



RubyDREAMS

40th Season Opening Gala

Celebration & Benefit Concert

September 7, 2025 – Dairy Arts Center, Boulder

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The Avenir
Foundation



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PROGRAM

Plorate filii Israel (<i>from Jephthe</i>)	Giocomo Carissimi
Fair Phyllis I Saw Sitting All Alone	John Farmer
Agnus Dei (<i>Mass for 4 Voices</i>)	William Byrd
Parce mihi, Domine	Cristobal Morales
Quanta Qualia	Patrick Hawes
Ging heut' morgen über's Feld	Gustav Mahler, arr. David Rain
Hallelujah	Leonard Cohen, arr. FACE
Selections by FACE Vocal Band	

INTERMISSION

Open Tower	Jenni Watson
The Hills of Glencar	Bill Douglas, arr. Tom Morgan
Afternoon on a Hill	Colin Britt
For You I Will Be an Island	Jennifer Lucy Cook
The Wanderer	Scott Joplin, arr. Ward Swingle
Somewhere (<i>from West Side Story</i>)	L. Bernstein, arr. R. Edgerton
Wind Song	Bruce Stark

Nathan Mertens, *saxophone*

FACE Vocal Band

Tom Morgan, *Artistic Director and Conductor*

Jessie Flasschoen Campbell, *Associate Conductor*

Kimberly Brody, *Executive Director*

Please silence your cell phones.

*Kindly note that no video recording, audio recording,
or photography is permitted. Program subject to change.*

Our season artwork is by Longmont artist Scott Fraser:

www.sfraser.com



Ars Nova Singers

Soprano

Krista Benesch ¹
Evanne Browne
Jessica Harbeson
Olivia Lundy*
Julie Poelchau
Karen Ramirez
Szilvia Schranz ¹
Levi Spanarella ¹
Jocelyn Su
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Sophia Young*

Alto

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Tenor

Asher Bowman*
Bruce Doenecke
Nikhil Harle ¹
Sam Henderson ¹
Barry Janzen
Steve Kientz
Jonathan Raabe ¹
Sam Rowden
Kyle Shaw
Bruce Smith
Louis Warshawsky

Bass

John Adams
John Butterfield
Andrew Carr
Brian du Fresne ¹
Brant Foote
Nathan Jensen ¹
Paul Munsch
Eric Pahlke
Ken Short

** High School Apprentice*

¹Ensemble Singers for Britt, *Afternoon on a Hill*

U.S.-based saxophonist **Nathan Mertens** (he/him) currently teaches at the University of Colorado Boulder. For Mertens, teaching the next generation of musicians is a great honor, and he is constantly reshaping the ways he teaches and mentors students. Through his past teaching and performing experiences around the world, and additional education with the Global Leaders Institute, Mertens aims to develop saxophonists who serve as socially and culturally responsible stewards of music, remaining deeply connected to their communities.

One of the core tenets of Mertens' artistry is teaching and performing music that represents and reflects our shared world and current realities. This commitment has led him to commission and premiere 40+ works, with upcoming projects with Anthony R. Green and Zinia Chan. During the 2025–2026 school year, Mertens will embark on a recital tour with UK saxophonist Gillian Blair, perform David Maslanka's Saxophone Quartet Concerto, present at the Midwest Clinic, premiere new commissions that blend saxophone with house/dance music, and share the stage with Japanese and American artists in a Potpourri chamber saxophone concert at Suntory Hall. Moreover, as a queer individual and a former scholar in Japan, Mertens' performance output centers around uplifting and highlighting Japanese composers and LGBTQIA2S+ composers.

Mertens owes much of his development as both an artist and individual to the mentorship and guidance he received from Stephen Page at The University of Texas at Austin, Debra Rhodes at Hastings College, and Masato Kumoi at Kunitachi College of Music. He found artistic voice with Yamaha saxophones, D'Addario reeds, and Rousseau mouthpieces, and he now proudly represents these companies as an artist.



FACE VOCAL BAND

ALL-VOCAL ROCK

FACE is an internationally acclaimed all-vocal rock band from Boulder, Colorado who have been captivating audiences for over two decades with their infectious energy punctuated by an endearing love of performance. "Blending modern popular tunes with complex harmonies, brilliant beat-box rhythms and superb singing...FACE take their audience on a musical journey and it's fantastic fun." (*fringereview.co.uk*)

Performing over 100 shows per year around the world, the band has also competed on the hit NBC series "The Sing-Off," headlined at Edinburgh, Scotland's prestigious Festival Fringe, and has been scheduled in front of legendary performers such as Jon Bon Jovi, Jay Leno, Manhattan Transfer, Culture Club & Boy George, and Barenaked Ladies.

Critics and fans world-wide describe FACE as "a true American heartland sound." (*Recorded a cappella Review Board*)

"[FACE] communicates with a directness and warmth – perhaps America at its best." (*Norbbottens Kuriren*)

"Soulful singing stands out above the crowd."
(*Fringereview.co.uk*)



Q & A with the A. D.

Q. You started Ars Nova Singers in 1986, and nearly four decades later, the ensemble continues to produce a wealth of impressive programming and is flourishing. What inspired you to start it in the first place, and what do you think makes it different from other choirs around Colorado?

Tom Morgan: The co-founder of Ars Nova Singers is a longtime friend and Boulder alto Amy French. She and I sang together in the Boulder Bach Festival chorus in the "Bach 300" year of 1985 (300th anniversary of his birth). In discussing the local/regional choral scene at the time, we identified the possibility of creating a new, selectively auditioned ensemble and performing repertoire largely OUTSIDE of what other groups were doing. I was completing my master's degree in music composition at the time, so I've always been interested in contemporary music; my other areas of particular interest were medieval and Renaissance music. So the name "Ars Nova Singers" ("new art" in Latin) came to the fore as a possibility, as it addresses both of these areas of interest. The term 'ars nova' is used by musicologists to describe an area of music that started in the 14th century (with polyphonic music and more complex rhythms than plainsong). The term of course also refers to new music, which continues to play a central role in our mission and repertoire.



Another way in which Ars Nova Singers is fairly unique in the region is that we have two full-time staff positions: Artistic Director and Executive Director. We also have a part-time marketing person, and a staff of 15 professional singers (out of our 42-voice full ensemble). This greatly assists in implementing our mission and vision.

Q. Coming up with fresh ideas every season can't be easy – how do you keep things creative and exciting year after year? What keeps you driven and inspired along the way?

Tom Morgan: I feel we have to keep stretching ourselves, both artistically and conceptually, in this rapidly more interconnected larger world. Audiences and listeners have access to SO much high-quality content from around the world, including live concerts and recordings.

On the other side of the coin: there's still NOTHING that can compare to the in-person, in-community experience of live performance, and very few art forms can convey the depth and expression possible by the human voice.

So, it's inspiring to me to connect both of these worlds.

My other major motivation is finding inspiring collaborations. Looking back at the last couple of decades in particular, this has encompassed a really BROAD range: from a bluegrass band to a saxophone quartet, from a Grammy-winning solo cellist to an amazing virtuoso pianist, from string orchestra to solo guitar. Equally inspiring have been collaborations across disciplines: dance, literature, visual art, and theatre; this fall with FACE Vocal Band (an a cappella rock group); even last year with the Aspen Historical Society.

Q.What other performances or projects over these 40 years are particularly memorable to you?

Tom Morgan: Our "Shared Visions" project stands out as among the most meaningful and satisfying of our projects, so much so that we've decided to undertake it every two years. The idea is to create several 'chains of inspiration' across disciplines, using Colorado artists, and culminating in the creation and performance of new choral works.

For example, our current "Shared Visions 4" project launches this year. Last spring, we identified 7 Colorado visual artists, and each of these artists submitted three works for an online art gallery that was available for 3 months this summer (June 1 to September 1). The gallery is made available for Colorado poets and writers, who then look through the artworks and create new poetry based on what inspires them. This month, we will gather all of this poetry into an anthology (along with the associated artworks), and give this to four Colorado composers. The composers will then select what inspires THEM from the available works and create new music for voices.

In the Spring of 2026, our choir will rehearse and perform these works. At the performance, we gather all the artists together: the visual art is projected, the poets read their works, and the choir performs the pieces. It's hard to describe the gratification, validation, and connection this provides to all involved. It seems especially impactful to the visual artists; they could not have imagined – when sitting alone in their studios creating the visual art – that some day in the future people would SING this piece!

Q. Talk about legacy. What lasting impact do you want your work with Ars Nova to have on others and the world around you? What will echo beyond your time here?

Tom Morgan: I am very grateful that the vision and mission of Ars Nova Singers will continue after my tenure as Artistic Director. (And no! I'm not retiring yet...I'm having too much fun doing this!) Thanks to a very generous donor and a very successful Endowment campaign, Ars Nova Singers made my position full-time in July of 2021. I'm ecstatic to be able to focus my efforts and energy exclusively on this mission for the remainder of my professional career, AND someday to be a part of turning over the dream and the mission to a new generation of choral musicians. Ars Nova Singers WILL survive and flourish far into the future; that's a very rare thing in the choral world, and I'm grateful for this to be my legacy.

We plan, gather, prepare, invest, organize, strategize, prioritize, and rehearse in order to send the vibrations we create into the world. Sometimes they come back to us, in unexpected, beautiful ways.



Giocomo Carissimi, *Plorate filii Israel* (from Jephthe)

*Plorate filii Israel, plorate omnes virgines
et filiam Jephthe unigenitam
in carmine doloris lamentamini.*

Weep, children of Israel, cry all virgins,
and raise a sad lament for Jephthe's only child,
with a song of sorrow.

John Farmer, *Fair Phyllis I Saw Sitting All Alone*

Fair Phyllis I saw sitting all alone,
feeding her flock near to the mountain side.
The shepherds knew not,
they knew not whither she was gone,
But after her lover Amyntas hied,
Up and down he wandered whilst she was missing;
When he found her, O then they fell a-kissing.

William Byrd, *Agnus Dei* (Mass for 4 Voices)

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.*

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.



Cristobal Morales, *Parce mihi, Domine*

*Parce mihi, Domine, nihil enim sunt dies mei.
Quid est homo, quia magnificas eum?
Aut quid apponis erga eum cor tuum?
Visitas eum diluculo et subito probas illum.
Usquequo non parcis mihi, nec dimittis me,
ut glutiam salivam meam?
Peccavi, quid faciam tibi, o custos hominum?
Quare posuisti me contrarium tibi,
et factus sum mihimet issi gravis?
Cur non tolles peccatum meum,
et quare non auferes iniquitatem meam?
Ecce, nunc in pulvere dormiam,
et si mane me quaesieris, non subsistam.*

Spare me, Lord, for my days are as nothing.
What is Man, that you should make so much of us?
Or why should you set your heart upon us?
You visit us at dawn,
And put us to the test at any moment.
Will you not spare me and let me be,
while I swallow my saliva?
If I have sinned, how have I hurt you,
O guardian of mankind?
Why have you set me up as your target,
so that I am now a burden to myself?
Why do you not forgive my sin
and why do you not take away my guilt?
Behold, I shall now lie down in the dust:
if you come looking for me
I shall have ceased to exist. – Job 7:16-21

Patrick Hawes, *Quanta Qualia*

*O anima mea, Mane!
O quanta qualia
Conventus gaudia erunt.*

O my soul, wait!
O how great and how wonderful
the joys of meeting will be.
– text by Andrew Hawes (1954 –)



Gustav Mahler, arr. David Rain, *Ging heut' morgen über's Feld*

*Ging heut' morgen über's Feld, tau noch auf den Gräsern hing;
Sprach zu mir der lust'ge Fink:
„Ei du! Gelt? Guten Morgen! Ei, Gelt? Du!
Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?
Zink! Zink! Schön und flink! Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt!“*

*Auch die Glockenblum' am Feld hat mir lustig, guter Ding',
Mit den Glöckchen, klinge, kling,
Ihren Morgengruß geschellt:
„Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?
Kling! Kling! Schönes Ding! Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt!“*

*Und da fing im Sonnenschein gleich die Welt zu funkeln an;
Alles, alles, Ton und Farbe gewann!
Im Sonnenschein!
Blum' und Vogel, groß und klein!
„Guten Tag! Guten Tag!
Ist's nicht eine schöne Welt? Ei, du! Gelt? Schöne Welt!“*

*Nun fängt auch mein Glück wohl an?
Nein! Nein! Das ich mein',
Mir nimmer, nimmer blühen kann!*

*I walked across the fields this morning,
Dew still hung on the grass,
The merry finch said to me:
'You there, hey – Good morning! Hey, you there!
Isn't it a lovely world?
Tweet! Tweet! Bright and sweet! O how I love the world!'*

*And the harebell at the field's edge,
Merrily and in good spirits,
Ding-ding with its tiny bell
Rang out its morning greeting: 'Isn't it a lovely world?
Ding-ding! Beautiful thing! O how I love the world!'*

*And then in the gleaming sun
The world at once began to sparkle;
All things gained in tone and colour! In the sunshine!
Flower and bird, great and small.
'Good day! Good day! Isn't it a lovely world?
Hey, you there?! A lovely world!'*

*Will my happiness now begin?
No! No! The happiness I mean
Can never bloom for me!*

– text by Gustav Mahler; translation by Richard Stokes

Jennifer Lucy Cook, *For You I Will Be an Island*

For you I will be
A solo shelter
For you I will be
Miles away

For you I will be
With only water
For you I will be surrounded
By blue and gray

And when the coast is clear
Come let me know
Find me where love collides
With letting go

For you I will be uncharted
Except by starlight
For you I will be uncharted
Come what may

And when the coast is clear
Come let me know
Find me where love collides
With letting go
Now we divide to conquer
Only the waves for comfort

For you I will be an island
A solo shelter
For you, I will be an island
Miles away
Miles away

– Jennifer Lucy Cook



Bruce Stark, *Wind Song*

I am the wind, I am alone
No family and no home
I have no color, shape or size
Close your eyes and hear my song

I go everywhere, I know everyone
Under the stars and under the sun
I know the song of clouds and rainbows
I know the cold and dark of night

I know happiness, I know sadness
I know everything must end
When you feel sad and blue
Listen to your friend, the wind

– text by *Bruce Stark*



Our Ruby Anniversary Season 2025-2026

40 years!



Our 40th Season artwork is by Scott Fraser
www.sfraser.com

www.arsnovasingers.org

Ars Nova Singers

2025-2026 Ruby Anniversary Season

RubySHINE

October 17-18, 2025 ✕ Ars Nova Singers presents and shares the stage with the internationally acclaimed ensemble **VOCES8**, performing two unique programs in Boulder and Denver.

"The singing of VOCES8 is impeccable in its quality of tone and balance. They bring a new dimension to the word 'ensemble' with meticulous timing and tuning." – *Gramophone*

RubyJOY

December 7, 11, 13, 14, 2025 ✕ Ars Nova Singers' renowned, luminous solstice concerts – a Colorado holiday tradition! We present a selection of mysteriously moving music for the winter holidays: a program balancing novelty, tradition, and familiar melodies with innovative new sounds. Come help us make the season bright! Special guest artist Kathryn Harms, *harp*.

VINTAGERuby

February 20-22, 2026 ✕ A sonic feast from the 16th century! Weaving melodies together as a spider spins its web, the masters of vocal polyphony crafted music with a beautiful blend of emotional expression and thoughtful design. The power and pathos of the human spirit are captured in the intricate tapestries of Italian composer Carlo Gesualdo and English masters John Taverner and Thomas Tallis.

RubyFIRE: Shared Visions

April 24-26, 2026 ✕ We're igniting the Colorado arts scene with *RubyFire*, featuring our 4th **Shared Visions** venture. This magical interdisciplinary project connects Colorado visual artists, poets, composers, and performers in chains of artistic inspiration. Our performances will gather all these Colorado creatives together, and then the artworks will truly sing! The cycle is only complete when YOU, the audience, join us to bring this inspiring new art to life.

RubyGLOW

May 30, 2026 ✕ A rare opportunity to hear three of Colorado's finest choirs sharing the stage! Ars Nova hosts the first **Colorado New Choral Music Festival**, with the combined artistry of Ars Nova Singers, Kantorei, and St. Martin's Chamber Choir. The ensembles will join forces for the World Premiere of Terry Schlenker's new work *The Bird of Vision* (based a poem by the 13th-century Sufi mystic Rumi), specially commissioned for this one-night-only concert.

Tickets/full program info:

www.arsnovasingers.org



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*We're seeking energetic individuals
to serve on the Board
for this dynamic organization.*

For information, visit our website:

www.arsnovasingers.org



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Donations listed were received
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Ray and Jeanette Short
Rol Hoverstock
Ruth Morgan
St. John's Music Program
Steve Winograd
Tom Morgan and Nicky Kroge
Wendy Redal

SPECIAL THANKS

ALL of our wonderful volunteers!
Nicky Kroge
Muhammad Khan
Andrea Weidemann, *Digital Communications Coordinator*



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Enter to win our fall **Sweepstakes**, celebrating our season visual artist Scott Fraser!

Our exclusive prize package invites you into the rich, meticulous world of one of America's foremost realist painters. Package includes: a framed original print of our Butterfly season image; an elegant coffee table book of Scott's work; a private studio tour; and a Blackbelly gift card.

[CLICK HERE](#) for details and a special Gala discount; entries open until Dec 4; drawing on Dec 12.



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