

Presenting Male A Cappella group

cordus mundi

EVOLUTION



Sunday March 24 @ 4pm

Trinity Episcopal Church, Solebury, PA.

♩:cordusmundi

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Cordus Mundi
41 W. Ferry St.
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cordusmundi@comcast.net
www.cordusmundi.com

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Cordus Mundi

presents

Evolution

The Agincourt Song	Dunstable
Ave Maria	Carrillo
Notre Pere	Durufle
Salvation is Created	Chesnokov
Fields of Gold	Sumner
<i>Zack Devine & Jason Gersh, soloists</i>	
And So It Goes	Joel
<i>Zack Devine, Scott Totten, Steve Mallon, soloists</i>	
Bona nox!	Mozart

INTERMISSION

Find the Cost of Freedom	Stills
<i>Zack Devine & Rick Rosen, guitars</i>	
Morning Light	Gersh

WORLD PREMIERE

Prayer of the Children	Bestor
Three Okefenokee Miniatures	Rosen
I. One Small Score for Two Brown Eyes	
II. A Boodle of Boone	
III. A Song for Not Now	

Joshua Meyers, soloist
WORLD PREMIERE

When I'm 64	Lennon & McCartney
Dravidian Dithyramb	Paranjoti

THE AGINCOURT SONG - *Dunstable (1390 -1453)*

John Dunstable was once described as "an astrologian, a mathematician, a musician, and what not." He was an English composer in the service of the Duke of Bedford who, after Henry V's Agincourt victory, came to Paris as regent. The Duke brought Dunstable with him; Dunstable brought with him the "English polyphonic sound", called the *contenance anglaise*. Dunstable's music shows the beginnings of contrapuntal refinement; he is credited with writing this famous song commemorating the victory of the English king, Henry V, at the battle of Agincourt, France, on October 25th, 1415. The Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, England possesses the earliest known copy.

AVE MARIA - *Carrillo (b. 1957)*

A native of Caracas, Venezuela, Carrillo studied composition with Modesta Bor, a renowned Venezuelan pedagogue and composer. He has done special studies with diverse international conductors such as Robert Sund (Sweden), Vic Nees (Belgium), Alice Parker (USA), and Ernani Aguiar (Brazil). His works have garnered numerous composition awards. Carrillo is considered to be one of the foremost composers and arrangers in Venezuela. He is conductor of Cantarte Coro de Cámara and assistant conductor of Orfeón Universitario de la UCV.

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.

Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and in the hour of our death. Amen.

NOTRE PERE - *Maurice Durufle (1902 - 1986)*

Durufié, who was organist at Saint-Etienne-du-Mont in Paris and also director of the Gregorian Institute of Paris, set the Lord's Prayer in French as *Notre Père (Op. 14)* for liturgical use. It was a commission from a priest at Saint-Etienne, and is his only work suitable for congregational singing. Durufle regretted the decline of Gregorian chant in Latin which had influenced his earlier compositions. He wrote first a version for unison male voices with organ, then a transcription for a four-part choir a cappella. Both versions were published by Editions Durand, dedicated to his wife, famed organist Marie Madeleine Durufié, the unison version in 1977 and the choral version in 1978. It became his last published composition. Cordus Mundi has arranged *Notre Pere* for male voices.

Notre Père, qui est aux cieus, que ton nom soit sanctifié,
que ton règne vienne, que ta volonté soit faite sur la terre comme au ciel.

Donne-nous aujourd'hui notre pain de ce jour.

Pardonne-nous nos offenses, comme nous pardonnons aussi à ceux qui nous ont offensés.

Et ne nous laisse pas entrer en tentation mais délivre-nous du Mal.

Amen.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

SALVATION IS CREATED - Chesnokov (1877 - 1944)

Known for his some 500 choral works composed during his career, Russian composer Pavel Chesnokoff is perhaps best-known for his sacred choral work *Salvation is Created*. Composed in 1912 as the fifth of his "Ten Communion Hymns", *Salvation is Created* was one of the composer's last sacred works before he was forced by the Soviet government to write secular music. Due to this suppression of Christianity from the Soviet government, Tschesnokoff never got to hear this work performed during his life-time, although his children did many years after his passing.

Spaseniye sodjelal ye si po srjedje zjemli, Bozhe. Alliluiya.

Salvation is created in midst of the earth, O God. Alleluia.

FIELDS OF GOLD - Gordon Sumner (b. 1951)

Says the composer, "In England, our house is surrounded by barley fields, and in the summer it's fascinating to watch the wind moving over the shimmering surface, like waves on an ocean of gold. There's something inherently sexy about the sight, something primal, as if the wind were making love to the barley. Lovers have made promises here, I'm sure, their bonds strengthened by the comforting cycle of the seasons."

AND SO IT GOES - Billy Joel (b. 1949)

And So It Goes was written by rock composer, pianist, singer, and performer Billy Joel in 1983, although it was not released until six years later, appearing on his 1989 studio album "Storm Front". Joel wrote the song about a doomed relationship with model Elle Macpherson. Due to their 15-year age difference, their relationship was dramatic - Joel dated Macpherson for only a brief time, and shortly after became involved with model Christie Brinkley, who ultimately became his second wife in 1985. Joel notes that the song was inspired by the Scottish ballad Barbara Allen. Cordus Mundi sings an arrangement by Scott Wood, an original west coast Cordus Mundi member.

BONA NOX! - *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 - 1791)*

Bona nox! Bist a rechta Ox is a playful and somewhat unusual a cappella canon for four voices, entered into Mozart's catalogue in 1788 as part of a set of ten canons. The theme is 16 bars long; each of the four voices enters after four bars. The original lyrics are probably by Mozart himself; they include the words for "good night" in five different languages (Latin, Italian, French, English, and German), as well as a few "humorous" scatological colloquialisms (shhhh).

FIND THE COST OF FREEDOM - *Stephen Stills (b. 1945)*

Can just four verses compose a meaningful song? Yes. At least according to CSNY, an American folk rock supergroup made up of David Crosby, Stephen Stills, Graham Nash and (occasionally) Neil Young, whose surnames initials compose the acronym of the band's name. The song is called *Find the Cost of Freedom*, written by Stephen Stills and released in 1970. Indeed, despite its scarce lyrics the song carries a strong and complex meaning. It was the B-Side to the protest song *Ohio* which Neil Young wrote after seeing Life magazine's photos of the Kent State shootings that left four young war protesters dead. Rumor has it that when the group finished recording *Ohio* and then realized they didn't have a B-side picked out, Stephen Stills suggested *Find the Cost of Freedom* almost as a natural consequence. The haunting acoustic guitar intro and the perfect "a cappella" vocal harmony of the quartet creates a sort of gospel feeling, which perfectly fits the powerful and emotional repeated lyrics.

These simple lyrics hide a deep and wide meaning, especially if related to the context of 1970 - the cost of freedom refers to the death of those who are fighting for it, in this case the anti-war activists left dead in Kent and the soldiers who were dying in Vietnam, and in other cases all the way back to the Civil War and beyond. Mother Earth has swallowed the bodies of young soldier fighting the "freedom war" in Vietnam as well as the bodies of young students expressing their freedom in protests against the war in Vietnam. But if we look at this song with contemporary eyes, its meaning sadly fits our days perfectly: Mother Earth is still swallowing dead bodies of those who are fighting for their freedom (or believe so), no matter the age, sex, religion, race or ideals.

- *Marco Principia*

MORNING LIGHT - *Jason Gersh (b. 1978)*

The lyrics and music of *Morning Light* were written in February 2021 as an eager and joyful peek into to the future: not only from the cold darkness of winter to the warm light of spring, but also from a surge of winter illness to the much-anticipated springtime vaccinations that would liberate us from the prolonged separation imposed by the pandemic. The narrator of the poem wakes up from a restless night to see the light of the morning sun, casting bad dreams aside. At the end of the day, he returns to sleep with the reassurance that the light he remembers will continue to guide him forward. My setting of this poem is what I, with a touch of irony, call a "secular spiritual." There is no explicit religious imagery in this piece, yet both the words and

the musical style hearken to -- and are inspired by -- the tradition of spirituals.

The reality of how things unfolded in the months and years after this piece was written has been far more complicated than I/we might have naively expected back then. The world is, for better and for worse, a different place from what it was before the pandemic started, and we have all been touched and transformed by that experience. Nevertheless, the joy of that moment in February 2021 was quite real; and the vision of seeking -- and holding -- light in darkness continues to inspire me today. It is in that spirit of joy and optimism that I offer this piece.

In the great rising dawn
I shall see the light
Of the glorious dawn.

In the dark of the night
All my hopes are buried deep.
From the dark I awake
And put restless dreams to sleep.

At the end of the day
I shall hold the light
For to guide my way.

- *Jason Gersh*

PRAYER OF THE CHILDREN - *Kurt Bestor (b. 1958)*

Over the years, I've written many songs with melodies more memorable, lyrics more poetic, and harmonies richer. But none of my compositions has had the kind of reach and emotional effect of *Prayer of the Children*. Ironically, I never intended to publish the song at all. I wrote it out of frustration over the horrendous civil war and ethnic cleansing taking place in the former country of Yugoslavia.

Having lived in this now war-torn country back in the late 1970's, I grew to love the people with whom I lived. It didn't matter to me their ethnic origin - Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian - they were all just happy fun people to me and I counted as friends people from each region. Of course, I was always aware of the bigotry and ethnic differences that bubbled just below the surface, but I always hoped that the peace this rich country enjoyed would continue indefinitely. Obviously that didn't happen.

When Yugoslavian President Josip Broz Tito died, different political factions jockeyed for position and the inevitable happened - civil war. Suddenly my friends were pitted against each other. Serbian brother wouldn't talk to Croatian sister-in-law. Bosnian mother disowned Serbian son-in-law and so it went. Meanwhile, all I could do was stay glued to the TV back in the US and sink deeper in a sense of hopelessness.

Finally, one night I began channeling these deep feelings into a wordless melody. Then little by little I added words....Can you hear....? Can you feel.....? I started with these

...continued

feelings - sensations that the children struggling to live in this difficult time might be feeling. Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian children all felt the same feelings of confusion and sadness and it was for them that I was writing this song.

- Kurt Bestor

THREE OKEFENOKEE MINIATURES - Rick Rosen (b. 1951)

Through the 1950s & 1960s, the “Pogo” comic strip (humor with a bite) was drawn & written by animator, cartoonist and commentator Walt Kelly. Known by many for their rendition of “Deck us all with Boston Charlie”, the Pogo characters lived in both Kelly’s mind and in the Okefenokee swamp. They reasoned & spoke in a manner which often appeared to make little or no sense, but in actuality (and often ironically), said everything which needed to be said. In addition to creating the comic strip, Kelly wrote marvelous little four-line vignettes which were often amusing, whimsical, and meaningful at the same time. Three of these meaningful (?) mini-poems in particular grabbed my attention, and they each found melodies and settings in relatively short order. These *Miniatures* are lovingly dedicated to my late friend, student & teacher, Robert Herron.

- Rick Rosen

I. Evening is dawn and night unknown/But here in the more the mists are grown/And only then loon will laugh alone/And only the lone are lorn.

II. Who loots my heart steals traveled trash/For carved upon a trunk ash/Is Floyd Loves Flora in a flash/Of yester-even’s balderdash.

III. A song for not now you need not put stay/A tune for the was can be sung for today/The ones for the does not all sound as the does/Today you can sing for the will be that was.

WHEN I’M 64 - Lennon (1940- 1980) & McCartney (b. 1942)

An interestingly & cynically academic analysis of Beatle classic *When I’m 64* follows:

This song is Paul’s first official foray into the carefully put-on nostalgic-cum-vaudeville stylization that would become a stock part of his compositional arsenal for the remainder of his career as a Beatle. In the context of “Sgt. Pepper”’s running order, it provides a well-needed and right contrast to the proceeding track. The form is an unusual perfect arch; there is no doubling up of any sections, and the intro and outro are identical. There is no specific refrain section, though the verse here is of the type whose last phrase is refrain-like.

I am puzzled in the lyrics by the comment in the first bridge about: “If you say the word, I could stay with you.” Without a doubt, the rest of the song bespeaks of a long-married (at least long-cohabiting) couple. Does the hero somehow envision them inexplicably separated in their autumn years, or merely sleeping most of the time in separate beds?

- Alan W. Pollack (*Musicologist, Beatle song analysis authority*)

DRAVIDIAN DITHYRAMB - *Victor Paranjoti (1906 - 1967)*

Dravidian Dithyramb combines elements of both ragas from South India and Hindustani classical music called a tarana. A raga is a melodic mode used in Indian classical music that uses a series of 5 to 9 notes to create a melody; the way the notes are sung is more important than the notes themselves. A tarana is a type of vocal music that uses Persian and Arabic sounds as nonsense syllables. Dravidian refers to the languages and races of South India, and Dithyramb is a Greek term for a wild, passionate hymn.

CORDUS MUNDI

OUR 2023-34 SEASON CONCLUDES

Cordus - The Evolution Continues

Our concluding concert for this season is another patented 'Cordus eclectic mix'. We'll be featuring a world premiere, music from home-grown composers, accompanied music, and some favorite pieces drawn from our extensive repertoire.

June 9, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal Church, Solebury, PA

All 2023-24 information subject to change.

*For tickets, updates and all the latest information, contact
Cordus Mundi at 650.219.2748, www.cordusmundi.com, or on Facebook*

CORDUS MUNDI



Male a cappella group Cordus Mundi began life in Bucks County, PA in January, 2005 with a compliment of nine voices. In Cordus' first seventeen (!) seasons, the group has evolved while giving concerts and performances throughout a several county-wide area.

Cordus Mundi has sung with composer Morten Lauridsen, worked extensively with guest conductor Dr. David Fryling (Hofstra University) and associate Timothy Harrell (Trinity Episcopal Church), participated in a concert/concert CD project with WWFM radio, developed a choral scholar program to bring young singers into the group, developed a commission fund & program to create new male choral music, recorded two CDs, and produced over 100 virtual, performance & other videos.

The latest incarnation of Cordus Mundi has the flexibility and versatility to expand the group's musical exploration into new performance dimensions. Cordus' repertoire is varied and eclectic, and the group's members include several composers, arrangers, and instrumentalists.

Cordus Mundi draws its repertoire from a wide range of composers and styles encompassing the 12th - 21st centuries. Cordus Mundi music ranges from Dunstable to Duruflé, from Byrd to Bernstein, from Perotin to Paranjoti, from Brahms to the Beatles, and from Jacob Handl to Edie Hill. The group sings three primary concerts per season, with additional performances scheduled throughout the year.

Cordus Mundi is:

Tenors: Zack Devine, Joshua Meyers, Scott Totten

Basses: Jason Gersh, Steve Mallon, Rick Rosen+, James Wells, Dennis Walsh

Accompanist - Robert Gajdos

+ Artistic Director/Founder

In Memoriam



Tony Fazey
1945 - 2023

Founding Cordus Mundi Member

*So I would choose to be with you,
That's if the choice were mine to make.*

Tony's recent Cordus Mundi bio follows:

Tony Fazey - Tenor 2, relocated to the Philadelphia area from the U.K. in 1982 for work related reasons. Prior to crossing the pond, he sang first tenor in musicals produced by the Falkirk Bohemians, a theatre group based in Falkirk, Scotland. He also had a brief stint with a Gilbert and Sullivan group there, soloing in *The Gondoliers*.

After arriving in the New World, Tony continued to sing, joining the Trenton Civic Opera chorus in 1990. Travel commitments forced him to give up singing in 1995, but couldn't silence him for long. In 2005 he joined the Bucks County Choral Society where he sang first tenor.

At the same time, he became aware of a new a cappella group (Cordus Mundi) being formed in the New Hope area where he lives. He attended one of their first rehearsals and was promptly added to the group as a first tenor.

The U.K. is still seeking reparations from the United States for stealing one of their tenors.

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This list reflects donations made prior to February 1, 2024

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*(In memory of Bob Strunk, a music lover
and a shining light in so many lives)*

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You can help to support us, while reaching out to our audience, by placing a print ad in our concert programs.

Special donor support made it possible for us to record our first CD, and makes it possible for us to consider commissioned pieces, to produce collaborative concerts, and much, much more. Join with Cordus Mundi as we continue to grow in our second decade - we appreciate and are grateful for your help!

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