's *Niobe*, *Regina di Tebe* with Philippe Jaroussky, Karina Gauvin and the BEMF orchestra. Kathryn very much enjoys the various thrills of recording, has been broadcast on NPR's Performance Today and can be heard on the Erato, Naxos, CPO, NCA, Analekta, and Dorian Sono Luminus labels.

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David Grogan has performed extensively throughout the southwest, getting positive reviews. The Dallas Morning News hailed Dr. Grogan as the "perfect Christus" after a performance of the St. Matthew Passion with the Dallas Bach Society. The New York Times called his singing "excellent." The Albuquerque Tribune, in reference to a performance of Messiah with the New Mexico Symphony, said, "David Grogan had all the range and power required of the part,

sounding like the voice of doom in "The people that walked in darkness" and the light of revelation in "The trumpet shall sound." A performance of Elijah had critics praising his ability to "move easily from stentorian declamation to lyrical aria." Another critic said that he "...brought an impressive vocal power to the lead role of Elijah, and his rich emotive gift set the level for the other chief performers." The Dallas Morning News said "His meaty bass shook the heavens and the earth and sounded the trumpet with imposing conviction." He has performed as a soloist with Dallas-Fort Worth area arts groups such as the Dallas Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, Dallas Bach Society, Plano Civic Chorus, Denton Bach Society, Texas Baroque Ensemble, Orpheus Chamber Singers, Texas Camerata, Fort Worth Baroque Society, and several Texas universities. Recent performances include Handel's Messiah with the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys in NYC, Handel's Acis and Galatea with Mountainside Baroque in Maryland, Bach's B-Minor Mass under the direction of Simon Carrington with the University of Northern Colorado, Verdi's Requiem with Texas Tech, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at Bass Hall in Fort Worth, Texas.



Ars Lyrica Founder & Artistic Director Matthew Dirst is the first American musician to win major international prizes in both organ and harpsichord, including the American Guild of Organists National Young Artist Competition (1990) and the Warsaw International Harpsichord Competition (1993). Widely admired for his stylish playing and conducting, the Dallas Morning News recently praised his "clear and evocative conducting" of Handel's Alexander's Feast, which

"yielded a performance as irresistibly lively as it was stylish." Dirst's recordings with Ars Lyrica have earned a Grammy nomination and widespread critical acclaim. His degrees include a PhD in musicology from Stanford University and the prix de virtuosité in both organ and harpsichord from the Conservatoire National de Reuil-Malmaison, France, where he spent two years as a Fulbright scholar. Equally active as a scholar and as an organist, Dirst is Professor of Music at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston, and Organist at St Philip Presbyterian Church in Houston. He is the author of *Engaging Bach*: The Keyboard Legacy from Marpurg to Mendelssohn (Cambridge University Press, 2012) and the editor of Bach and the Organ (University of Illinois Press, 2016).

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ABOUT ARS LYRICA

Founded in 1998 by harpsichordist and conductor Matthew Dirst, Ars Lyrica **Houston** presents a diverse array of music from the 17th and 18th centuries on period instruments. Its local subscription series, according to the Houston Chronicle, "sets the agenda" for early music in Houston and it also appears regularly at major festivals and conferences, including the 2014 Berkeley Early Music Festival & Exhibition. Ars Lyrica's distinctive programming favors Baroque dramatic and chamber works, and its pioneering efforts have won international acclaim: the ensemble's world première recording of Johann Adolf Hasse's Marc'Antonio e Cleopatra, hailed by Early Music America as "a thrilling performance that glows in its quieter moments and sparkles with vitality," was nominated for a Grammy Award® for Best Opera 2011.

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All proceeds from the event will benefit Ars Lyrica Houston, making sure that the organization continues to delight local and national audiences with superlative performances of baroque music for years to come.

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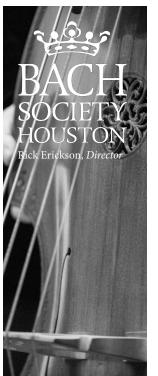
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bachsocietyhouston.org | 713.400.0514

Bach Society Houston is funded in part by the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance









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