Our 37th Season
2022-2023

Season Sponsors

Program

Love Songs from Lonely Letters (World Premiere)  Joel Thompson
One
Found

Three-fours, Op. 71, II. Andante  Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, arr. Alex Vittal
Corta-Jaca  Chiquinha Gonzaga, arr. Alex Vittal

Sphere Ensemble

Es sang vor langen Jahren (1984)  Arvo Pärt
Virgencita (2012)  Arvo Pärt
Solfejgio (1963)  Arvo Pärt

Intermission

Berlin Mass (1990; revised 2002)  Arvo Pärt
Kyrie
Gloria
Ester Alleluiaers
Zweiter Alleluiaers
Veni Sancte Spiritus
Credo
Sanctus
Agnus Dei

Sphere Ensemble and Ars Nova Singers
Tom Morgan, Artistic Director and Conductor
Elizabeth Swanson, Associate Conductor
Kimberly Brody, Executive Director

www.arsnovasingers.org
Sphere Ensemble was formed in 2011 by professional string players driven to explore the vast potential of the string ensemble repertory. Moving beyond the stereotype of classical music tradition, Sphere's programs include both masterpieces of string orchestra repertoire and exceptional works drawn from all genres to create a new definition of modern performance. Innovative arrangements are written by group members generating a unique and transformative musical experience.

Please join Sphere Ensemble for their next performances, **Vintage**: Saturday, March 18, 2023 at 7:30 pm – Broomfield Auditorium
Sunday, March 19, 2023 at 2:00 pm – Mercury Cafe, Denver

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Joel Thompson is an Atlanta-based composer, conductor, pianist, and educator, best known for the choral work, *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*, which was premiered in November 2015 by the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club and Dr. Eugene Rogers and won the 2018 American Prize for Choral Composition. In August 2021 he premiered another new work in Boulder at the Colorado Music Festival; the piece sets the writings of James Baldwin to music.

Thompson's works have been performed by esteemed ensembles such as the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Master Chorale, Los Angeles Master Chorale, EXIGENCE, and the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus. He recently received his doctorate from the Yale School of Music and is the newly appointed composer-in-residence at the Houston Opera. Thompson was also a 2017 post-graduate fellow in Arizona State University and a composition fellow at the 2017 Aspen Music Festival and School, where he studied with composers Stephen Hartke and Christopher Theofanidis and won the 2017 Hermitage Prize.

Thompson taught at Holy Innocents’ Episcopal School in Atlanta from 2015 to 2017, and also served as Director of Choral Studies and Assistant Professor of Music at Andrew College from 2013 to 2015. Thompson has a B.A. in Music and an M.M. in Choral Conducting, both from Emory University.

**Thompson, Love Songs from Lonely Letters**

**One**

You broke something open in me that had been vaulted away, deserted, renounced, for such a long time. It was in you that I found that I was seeking something without knowing it. So thank you, thank you for all that you are, for all that you have been.

Love is the impossible extension of an ordered time; the desire of impossible non-spacetime where the joy of music plays consistently eternal. Love is seeking a world otherwise *wherewhen* one can linger. May that which makes us one be always with you.

**Found**

We are stars, we are literally made of the cosmos, we are what remains, what becomes, what is becoming, of that which isn't separable. And since we are stars, we are also stardust. Perhaps we are searching, continually, for our stardust. Perhaps love is the unceasing variation of the search for stardust. Perhaps we are gathered here...but because we have found each other: we have found our stardust.

No. What I’m saying is this: Maybe we are searching for our stars, maybe love is that search. And something about that search, even when it’s unfulfilled through the capture, brings me so much joy.

– texts by Dr. Ashon Crawley, *The Lonely Letters*

**Love Songs from Lonely Letters** was commissioned by a consortium of choirs including Harvard University, Grinnell College, Macalester College, the College of St. Thomas, and Ars Nova Singers.
Pärt, *Es sang vor langen Jahren*

*Es sang vor langen Jahren wohl auch die Nachtigall. Das war wohl süßer Schall, da wir zusammen waren.*

*I sing and cannot weep, and thus, alone, I spin The bright, clean threads as long as the moon shines.*

*Da wir zusammen waren, da sang die Nachtigall. Nun mahnet mich ihr Schall, dass du von mir gefahren.*

*When we were together, then sang the nightingale; Now her sound reminds me that you are gone from me.*

*So oft der Mond mag scheinen, so denk ich dein allein. Mein Herz ist klar und rein, Gott wolle uns vereinen.*

*However often the moon shines, I think on you alone; My heart is bright and clean; God grant we be united!*

*Seit du von mir gefahren, singt stets die Nachtigall. Ich denk bei ihrem Schall, wie wir zusammen waren.*

*Since you have gone from me, the nightingale sings constantly; Her sound makes me think how we were together.*


*God grant we be united. Here, so alone, I spin; The moon shines bright and clean; I sing, and would weep.*

— Clemens Brentano (1778–1842), *Der Spinnerin Nachtlied*

Pärt's choir piece *Virgencita* was inspired by the invitation of the Mexican ambassador Agustín Gutiérrez Canet to participate at the international Cervantino Festival in Mexico with Tõnu Kaljuste and the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. It is one of the most important multidisciplinary festivals in Latin America. Pärt himself has said about the composition: “When Agustín Gutiérrez Canet, the Mexican ambassador to Estonia, invited me to Mexico, my interest and notions of the country were strongly affected by the famous legend of Juan Diego and his reports of the apparition of the Virgin Mary. The happy anticipation of being in Mexico very soon and the name Guadalupe left me no peace; they inspired me to write a choral work which I took along as a present to the people of Mexico.”

Pärt has made a selection of lines from prayers in Spanish, turning to Our Lady of Guadalupe, the symbol of the Catholic Mexico. The composition premiered on 18, 19 and 20 October 2012 in León, Guanajuato and México City, with Tõnu Kaljuste conducing the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir.
Arvo Pärt is one of those composers in the world, whose creative output has significantly changed the way we understand the nature of music. In 1976, he created a unique musical language called tintinnabuli, that has reached a vast audience of various listeners and that has defined his work right up to today. There is no compositional school that follows Pärt, nor does he teach, nevertheless, a large part of the contemporary music has been influenced by his tintinnabuli compositions.

In Pärt’s creative biography, the years 1968–1976 mark his period of crisis – the final renunciation of the modernist techniques and means of expression used so far, searches for personal musical language and as a result, a radical change in the author’s style. “I didn’t know at the time that was I going to be able to compose at all in the future. Those years of study were no conscious break, but life and death agonizing inner conflict. I had lost my inner compass and I didn’t know anymore, what an interval or a key meant,” Pärt recalled many years later.

In his new quest for self expression Pärt turned even more intensively towards the early music and became absorbed for years studying Gregorian chant, the Notre Dame School and Renaissance polyphony. The first signs of this appear in his Symphony No. 3 (1971) – one of the very few works that premiered in these years. It was also the time of important events in Arvo Pärt’s personal life as he married and joined the Orthodox Church in 1972. In 1976, Pärt emerged with a new and highly original musical language, which he called tintinnabuli (from tintinnabulum – Latin for ‘little bell’). The new style first appears in a short piece for piano, Für Alina, followed soon by works like Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten (1977), Fratres (1977), Tabula rasa (1977) and Spiegel im Spiegel (1978). Pärt has now been composing in his tintinnabuli-style for over 40 years, and it has proven to be a rich and inexhaustible creative source.

Tintinnabuli music can be defined as a distinct technique, which in essence unites two monodic lines of structure – melody and triad – into one, inseparable ensemble. It creates an original duality of voices, the course and inner logic of which are defined by strict, even complicated mathematical formulas. Through that duality of voices Pärt has given a new meaning to the horizontal and vertical axis of music, and broadened our perception of tonal and modal music in its widest sense. Tintinnabuli music can also be described as a style in which the musical material is extremely concentrated, reduced only to the most important, where the simple rhythm and often gradually progressing melodies and triadic tintinnabuli voices are integrated into the complicated art of polyphony, expressing the composer’s special relationship to silence. In addition, tintinnabuli is also an ideology, a very personal and deeply sensed attitude to life for the composer, based on Christian values, religious practice and a quest for truth, beauty and purity.

Arvo Pärt has lived permanently in Estonia since 2010. The same year, on the initiative of Arvo and Nora Pärt, the Arvo Pärt Centre was established in Laulasmaa. In collaboration with the composer himself and his family, the APC aims to create and maintain the personal archive of the composer.

**Berlin Messe** was composed for the 90th German Catholics Days in Berlin in May 1990 – the first held following the fall of the Berlin Wall. Initially composed for soloists (SATB) and organ, the piece was premiered at a service in Hedwig’s Cathedral by the Theatre of Voices ensemble conducted by Paul Hillier. Today, mass compositions are mainly performed as concert pieces. Berliner Messe also has its fixed place in concert repertoire, but in its form and structure, the work can be also used as part of traditional Catholic liturgy. Optional parts for certain holidays are added to the ordinary parts of the Mass (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei). Between Gloria and Credo there are two Alleluja verses for Christmas and two more for Pentecost, as well as the Pentecost sequence Veni Sancte Spiritus. The sounds in the composition are strictly structured accounting for the number of syllables, emphasis and other parameters of the text. “Each step is derived from the text. Hence, this is not a result of a so-called inspiration, but something more objective,” the composer has said about his piece. To the smallest of details, the musical structure is subordinated to the formulae of the tintinnabuli technique.

**Biography and program notes from the Arvo Pärt Center:** [https://www.arvopart.ee](https://www.arvopart.ee)
Pärt, Berlin Mass

**Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.**

**Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

*Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.*

*Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te.*

*Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.*

*Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.*

*Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe.*

*Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.*

*Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.*

*Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.*

*Qui sedes ad dextram Patris, miserere nobis.*

*Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dominus,*

*Tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe.*

*Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.*

**ERSTER ALLELUIAVERS (ZUM PFINGSTFEST)**

*Alleluia. Alleluia. Emitte Spiritum tuum et creabuntur,*

*et renovabis faciem terrae. Alleluia.*

**ZWEITER ALLELUIAVERS (ZUM PFINGSTFEST)**

*Alleluia. Alleluia.*

*Veni Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium:*

*et tui amoris in eis ignem accende. Alleluia.*

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory be to God in the highest.

And on earth peace to men of good will.

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

We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.

Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son.

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art Holy, Thou only art the Lord,

Thou only art the Most High, Jesus Christ.

With the Holy Ghost, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**FIRST ALLELUIA (FOR PENTECOST)**

*Alleluia. Alleluia. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created,*

*and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Alleluia.*

**SECOND ALLELUIA (FOR PENTECOST)**

*Alleluia. Alleluia.*

*Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful:*

*and kindle in them the fire of Thy love. Alleluia.*

The most sensitive musical instrument is the human soul.

The next is the human voice.

— Arvo Pärt
Veni, Sancte Spiritus
et emitte caelitus
lucis tuae radium.

Veni, pater pauperum,
veni, dator munierum,
veni, lumen cordium.

Consolator optime,
dulcis hospes animae,
dulce refrigerium.

In labore requies,
in aestu temperies,
in fletu solatium.

O lux beatissima,
reple cordis intima
tuorum fidelium.

Sine tuo numine
nihil est in homine,
nihil est innoxiun.

Lava, quod est sordidum,
riga, quod est arium,
sana, quod est saucium.

Flecte, quod est rigidum,
fove, quod est frigidum,
rege, quod est devium.

Da tuis fidelibus
in te confidentibus,
sacrum septenarium.

Da virtutis meritum,
da salutis exitum,
da perenne gaudium.

Amen. Alleluia.

I believe in one God; the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
And of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
The only begotten Son of God,
Begotten of the Father before all worlds;
God of God, light of light, true God of true God,
Begotten, not made; of one substance with the Father,
By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation
Descended from heaven; and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
Of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate,
Died and was buried.
And on the third day He rose again according 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.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified;
As it was told by the prophets.

And I believe in one
Holy catholic and apostolic church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.
And I await the resurrection of the dead
And the life of the world to come. Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
Have mercy upon us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
Grant us peace.
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Take a walk, sit and meditate, or lie in the grass – wherever you are in the park, the music of the soundwalk will respond to you.

All ages and mobility levels welcome!

Runs March 18 – September 4

Tickets/info: www.arsnovasingers.org

Reflections

Explore the powerful movement and vibration of sound, featuring a cluster of early and contemporary works that explore rich, multi-voice choral textures. An eclectic, uniquely Ars Nova program, with a cappella music by William Byrd, Gustav Mahler, Howard Skempton, Eric Whitacre, Bill Douglas, and more.

The song speaks to us. It says: “Stop. Stop with what you are doing, stop thinking, be still for a while, and just be.” We are not created for endless worry and struggle. Remember who you are. We are born from the stars, not from downtrodden earth. We are the light that shines through us.

Thursday, April 13 – Sacred Heart Cathedral, Pueblo
Friday, April 14 – Cathedral of St. John, Albuquerque
Saturday, April 15 – NM Museum of Art, Santa Fe
Friday, April 21 – 1st United Methodist Church, Boulder
Saturday, April 22 – Bethany Lutheran Church, Denver
Saturday, June 3 – The Tank Center for Sonic Arts, Rangeley
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