

MEISTERSINGERS

EXPERIENCE THROUGH SONG

Brian Dehn, *Artistic Director*

The Poet Sings



JUNE 18TH ~ 7:00 PM

**Our Lady Queen of Angels
Catholic Church**

2100 Mar Vista Drive
Newport Beach, CA 92660

MEISTERSINGERS

EXPERIENCE THROUGH SONG

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JUNE 2022



MISSION STATEMENT

Meistersingers, Inc. is dedicated to excellence in the performance of choral music. To enrich our society, educate our communities, and develop our singers, we preserve the past, promote the present and foster the future of the choral art.

Dear Friends and Meistersingers Family,

Thank you for joining us tonight as we present the last concert of the 2021-2022 season.

This has been an amazing year that has allowed us to showcase our Meistersingers' Christmas Favorites, display the best of Broadway and Opera, and memorialize our dear friend Barbara Worsley with a commissioned piece in her honor.

Our finale concert showcases wonderful poetry that is masterfully set to music. We invite you to join us on this journey, tackling a broad range of emotions and ideas expressed through the poets' verses.

We are extremely grateful for those who have given generously to make this season possible. It is through your contributions that we are able to continue bringing exceptional choral music to Orange County. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Timothy Ryan
Chairperson
Meistersingers Board of Directors

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to thank the Pastor and Director of Music Ministries of Our Lady Queen of Angels Catholic Church for their support and assistance. We are honored to give this concert for your community.

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The Poet Sings

Brian Dehn, *Conductor*
Minako Horimura Han, *Accompanist*

Ballade to the Moon.....*Daniel Elder*

Acrostic Song.....*David Del Tredici*

SOLOIST: *Erin Theodorakis*

WHISPER CHORUS: *Myrna Goodbaudy, Teresa Guido, Grayson Hutchins,
Maeve Hutchins, Cory Peoples, Timothy Ryan*

Reincarnations.....*Samuel Barber*

Mary Hynes

Anthony O'Daly

The Coolin

Prayer.....*Morten Lauridsen*

Soneto de la Noche.....*Morten Lauridsen*

Sure On This Shining Night.....*Morten Lauridsen*

INTERMISSION

Stars.....*Ēriks Ešēvalds*

There Will Be Rest.....*Frank Ticheli*

At the Round Earth's Imagined Corners.....*Williametta Spencer*

Noche oscura del alma.....*Carlos Surinach*

Come To Me, My Love.....*Norman Dello Joio*

i carry your heart with me.....*David C. Dickau*

Let My Love Be Heard.....*Jake Runestad*

"Poetry is the music of the soul, and, above all, of great and feeling souls."

— VOLTAIRE (1694-1778)

Please turn off all electronic devices.



BRIAN DEHN, *Artistic Director*

Brian Dehn, founder and conductor, is known as an educator, performer, clinician and pedagogue, and has conducted his ensembles in some of the world's most remarkable venues including Carnegie Hall, the Sistine Chapel, St. Mark's in Venice, St. Peter's in Rome, St. Mathias in Budapest, St. Tomas Kircke in Vienna, St. Patrick's and The Riverside Church in New York, St. Anne's Cathedral in Sydney, St. Mary's Church in Cambridge, St. Patrick's and St. Mary's in Dublin and the Beijing Central Conservatory. His selection of top quality repertoire and special work with vocal development has him in frequent demand as a guest clinician with choirs throughout California and the western United States.

Mr. Dehn is privileged to helm two wonderful community choruses in Meistersingers and Meritage. With these ensembles he is able to work with professional soloists and orchestras while committing to assisting amateurs develop and explore their gifts. Both ensembles are unique in the repertoire they choose to perform and have vibrant community support. He is also Music Director at First Christian Church of Orange where he leads the Chancel Choir, two Handbell Ensembles and two Children's Choirs.

Mr. Dehn is currently pursuing his Doctorate of Musical Arts at Claremont Graduate University. He recently completed 15 years of teaching at the high school level where his ensembles were awarded consistent "Superior" ratings and invitations to prestigious festivals around the state, including an invitation to perform at the 2018 ACDA Western Region Convention. He took his students on performance tours to New York, Spain and Portugal, San Francisco, China, Italy, Ireland and England, and Australia.

ABOUT THE MEISTERSINGERS

Now in its twenty-second season, Meistersingers was formed in response to the growing demand for quality choral music performance in the community. Created to be a chamber ensemble specializing in the most demanding classical choral works, Meistersingers maintains high standards in literature and chooses outstanding performance venues with beauty and elegance equal to the music.

Believing that choral music is one of the most profound resources for the elevation of the human spirit and committed to enriching community life, Meistersingers has always offered inspiring and educational performances of the highest quality.

The group is made up of individuals who make a commitment of time and effort rivaling that of the best ensembles in the country. They are consistently rewarded with high praise from audiences and a growing anticipation for future projects. With seven highly successful recordings to their credit, as well as invitations to perform all over the world, they are quickly becoming recognized as a major ensemble in the choral world.



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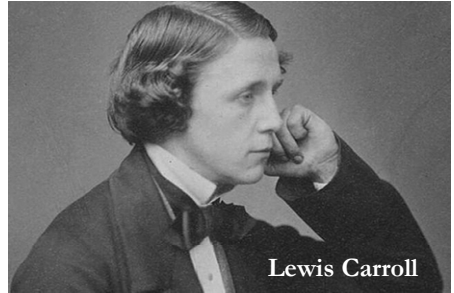
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PROGRAM NOTES

Singing is sometimes identified as the first art. That might seem a very large claim to boast, however, contemplating the origins of human communication, Charles Darwin once wondered, “Did our language commence with singing?” The idea that even before we had words and sentences with structure and syntax, we were using our voices to express thoughts and emotions does not seem far-fetched. While the very earliest records might be lost to antiquity, we do have a Sumerian tablet dating back 3,400 years with words and indications of pitches in a hymn praising the creation. Throughout all history, we have looked to storytellers, and poets in particular, to express our deepest feelings and most profound ideas. Meistersingers tonight presents a selection of works featuring exquisite poetry in settings by some of the most acclaimed composers in more than a generation.

Our program begins with Daniel Elder’s *Ballad to the Moon*, a paean to nature and the celestial firmament as he wanders through the woods at night. The poet is in love, but are these romantic feelings for another person, or the intimacy of the solitude he finds under the stars with only the moon to guide him? He knows the feelings will come to an end,

“as the darkened hours flee,” and so in the midst of his joy he weeps over the impermanence of these precious moments. May this poem, remind us to find beauty in whatever brings us joy, even deep thought.



In his *Through the Looking Glass*, the second of two Alice stories written for his niece, Lewis Carroll wrote a poem in the form of an acrostic. The first letter of each line in the poem spells out her full name: Alice Pleasance Liddle. Pulitzer Prize winning composer David Del Tredici’s clever arrangement of *Acrostic Song* for mixed voices includes a whisper chorus sounding out those initial letters as the piece proceeds. The melody and harmonic language are as deep and multi-layered as the poetry that inspired it.

Irish poet James Stephens penned 28 poems inspired by the works of Anthony Raftery, calling his
(continued on page 14)

The Poet Sings

Brian Dehn, *Conductor*

Minako Horimura Han, *Accompanist*

BALLADE TO THE MOON —by *Daniel Elder (1986-)* from *Three Nocturnes*

On moonlit night I wander free,
my mind to roam on thoughts of thee.
With midnight darkness beckoning
my heart t'ward mystic fantasy:

Come and dream in me!

How beautiful, this night in June!
And here upon the velvet dune,
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

The path lies dark before my sight,
and yet, my feet with pure delight
trod onward through the blackened vale,
beneath the starry sky so bright.

O share thy light!

These woods, their weary wand'rer soon
in awe and fearful wonder swoon;
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

And as the darkened hours flee,
my heart beats ever rapidly.
Though heavy hang my eyes with sleep,
my soul, my singing soul, it cries to thee.

Come, sing with me!

The twinkling sky casts forth its tune:
O must I leave thy charms so soon?
I weep with joy beneath the moon.



ACROSTIC SONG — *by David Del Tredici (1937-) from Final Alice,*
poem by Lewis Carroll (1832-1898)

A boat, beneath a sunny sky
Lingering onward dreamily
In an evening of July—

Children three that nestle near,
Eager eye and willing ear,
Pleased a simple tale to hear—

Long has paled that sunny sky:
Echoes fade and memories die:
Autumn frosts have slain July.

Still she haunts me, phantomwise,
Alice moving under skies
Never seen by waking eyes.

Children yet, the tale to hear,
Eager eye and willing ear,
Lovingly shall nestle near.

In a Wonderland they lie,
Dreaming as the days go by,
Dreaming as the summers die:

Ever drifting down the stream—
Lingering in the golden gleam—
Life, what is it but a dream?



REINCARNATIONS — *by Samuel Barber (1910-1981) poems by James Stephens (1880-1950) based on the Irish of Raftery*

1. Mary Hynes

She is the sky
Of the sun!
She is the dart
Of love!
She is the love
Of my heart!
She is a rune!
She is above
The women
Of the race of Eve,
As the sun

Is above the moon!
Lovely and airy
The view from the hill
That looks down on Ballylea!
But no good sight is good,
Until by great good luck
You see
The blossom
Of branches
Walking towards you,
Airily.

2. Anthony O'Daly

Anthony!
Since your limbs were laid out
The stars do not shine!
The fish leap not out
In the waves!
On our meadows the dew
Does not fall in the morn,
For O'Daly is dead!
Not a flow'r can be born!
Not a word can be said!
Not a tree have a leaf!
On our meadows the dew
Does not fall in the morn,
For O'Daly is dead!
Anthony!
After you
There is nothing to do!
There is nothing - but grief!

3. The Coolin

Come with me, under my coat,
And we will drink our fill
Of the milk of the white goat,
Or wine if it be thy will.
And we will talk,
Until talk is a trouble, too,
Out on the side of the hill;

And nothing is left to do,
But an eye to look into an eye,
And a hand in a hand to slip;
And a sigh to answer a sigh;
And a lip to find out a lip!

What if the night be black!
And the air on the mountain chill!
Where goat lies down in her track,
And all but the fern is still!
Stay with me, under my coat!
And we will drink our fill
Of the milk of the white goat,
Out on the side of the hill!

PRAYER — *by Morten Lauridsen (1943-) poem by Dana Gioia (1950-)*

Echo of the clocktower, footstep
in the alleyway, sweep
of the wind sifting the leaves.

Jeweller of the spiderweb, connoisseur
of autumn's opulence, blade of lightning
harvesting the sky.

Keeper of the small gate, choreographer
of entrances and exits, midnight
whisper traveling the wires.

Seducer, healer, deity or thief,
I will see you soon enough -
in the shadow of the rainfall,

in the brief violet darkening a sunset -
but until then I pray watch over him
as a mountain guards its covert ore

and the harsh falcon its flightless young.



SONETO DE LA NOCHE [SONNET OF THE NIGHT]— *by Morten Lauridsen (1943-) from Nocturnes, poem by Pablo Neruda (1904-1973)*

Cuando yo muero quiero tus manos en mis ojos:
quiero la luz y el trigo de tus manos amadas
pasar una vez más sobre mí su frescura:
sentir la suavidad que cambió mi destino.

Quiero que vivas mientras yo, dormido, te espero,
quiero que tus oídos sigan oyendo el viento,
que huelas el aroma del mar que amamos juntos
y que sigas pisando la arena que pisamos.

Quiero que lo que amo siga vivo
y a ti te amé y canté sobre todas las cosas,
por eso sigue tú floreciendo, florida,
para que alcances todo lo que mi amor te ordena,
para que se pasee mi sombra por tu pelo,
para que así conozcan la razón de mi canto.

*When I die, I want your hands upon my eyes:
I want the light and wheat of your beloved hands
to pass their freshness over me one more time:
O want to feel the gentleness that changed my destiny*

*I want you to live while I wait for you, asleep,
I want your ears to still hear the wind,
I want you smell the scent of the sea we both loved,
and to continue walking on the sand we walked on.*

*I want all that I love to keep on living,
and you whom I loved and sang above all things
to keep flowering into full bloom,*

*so that you can touch all that my love provides you,
so that my shadow may pass over your hair,
so that all may know the reason for my song.*



Translation by Nicholas Lauridsen

SURE ON THIS SHINING NIGHT — *by Morten Lauridsen*
(1943-) *from Nocturnes, poem by James Agee (1909-1955)*

Sure on this shining night
Of starmade shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
Wandering far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

Sure on this shining night
Of starmade shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground

On this shining night,
This shining night.

INTERMISSION

STARS — *by Ēriks Ešenvalds (1977-) poem by Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)*

Alone in the night
On a dark hill
With pines around me
Spicy and still,

And I know that I
Am honored to be
Witness
Of so much majesty.

And a heaven full of stars
Over my head
White and topaz
And misty red;

Myriads with beating
Hearts of fire
The aeons
Cannot vex or tire;

Ah the dome of heaven
Like a great hill
I watch them marching
Stately and still.



THERE WILL BE REST — *by Frank Ticheli (1958-) poem by Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)*

There will be rest, and sure stars shining
 Over the roof-tops crowned with snow,
A reign of rest, serene forgetting,
 The music of stillness holy and low.

I will make this world of my devising,
 Out of a dream in my lonely mind,
I shall find the crystal of peace, – above me
 Stars I shall find.

AT THE ROUND EARTH'S IMAGINED CORNERS— *by*
Williametta Spencer (1932 -) poem by John Donne (1572-1631)

At the round earths imagin'd corners, blow
Your trumpets, Angells, and arise, arise
From death, you numberlesse infinities
Of soules, and to your scattered bodies goe,
All whom the flood did, and fire shall o'erthrow,
All whom warre, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despaire, law, chance, hath slaine, and you whose eyes,
Shall behold God, and never taste death's woe.
But let them sleepe, Lord, and mee mourne a space,
For, if above all these, my sinnes abound,
'Tis late to aske abundance of Thy grace,
When wee are there; here on this lowly ground,
Teach mee how to repent; for that's as good
As if thou hadst seal'd my pardon, with Thy blood.



NOCHE OSCURA DEL ALMA [DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL]—
by Carlos Surinach (1915-1997) poem by Saint John of the Cross (1542)

En una noche oscura,
con ansias en amores inflamada,
¡oh dichosa ventura!,
salí sin ser notada,
estando ya mi casa sosegada.

Aoescuras y segura,
por la secreta escala, disfrazada,
¡oh dichosa ventura!,
a oscuras y en celada,
estando ya mi casa sosegada.

En la noche dichosa,
en secreto, que nadie me veía,
ni yo miraba cosa,
sin otra luz y guía
sino la que en el corazón ardía.

Aquesta me guiaba,
más cierto que la luz del mediodía,
donde me esperaba
quien yo bien me sabía
en parte adonde nadie parecía.

¡Oh noche, que guiaste!,
¡Oh noche amable más que el
alborada! ¡Oh noche que juntaste
Amado con amada, amada en el
Amado transformada!

En mi pecho florido,
que entero para él sólo se guardaba,
allí quedó dormido,
y ella le regalaba,
Y el ventalle de cedros aire daba.

El aire del almena,
cuando yo sus cabellos esparcía,
con su mano serena

*One dark night,
fired with love's urgent longings
-- ah, the sheer grace! --
I went out unseen,
my house being now all stilled.*

*In darkness, and secure,
by the secret ladder, disguised,
-- ah, the sheer grace! --
in darkness and concealment,
my house being now all stilled.*

*On that glad night
in secret, for no one saw me,
nor did I look at anything
with no other light or guide
than the One that burned in my heart.*

*This guided me
more surely than the light of noon
to where he was awaiting me
-- him I knew so well --
there in a place where no one appeared.*

*O guiding night!
O night more lovely than the dawn!
O night that has united the Lover with
his beloved, transforming the Beloved into
his Lover.*

*Upon my flowering breast,
which I kept wholly for him alone,
there he lay sleeping,
and I caressing him there in a breeze
from the fanning cedars.*

*When the breeze blew from the turret,
as I parted his hair,
it wounded my neck*

en mi cuello hería,
y todos mis sentidos suspendía.

*with its gentle hand,
suspending all my senses.*

Quedeme y olvideme,
el rostro recliné sobre el amado,
cesó todo, y dejeme,
dejando mi cuidado
entre las azucenas olvidado.

*I abandoned and forgot myself,
laying my face on my Beloved;
all things ceased;
I went out from myself, leaving my cares
forgotten among the lilies.*

Translation by Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (1991)

COME TO ME MY LOVE— *by Norman Dello Joio (1913-2008)*
based on the poem Echo by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Come to me in the night,
Come, come to me in the silence of the dark'ning night.
Come to me in the speaking silence of a dream;
With soft and rounded cheeks and eyes as bright as sunlight on a stream;
O! come, come back in tears, my love of finished years,
In dreams too sweet, too sweet,
In dreams too bitter sweet,
Of Paradise where souls of love abide and meet,
Come back my love to me.

Yet come to me in dreams that I may live my life again;
A mem'ry of those thirsty longing eyes, those eyes so bright;
Come back to me my love that I may give, pulse for pulse,
breath for breath;
Speak low,
Lean low,
O! come in silent dreams, my love;
And whisper low, as long ago.



I CARRY YOUR HEART WITH ME— by *David C. Dickau (1954-)*
poem by e.e. cummings (1894-1962)

i carry your heart with me(i carry it in
my heart)i am never without it(anywhere
i go you go,my dear;and whatever is done
by only me is your doing,my darling)
i fear
no fate(for you are my fate,my sweet)i want
no world(for beautiful you are my world,my true)
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant
and whatever a sun will always sing is you



here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life;which grows
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)

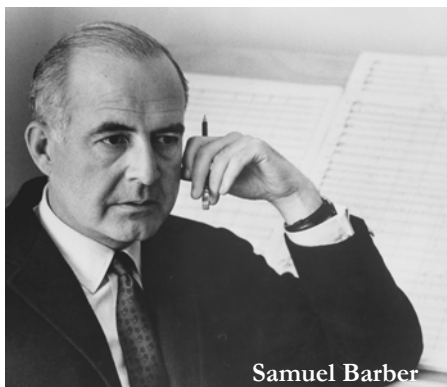
LET MY LOVE BE HEARD— by *Jake Runestad (1986-)* *poem by*
Alfred Noyes (1880-1958)

Angels, where you soar
 Up to God's own light,
Take my own lost bird
 On your hearts tonight;
And as grief once more
 Mounts to heaven and sings,
Let my love be heard
 Whispering in your wings.



PROGRAM NOTES *(continued from page 3)*

collection *Reincarnations* to distinguish them from Raftery's earlier well-known works in the Irish tongue, primarily because he felt insecure about his knowledge of that language. During a brief time, teaching at Curtis Institute of Music, Samuel Barber composed



Samuel Barber

settings of three of Stephens' collection. **"Mary Hynes"** is an exuberant song of praise for the "the shining flower of Ballylea." The poet is so enchanted by her beauty that he identifies her as a rune, meaning a mystery, and as a "love of my heart." This is based on Raftery's telling of the Mary Hynes legend: that her beauty was so profound that no less than eleven men proposed marriage to her in one day! **"Anthony O'Daly"** recounts the execution by hanging of an Irish folk hero. It is a desperate lament (or perhaps a curse on his murderers) in the form of a dirge expressing grief over the death of an innocent man. Under a not-so-subtle

wailing, or keening, in a variety of melodically harsh turns, you will hear multiple repetition of his name, perhaps imploring an understanding and meaning to those left to carry on and fight for justice. In **"The Coolin,"** (subtitled *The Fair Haired One*) we hear of a couple, perhaps newly so, deeply in love. Too preoccupied with one another to consider the weather, the blackness of the night or even conversation, they walk hand in hand, they kiss, and they sigh as they linger out on the hill.

Few composers have captured the devotion of singers as well as audiences that follow Morten Lauridsen. He was Composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1994 to 2001, and the National Endowment for the Arts named him an "American Choral Master" in 2006. We offer three of his works reflecting his most profoundly beautiful textual choices on the brevity of life and coming to terms with the absence of those whom we have loved.

Upon a first reading of *Prayer*, it may seem esoteric, mystical, even aloof. However, once we realize that Dana Gioia's poem was written after the loss of his infant son there are few ways to even begin to describe this loss — especially

with such a sense of humility, eloquence, and profundity. *Soneto de la Noche* and *Sure on This Shining Night* are pieces that have lived in Meistersingers repertoire ever since we recorded them on our album, *Lux et Nox*. There are many beautiful poems on love, but Neruda's *Soneto de la Noche* is one that has resonated with us deeply. It is told from the perspective of the recently deceased and wishing nothing but peace and joy for those left behind. We end the first half as we have begun, *Sure on This Shining Night* is Agee's poem on wandering a shining night and wondering just how "Kindness" will watch over us.

We open our second half with two poems of an American icon. Erik Ešenvalds *Stars*, on a poem by Sara Teasdale, shares the mood of awe and wonder we might feel as we gaze upon the night sky from atop a hill. The effect is enhanced by the playing of resonant glasses tuned to specific chords as the choir sings. Composer Frank Ticheli set another Teasdale poem, *There Will Be Rest*, in memory of Cole Carsan St.Clair, another infant lost too soon.

We then move to two selections from a religious perspective: Williametta Spencer's *At the Round Earth's Imagined Corners* is an

exhortation imploring the heavenly host to awaken those souls that sleep in death to attain their salvation. But then the poet pleads with God to give him time to properly repent. The song is relatively short, but by no means anything less than passionate and bombastic.

Born in Barcelona, composer and conductor Carlos Surinach emigrated to the United States following World War II in hopes of establishing a reputation and a demand for his work. He was known preeminently as a composer for the dance, creating works in collaboration with Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, and the Joffrey Ballet. Among his best-known choral works is a set of four pieces on poetry of the 16th-century Spanish mystic Juan Yepes, known today as St. John of the Cross. *Noche oscura del alma* is the journey of a soul in search of union with God, his beloved. For many, going through this deeply miserable process of growth, becoming enhanced with a deeper perception of life and their place in it, is the only way to become a more conscious and mature individual. The mystic Hazrat Inayat Khan stated it succinctly, "There can be no rebirth without a dark night of the soul, a total annihilation of all that you believed in and thought that you were." Whatever form it

takes, a person's transition is usually painful, and Surinach has captured it perfectly.

Also having a connection to Martha Graham and music for the ballet is Norman Dello Joio. He was a prolific composer, receiving numerous accolades and awards, including a Pulitzer Prize and an Emmy. In a career spanning more than half a century, he produced works for nearly every type of ensemble and voice combination. His *Come to Me, My Love* is based on Christina Rossetti's poem *Echo*, a remembrance of a lost love, and her desire for that love to return to her like an echo.

In *i carry your heart with me*, David Dickau embraces the warmth and optimism found in so many of the more romantic poems of E.E. Cummings. Moving deftly from unison passages to comparatively dense harmonies, Dickau lets the poetry speak for itself, a generous expression of love and devotion.

The text of *Let My Love Be Heard* is an adaptation by Jake Runestead of *A Prayer* by Alfred Noyes. It is the voice of one praying to the angels to lift the yearnings, however inadequate and undeserving, to be heard in the realm of God. The chorus is used beautifully in this work. One can hear the prayer lifting, unsure, but unrelenting. The tenors begin the

supplication, then followed by the full chorus. The tenors and bases then build both harmonically and dynamically, as the treble voices trade off incomplete triplet figures, like a beautiful relay race, building up to a confident and secure vocal plea. However, we end as we began, with the triplet figure helping us find our humility and succumbing to our simplicity.

This is what we have hopefully found this evening – unity in the trials in life. We all go through life wondering what to make of it. Some are humble, some are boisterous. But, contrary to social media or perceived fame or success, no one has it figured out. What these poets have done is given us a voice to the shared experiences – be them painful or joyful. They are all parts of the human experience. We hope we have given those poets another voice this evening, and, as Barber did to Stephens who did to Raftery, “reincarnate” lost voices and showed how the human voice is one. And, as is our job, as both performers and listeners, we must give voice to those things that tie us together with those around us.

May we unify in voice and spirit, loving each other, supporting each other, and, as we have said on multiple occasions, always creating harmony with each other.

*Program notes by
Dave Roman and Brian Dehn*

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Thomas Zvanovec

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Why support Meistersingers? You'd probably like a good couple of reasons. Groups such as ours must continuously grow to survive. That growth needs to be in several areas. The first is musically. The virtuosity of the group needs to be challenged year to year, performance to performance for improvement. The vision of the group also needs to adapt, evolve, innovate and mature. Financially, decisions need to be sound, consistent and always with the future in mind. Want to help Meistersingers grow? Consider sponsoring an upcoming event or program.

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MEISTERSINGERS

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