

# GRACE CHORALE OF BROOKLYN JASON ASBURY, MUSIC DIRECTOR CHRIS URQUIAGA, ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR

# SONGS HOPE: **PSALMS** TROUBLED TIMES



SUNDAY, APRIL 7 at 3:00 PM
The Old First Reformed Church 729 Carroll Street, Park Slope

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# GRACE CHORALE OF BROOKLYN

Jason Asbury, Music Director Chris Urquiaga, Assistant Music Director

Presents

# SONGS OF HOPE: PSALMS FOR TROUBLED TIMES

Salmo 30

CHRIS URQUIAGA (2024 COMMISSION)

Dixit Dominus

MARIANNA MARTINES

Chichester Psalms

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes

ADOLPHUS CUNNINGHAM HAILSTORK III

With

Carami Hilaire SOPRANO
Karmesha Peake MEZZO-SOPRANO

Edward Washington II TENOR
Peter Kendall Clark BARITONE

Sebastian Spalding BOY SOPRANO

There will be a reception following the performance. Please join us!

The concert program is continued on page 5

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# Salmo 30

#### CHRIS URQUIAGA

Text from Psalm 30:1-5

Commissioned by Grace Chorale of Brooklyn, Jason Asbury, conductor, for its spring concert in April 2024 in Brooklyn, New York

- 1. Te glorificaré, oh Jehová, porque me exaltaste, Y no permitiste que mis enemigos se alegraran de mí.
- **2.** Jehová Dios mío, A ti te clamé, y me sanaste.
- 3. Jehová, Dios mio hiciste subir mi alma del Seol; Me diste vida, para que no descendiese a la sepultura.
  - **4.** Cantad a Jehová... y celebrad la memoria de su santidad.
  - 5. Porque un momento será su ira, Pero su favor dura toda la vida. Por la noche durará el lloró, Y a la mañana será la alegría.

- 1. I will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.
- **2.** O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.
- **3.** O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.
- **4.** Sing unto the Lord... and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.
- 5. For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

# Dixit Dominus

MARIANNA MARTINES (1744-1812)

Text from Psalm 110, verses 1-7

- 1. Dixit Dominus Domino meo: Sede a dextris meis, donec ponam inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum.
- 2. Virgam virtutis tuæ emittet
  Dominus ex Sion:
  dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.
  - CARAMI HILAIRE, SOPRANO
- 1. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.
- 2. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

KARMESHA PEAKE, MEZZO-SOPRANO

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-LEO TOLSTOY

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3. Tecum principium in die virtutis tuæ in splendoribus sanctorum: ex utero, ante luciferum, genui te.

**3.** Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning.

#### KARMESHA PEAKE, MEZZO-SOPRANO

- **4.** Juravit Dominus, et non pænitebit eum: Tu es sacerdos in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech.
- 5. Dominus a dextris tuis;
  confregit in die iræ suæ reges.
  Judicabit in nationibus,
  implebit ruinas;
  conquassabit capita in terra multorum.
  De torrente in via bibet;
  propterea exaltabit caput.
- **6.** Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto, Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper.

# CARAMI HILAIRE, SOPRANO EDWARD WASHINGTON II, TENOR

7. Et in saecula saeculorum, Amen.

- **4.** The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.
- 5. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up the head.
- **6.** Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, As it was in the begining is now and ever shall be.

KARMESHA PEAKE, MEZZO-SOPRANO PETER KENDALL CLARK, BARITONE

7. Forever and ever, Amen.

# Chichester Psalms

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918-1990)

Text from Psalms 2, 23, 100, 108, 131, 133

#### I. Psalm 108, verse 2

Urah, hanevel, v'chinor!
A'irah shachar!

Hariu l'Adonai kol ha'arets. Iv'du et Adonai b'simcha. Bo'u l'fanav bir'nanah. D'u ki Adonai Hu Elohim. Hu asanu, v'lo anachnu. Awake, psaltery and harp: I will rouse the dawn!

#### Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness.

Come before His presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord, He is God.

It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves.

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Amo v'tson mar'ito. Bo'u sh'arav b'todah, Chatseirotav bit'hilah, Hodu lo, bar'chu sh'mo. Ki tov Adonai, l'olam chas'do, V'ad dor vador emunato.

#### CARAMI HILAIRE, SOPRANO EDWARD WASHINGTON II, TENOR

Lamah rag'shu goyim

Ul'umim yeh'gu rik?

Yit'yats'vu malchei erets,

V'roznim nos'du vachad

Al Adonai v'al m'shicho.

N'natkah et mos'roteimo.

V'nashlichah mimenu avoteimo. Yoshev bashamayim

Yis'chak, Adonai

Yil'ag lamo!

We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endureth to all generations.

KARMESHA PEAKE, MEZZO-SOPRANO PETER KENDALL CLARK, BARITONE

#### II. Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Adonai ro'i, lo echsar. Bin'ot deshe varbitseini, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, Al mei m'nuchot y'nachaleini, He leadeth me beside the still waters. Naf'shi y'shovey, He restoreth my soul, Yan'cheini b'ma'aglei tsedek, He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, For His name's sake. L'ma'an sh'mo. Yea, though I walk Gam ki eilech Through the valley of the shadow of death, B'gei tsalmavet, Lo ira ra, I will fear no evil. Ki Atah imadi. For Thou art with me. Shiv't'cha umishan'techa Thy rod and Thy staff Hemah y'nachamuni. They comfort me.

#### Psalm 2, verses 1-4

Why do the nations rage, And the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together Against the Lord and against His anointed. Saying, let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens Shall laugh, and the Lord Shall have them in derision!

#### Psalm 23 (cont.)

Thou preparest a table before me In the presence of mine enemies, Thou anointest my head with oil,

9

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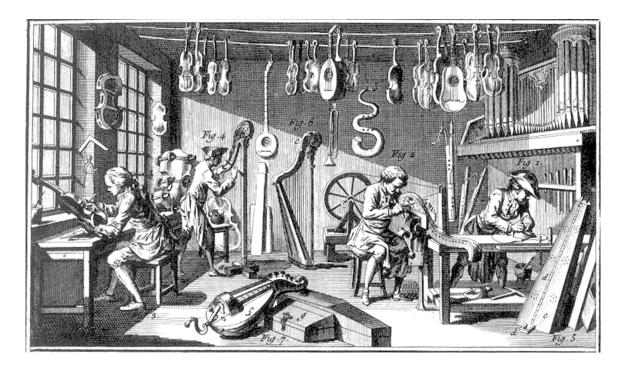


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162 PROSPECT PARK SW BROOKLYN, NY 11218 917-692-7406 LTRUPIANO@HOTMAIL.COM Cosi r'vayah. Ach tov vachesed Yird'funi kol y'mei chayai, V'shav'ti b'veit Adonai L'orech yamim. My cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy
Shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever.

#### SEBASTIAN SPALDING, BOY SOPRANO

#### III. Psalm 131

Adonai, Adonai,
Lo gavah libi,
V'lo ramu einai,
V'lo hilachti
Big'dolot uv'niflaot
Mimeni.
Im lo shiviti
V'domam'ti,
Naf'shi k'gamul alei imo,
Kagamul alai naf'shi.
Yachel Yisrael el Adonai
Me'atah v'ad olam.

Hineh mah tov, Umah nayim,

Shevet achim

Gam yachad.

Amen.

Lord, Lord,
My heart is not haughty,
Nor mine eyes lofty,
Neither do I exercise myself
In great matters or in things
Too wonderful for me.
Surely I have calmed
And quieted myself,
As a child that is weaned of his mother,
My soul is even as a weaned child.
Let Israel hope in the Lord
From henceforth and forever.

#### Psalm 133, verse 1

Behold how good, And how pleasant it is, For brethren to dwell Together in unity. Amen.

# I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes

ADOLPHUS CUNNINGHAM HAILSTORK III (b. 1941)

Text from Psalm 121 verses 1-3,7; Psalm 13 verses 1-3; Psalm 23 verses 1-6

#### I. I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes Psalm 121

**1.** I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

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- **2.** My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.
- **3.** He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.
- **7.** The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

# II. How Long? Psalm 13

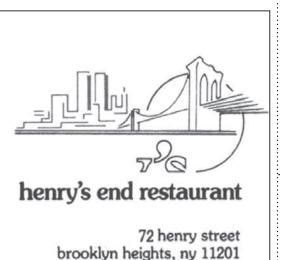
- 1. How long, O Lord, will Thou forget me? How long will Thou hide Thy face from me?
- **2.** How long must I suffer anguish in my soul and grief in my heart?
- 3. Look now and answer me, O Lord. Give light, O Lord, give light to my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.

#### III. The Lord Is My Shepherd, Alleluia Psalm 23

- 1. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- **2.** He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
- **3.** He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- **4.** Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
- **5.** Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
- **6.** Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

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# From the Music Director

DODAY WE FIND OURSELVES IN SEARCH OF A NEW NORMAL, facing contentious political landscapes, dangerous climate change, rapid development of artificial intelligence, and more. Songs of Hope seeks insight from those in the past who also faced great challenges.

Poets and musicians have long striven to express our experience in times of political upheaval, rapid change, and uncertainty. The text of the Psalms has served as a rich source of inspiration for composers for millennia, expressing the darkest despair, anger, and the all too human thirst for revenge, along with thankfulness, joy, and deep faith. The poetic words can be a deep source of comfort, hope, contemplation, and triumph for both people of faith and those who connect with the Psalms' profound humanity.

With this concert, we hope to provide a communal artistic opportunity to engage with these themes. Tonight's pieces, three existing and one newly commissioned, all draw from the Psalms, yet each is distinct in its musical style and historical context and in the composer's creative expression. We hope the variety and depth of these works provide you a chance to connect to a long music tradition that gives voice to the human experience.

*Dixit Dominus* was composed by Marianna Martines (1744-1812), an Austrian composer and performer with close associations to prominent musicians of her time, including Haydn and Mozart. Based on Psalm 110, the piece serves to uplift our spirits in triumph. It showcases Martines' mastery of counterpoint and vocal writing and incorporates traditional Baroque style and the later galant style.

Leonard Bernstein's (1918-1990) *Chichester Psalms* was commissioned for the Chichester Festival in England. The three movements use a Hebrew text derived from two psalms—one in its entirety, one selectively—to support or provide contrast for the other's ideas. In his typical style, Bernstein's work blends classical choral music with contemporary elements and incorporates both Jewish and Christian musical traditions, reflecting his ecumenical vision. Although the piece expresses conflict, the translation of the final line is "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity."

The program concludes with *I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes*, written by Adolphus Hailstork III (b. 1941), an African American composer. Hailstork's setting draws from Psalms 121, 13, and 23 to bring us themes of comfort and divine protection. The piece is characterized by African American music traditions including call-and-response, the Blues, and syncopated rhythms. *I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes* ranks with Hailstork's many significant contributions to the choral repertoire; he composed it as a tribute to Undine Smith Moore, considered the dean of Black women composers. —*Jason Asbury* 

#### Program notes from the composer of Grace Chorale of Brooklyn's 2024 commission.

*Salmo 30*, set to verses 1-5 of Psalm 30, includes elements of fanfare, music from the traditions of the Black American church, film scores, and Latin American music rhythms.

The composition reflects the contrasting emotions of praising God and fearing God, correlating with the text. With *Te glorificaré*, *oh Jehovah* (*I will glorify you, oh Jehovah*), the music exudes elements of celebratory fanfare. At *Porque un momento será su ira* (*For his anger lasts only a moment*), the music reflects sudden anger, quickly becoming darker and more dissonant. When the piece arrives at *Pero su favor dura toda la vida* (*But his favor lasts a lifetime*), the music turns soothing and harmonious, reflecting God's mercy. We end by returning to the opening phrase of the psalm in a grand and celebratory tone. —*Chris Urquiaga* 





# About the Artists

### JASON ASBURY, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Jason Asbury has been the Music Director of Grace Chorale since 2012, and has led the chorus in major performances including Ellington's Sacred Concert, Rex Isenberg's Messiahs False and True, William Grant Still's And They Lynched Him on a Tree, and Benjamin Yarmolinksy's The Constituition, an Oratorio. He has forged relationships with several musical partners, including The Brooklyn Chamber Orchestra and the String Orchestra of Brooklyn. Jason kept the Chorale engaged and creative through the pandemic years, overseeing a number of virtual concerts, including The Podd Brothers' How can I Keep from Singing, which has received nearly a million views on YouTube. Jason has led the Chorale in commissioning new works every year and has championed pieces by under-recognized women composers and composers of color.

Jason currently serves as the Associate Head of School at Saint Ann's School where he has taught music for twenty-five years. He has been active as an organist and conductor in the New York City metropolitan area since 1997 and served 17 years as Director of Music at Prospect Presbyterian Church in Maplewood, New Jersey. He has served as assistant conductor of the Summit Chorale at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, accompanist for the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, conducted the Prospect Presbyterian Chancel Choir's concert tours in Scotland and Montreal, and has led the Saint Ann's High School Chorus on tours to Germany, Czech Republic, Spain and Iceland. In August 2017, he led a choir trip of 150 choristers to Scotland in honor of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

#### CHRIS URQUIAGA, ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR

Singer-songwriter, pianist, and producer Chris Urquiaga is lauded for his performance energy and smooth voice. Hailed by *Metro Weekly* magazine, Chris is internationally recognized for pop compositions laced with Latin, Afro, and Brazilian influences. His music is influenced by his Brazilian and Peruvian heritage and explores themes of gender fluidity and queer culture.

Performance highlights include appearing at the White House for President Barack and Michelle Obama and as a headliner for Latin Music Night at 54 Below, as well as the 2022 ¡Presente! Latino Heritage Festival Concert at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Latino.

His music as urban Latin artist *JChris* has achieved over two million views on YouTube, over 500,000 streams on Spotify, international touring, and music videos. His single "Caliente" featured Latin music superstar Naldo Benny and was filmed in Rio de Janeiro. Chris is proud to be the assistant director of Grace Chorale. Before his appointment, Chris worked with GCB as a vocalist, commissioned composer, and accompanist. Chris was artistic director of Congressional Chorus in Washington, D.C. 2020-2021 and has been a music teacher at Saint Ann's School since 2021.



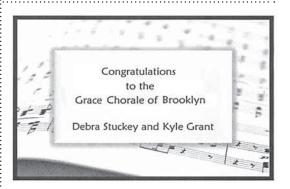
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and in memory of Christina Margaret Porter, who sang two years with the Chorale before her passing.

#### CARAMI HILAIRE, SOPRANO

Carami Hilaire is a soulful soprano from Brooklyn, New York, who is a graduate of the Professional Studies program at Mannes School of Music. Carami has received awards from both the Wagner Society of New York and the Premiere Opera competition. She has sung with the Internationale Opernwerkstatt based in Switzerland and performed the role of Tosca with both Regina Opera and New Jersey Verismo Opera to rave reviews as well as the roles of Aida in *Aida* and Musetta in *La Boheme*.

In fall 2020 she sang the role of Alice in *Alice in the Pandemic* with White Snake Opera projects. In 2022, she sang the soprano solo in Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra. In May she also performed the role of Circe in *A Survivor's Odyssey*, which was presented live at Opera America's Opera Conference. In the fall she returned to her collaboration with White Snake Opera Projects to sing the role of Tiamat in *Cosmic Cowboy*, which generated rave reviews. "Indeed, the universe creator and savior Tia, as dramatically sung by Carami Hilaire, unleashed from the magic fires of chaos a Brunhilde for our times...[she] sang with brilliant force and conviction almost continuously." —Lee Eiseman, *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* 

In the summer of 2023 Carami joined White Snake Projects again to sing the role of Mara the Demon Queen as well as Utah Festival Opera to sing the lead role of Aida. "Her low notes are rich and her high notes soar...Hilaire is especially effective at expressing heartache"—Keola Kinghorn, *Front Row Reviewers* 

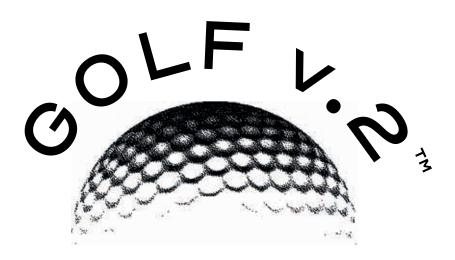
Up next, she will perform "My Wings Burned off" at the Opera America Conference in June in collaboration with Synchrony.

#### KARMESHA K. PEAKE, MEZZO-SOPRANO

An enterprising, skilled, and extraordinarily gifted dramatic mezzo-soprano, Karmesha K. Peake discovered her affinity for music at the age of five singing in her Louisville, Kentucky, church youth choir. A graduate of the University of Kentucky, Karmesha received both a summa cum laude Bachelor of Music Performance degree and Master of Music Performance degree.

Karmesha resides in New York City, where she's established herself as a formidable artist in the city's thriving music community and is on her way to becoming one of the world's outstanding dramatic mezzo-sopranos. Over the years, Karmesha has been afforded the opportunity to receive instruction and participate in workshops with some of the industry's most renowned and revered talents, including Scott Carlton.

At the core of Karmesha's portfolio of music, her passion has been dedicated to giving voice to the premiere works of African American composers. Further still, Karmesha finds joy in performing the hymns and spirituals of one of America's earliest expressions of



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religious folk song. From the sacred spaces of the African American religious experience to palatial opera houses around the world, Karmesha is delighted to share with her audiences her rich, velvet voice of euphony, charisma, and spiritual invitation.

### EDWARD WASHINGTON II, TENOR

Edward Washington II, an American tenor with an international background, makes a distinguished figure known for his compelling tenor voice, lighting fast coloratura, and rounded dedication to the art form.

Edward has performed with Detroit Opera, Opera Omaha, Central Florida Lyric Opera, Opera Orlando, Annapolis Opera, the International Festival of the Voice, Syracuse Opera, and the Metropolitan Opera with two Grammy Wins.

Edward's concert career includes the USAF Band, Alexandria Symphony, Wheeling Symphony, Britain's Got Talent Finalists Group "Vox Fortura", and the American Spiritual Ensemble, to name a few. Mr. Washington has premiered the works of seven American composers including numerous Spirituals, Art Songs, one Cantata, two Song Cycles and two Operas. He has also been part of the creation of new works to come.

Edward is a brother of Phi Mu Alpha. Edward received his BM at Stetson University, then received his master's degree (4.0) from Morgan State University.

#### PETER KENDALL CLARK, BARITONE

Peter Kendall Clark, a born New Yorker, has been appearing in opera, theater, and concert for a half-century. Particularly known for his portrayals of Sondheim anti-heroes, he has been performing Golden Age Musicals since...the Golden Age.

As an operatic baritone he has sung many contemporary works and, in recent seasons, starred in the world premieres of Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Garden of The Finzi-Continis* and Ted Rosenthal's *Dear Erich* (NYCO). He sang the bass solos in Grace Chorale's recent *Messiah* performances and has been appearing with the group since its inception. He has enjoyed long associations with Chelsea Opera, New York City Opera, Union Avenue Opera, Virginia Opera, Charlottesville Opera, Opera Roanoke, St. Petersburg Opera, Syracuse Opera, and Opera Company of Middlebury, to name a few.

Peter just finished a run as El Gallo in *The Fantasticks* at Tri-Cities Opera (Boy Meets Boy Version) and will sing his fifth (!) Older Thompson in Chelsea Opera's revival of Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied* later this season. Beginning in May of 2020, his nightly stoop concerts in Brooklyn garnered global media attention (called "the hottest ticket in town"– New York Post); As the "Brownstone Baritone" he continues to give concerts regularly in Brooklyn Heights and appears in cabaret venues around the country with his acclaimed one-man show *Songs From The Ledge*.

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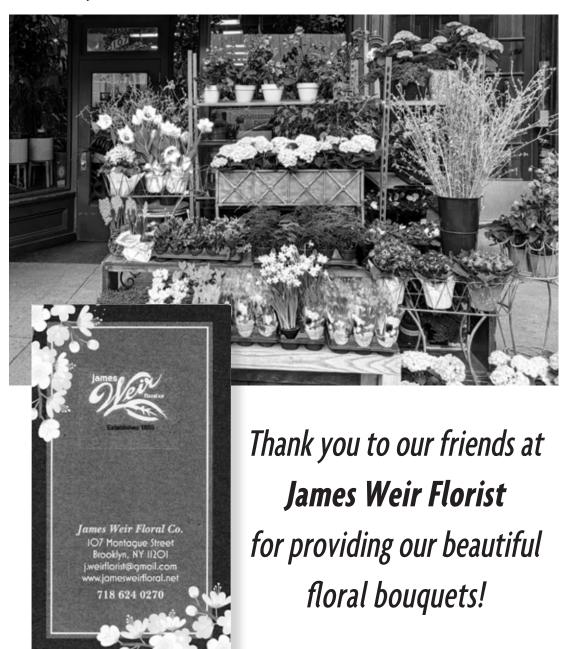
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27

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Percussion II
Percussion III

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Jim Ferraiuolo

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Nicco Mazziotto

Malachi Brown

Alex Lavine

Double Bass

Chris van Voorst van Beest Oboe Keve Wilson

Trumpet I
Sam Jones Clarinet
Trumpet II Mike Raia

Hugh Ash Bassoon

Trumpet III Gilbert Dejean
Frank Huber

Trombone I Keyboard
Chris Urquiaga

Mike Lormand \*Principal

# GRACE CHORALE OF BROOKLYN

Jason Asbury, Artistic Director Christopher Urquiaga, Assistant Music Director

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Jean Kahler

Zoe Katz

Brenna Kane

Renee Khuong

Natasha Lewison

Marlyn Klee

Janet Campano

Ionathan Fluck

Jessica Dalv

Ben Gaiarin

Brit Geiger

Jaime Galindo

Wren Hanks
Elise Harris
Akari Kubo
Max Palmer
Brent Porter
Colin Proctor
Terry Quinn
Ronen Shai
Steve Shohl
Bee Weisberger

Basses Ian William Bauman Chip Brenner Markus Finkemeier David Frutkoff Eric Granwehr Douglas Jensen William Leavitt **Bob Lewis** Richard Mann William Parsons Monte Peterson Gordon Revnolds Patrick Scalise Manuel Sosa Andrew Stephens Peter Wheelwright Christopher Wu

29

Casev Newbegin

Karen Ogle

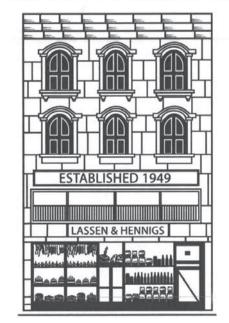
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TO MAKE A DONATION

Grace Chorale of Brooklyn is a 120-member chorus based in Brooklyn Heights dedicated to the performance and promotion of choral singing in Brooklyn. Our concerts, performing partnerships, and educational outreach events offer a wide variety of choral music, including newly commissioned works, to audiences throughout the borough, while providing amateur singers of varied experience the opportunity to study the art of choral singing under the dynamic and professional leadership of Music Director Jason Asbury and Assistant Music Director Christopher Urquiaga.



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To Jason
and the Board of Grace Chorale,
Thank for your hard work,
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In gratitude,

Jeanne Morgan-Nagle

Thrilled to be singing with my friends and fellow singers.

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Didi Rick





A huge thank you to Gordon Reynolds, bass, for your invaluable contribution to Grace Chorale of Brooklyn, designing and creating our concert programs, posters, and mailers.



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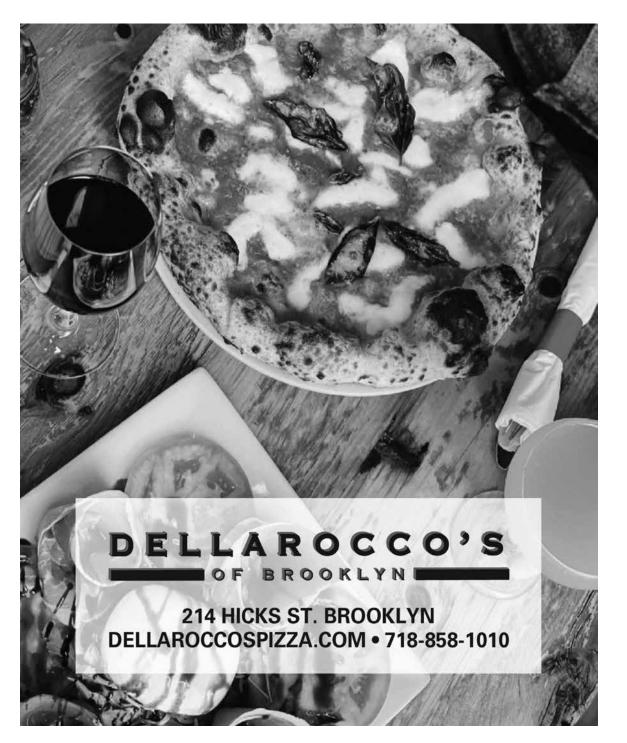
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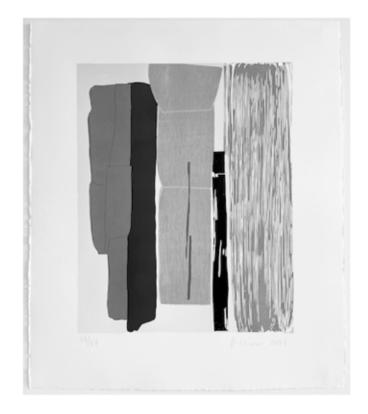
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Congratulations to Grace Chorale of Brooklyn and best wishes to its dedicated artists for many more years of beautiful music!

Joseph J. Mattera

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