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REBECCA CLARKE AND HER CIRCLE

dedicated to the life of Joëlle LeClair Whitmarsh

Clarke: Weep You No More, Sad Fountains (1926)
Clarke: Come, O Come, My Life's Delight (1926)
Vaughan Williams: Rest (1902)
Clarke: Music, When Soft Voices Die (1910)
Clarke: My Spirit Like A Charmed Bark Doth Float (1911)
Clarke: When Cats Run Home & Light Is Come (1909)
Britten: Hymn to St. Cecilia, Op. 27 (1942)

INTERMISSION

Clarke: Ave Maria (1937)
Palestrina: Ave Maria (1575)
Clarke: A Lover's Dirge (1908)
Clarke: There Is No Rose (1928)
Clarke: Now Fie On Love (1906)
Clarke: Philomela (1914)
Clarke: He That Dwelleth In The Secret Place Of The Most High (1921)

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Weep You No More, Sad Fountains

Anonymous

Weep you no more, sad fountains;
What need you flow so fast?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste.
But my sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lie sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets.
Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at even he sets?
Rest you then, rest, sad eyes,
Melt not in weeping
While she lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

Come, Oh Come, My Life's Delight

Thomas Campion (1567 - 1620)

Come, O come, my life's delight!
Let me not in languor pine:
Love loves no delay, thy sight
The more enjoyed, the more divine.
O come, and take from me
The pain of being deprived of thee.

Thou all sweetness dost enclose,
Like a little world of bliss:
Beauty guards thy looks: the rose
In them pure and eternal is.
Come then! and make thy flight
As swift to me as heavenly light!

Rest

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

O EARTH, lie heavily upon her eyes;
Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching,
Earth;
Lie close around her; leave no room for

mirth

With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs.
She hath no questions, she hath no replies,
Hush'd in and curtain'd with a blessèd dearth
Of all that irk'd her from the hour of birth;
With stillness that is almost Paradise.
Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
Silence more musical than any song;
Even her very heart has ceased to stir:
Until the morning of Eternity
Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be;
And when she wakes she will not think it long.

Music, When Soft Voices Die

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 - 1822)

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

My Spirit Like A Charmed Bark Doth Float

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 - 1822)

"A Fragment: To One Singing"

My spirit like a charmed bark doth float
Upon the liquid waves of thy sweet singing,
Far far away into the regions dim
Of rapture.
As a boat, with swift sails winging
Its way adown some many-winding river.

When Cats Run Home And Light Is Come

from "Poems, Chiefly Lyrical"

Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892)

When cats run home and light is come
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his round-e-lay;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

Hymn to St. Cecilia

W.H. Auden (1907-1973)

I.

In a garden shady this holy lady
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Poured forth her song in perfect calm:
And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer,
And notes tremendous from her great
engine
Thundered out on the Roman air.
Blonde Aphrodite rose up excited,
Moved to delight by the melody,
White as an orchid she rode quite naked
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;
At sounds so entrancing the angels dancing
Came out of their trance into time again,
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses
The huge flame flickered and eased their
pain.
Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and
startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

II.

I cannot grow;
I have no shadow
To run away from,
I only play.
I cannot err;
There is no creature
Whom I belong to,
Whom I could wrong.
I am defeat
When it knows it
Can now do nothing
By suffering.
All you lived through,

Dancing because you
No longer need it
For any deed.
I shall never be
Different. Love me.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and
startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

III.

O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall,
O calm of spaces unafraid of weight,
Where Sorrow is herself, forgetting all
The gaucheness of her adolescent state,
Where Hope within the altogether strange
From every outworn image is released,
And Dread born whole and normal like a
beast
Into a world of truths that never change:
Restore our fallen day; O re-arrange.
O dear white children casual as birds,
Playing among the ruined languages,
So small beside their large confusing
words,
So gay against the greater silences
Of dreadful things you did: O hang the
head,
Impetuous child with the tremendous brain,
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the
stain,
Lost innocence who wished your lover
dead,
Weep for the lives your wishes never led.
O cry created as the bow of sin
Is drawn across our trembling violin.
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the
stain.
O law drummed out by hearts against the
still
Long winter of our intellectual will.
That what has been may never be again.
O flute that throbs with the thanksgiving
breath
Of convalescents on the shores of death.
O bless the freedom that you never chose.
O trumpets that unguarded children blow

About the fortress of their inner foe.
O wear your tribulation like a rose.
Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and
startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

Avé María, Grátia pléna, Dóminus técum.
Benedícta tu in muliéribus, et benedíctus
frúctus véntris túi, Iésus.
Sáncta María, Regina Coeli, dulcis et pia,
O Mater Dei. Ora pro nóbis peccatóribus,
ut cum electis te videamus

*Hail Mary, full of Grace; the Lord is with
thee.
Blessed art thou among women, and
blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Blessed Mary, Queen of Heaven, gentle and
merciful, O Mother of God.
Pray for us sinners, so that with the saints
we may see thee.*

A Lover's Dirge

William Shakespeare (1564–1616)
From "Twelfth-Night," Act II. Scene 4

Come away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.
Not a flower, not a flower sweet,

On my black coffin let there be strown;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corse, where my bones shall be
thrown:
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O, where
Sad true lover never find my grave
To weep there!

There is no Rose

*15th Century English Carol, arr. By Rebecca
Clarke*

There is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bore Jesu;
Alleluia.

For in this rose contained was
Heaven and earth in little space;
Res miranda.

The angels singen the shepherds to:
*Gloria in excelsis Deo:
Gaudeamus.*

Now Fie on Love

*Edward Phillips (1630-1696),
"Against Love" The Mysteries of Love and
Eloquence (1658)*

Now fie on Love, it ill befits
or Man or woman know it:
Love was not meant for people in their wits
and they that fondly show it
betray their too much feathered brains
and shall have only Bedlam for their pains.



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To love is to distract my sleep
 and waking to wear fetters.
 To love is but to go to school to weep;
 I'll leave it for my betters.
 If single love be such a curse,
 to marry is to make it ten times worse.

Philomela

Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86) altered
 The Nightingale, as soon as April bringeth
 Unto her rested sense a perfect waking,
 While late-bare Earth, proud of new cloth-
 ing, springeth,
 Sings out her woes, a thorn her song-book
 making;
 And mournfully bewailing,
 Her throat in tunes expresseth
 What grief her breast oppresseth,
 For Tereus' force on her chaste will prevail-
 ing.
 O Philomela fair, O take some gladness
 That here is juster cause of plaintful sad-
 ness!
 Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
 Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart
 invadeth.
 Alas! she hath no other cause of anguish

But Tereus' love, on her by strong hand
 wroken;
 Wherein she suffering, all her spirits languish,
 Full womanlike complains her will was broken
 But I, who, daily craving,
 Cannot have to content me,
 Have more cause to lament me,
 Since wanting is more woe than too much
 having.
 O Philomela fair, O take some gladness
 That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness!
 Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
 Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart inva-
 deth.

He that Dwelleth in the Secret Place of the Most High

Psalm 91
 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the
 Most High
 shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
 I will say of the LORD,
 He is my refuge and my fortress:
 my God; in whom I trust.
 For he shall deliver me from the snare of the
 fowler,
 and from the noisome pestilence.
 He shall cover thee with his pinions,
 and under his wings shalt thou take refuge:
 his truth is a shield and a buckler.
 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by
 night;
 nor for the arrow that flieth by day;
 nor for the pestilence that walketh in dark-
 ness;
 nor for the destruction that wasteth at
 noonday.
 A thousand shall fall at thy side,
 and ten thousand at thy right hand;
 but it shall not come near thee.
 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold
 and see the reward of the wicked.
 For thou, O Lord, art my refuge!
 Thou hast made the Most High thy habitation;
 There shall no evil befall thee,
 neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwell-
 ing.
 For he shall give his angels charge over thee,
 to keep thee in all thy ways.

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They shall bear thee up in their hands,
lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.
Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder:
the young lion and the serpent shalt thou
trample under feet.
He hath set his love upon me, therefore will
I deliver him:
I will set him on high, because he hath
known my name.
He shall call upon me, and I will answer
him:
I will be with him in trouble;
I will deliver him, and honor him.
With long life will I satisfy him,
and show him my salvation.

Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)

Rebecca Clarke is now recognized as one of the most important British composers in the period between the world wars. Striking for its passion and power, her music spans a range of 20th-century styles including Impressionism, post-Romantic, and neo-Classical. Although she wrote nearly 100 works (including songs, choral works, chamber pieces and music for solo piano), only 20 pieces were published in her lifetime, and by the time of her death in 1979, at age 93, all of these were long out of print. Born and raised in England, with a German mother and American father, Clarke spent

much of her adulthood in the United States and claimed both English and American nationality. Her late-Victorian childhood and, in particular, her father's cruelty, are described in her memoir written in 1969-73. But it is also clear that her family was artistically inclined and that her musical studies were encouraged. Clarke enrolled at the Royal Academy of Music in 1903, where she studied the violin. In 1905, her father abruptly withdrew her from the institution, when her harmony teacher, Percy Miles, proposed marriage. In 1907 she began a composition course at the Royal College of Music, where she was Charles Villiers Stanford's first female student. Again, she was unable to finish her studies, when her father banished her from the family home as a result of their conflicts.

To support herself, Clarke embarked on an active performing career as a violist, and in 1912 she became one of the first female musicians in a fully professional (and formerly male) ensemble, when Henry Wood admitted her to the Queen's Hall orchestra. In 1916 she began a US residency that included extensive travel and concertizing, including performances with cellist May Mukle in Hawaii in 1918-1919 and on a round-the-world tour of the British colonies in 1923.

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During these years Clarke achieved fame as a composer with her Viola Sonata (1919) and Piano Trio (1921), both runners up in competitions that were part of the Berkshire (Mass.) Festival of Chamber Music, sponsored by the American patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. The pieces, submitted anonymously as required by the Festival rules, were rumored to have been composed by Ravel or Bloch, before Clarke's authorship was fully accepted. Coolidge commissioned the Rhapsody for Cello and Piano in 1923, making Clarke the only woman composer

the famous Maecenas supported.

Clarke settled in London in 1924, where she performed as a soloist and ensemble player with major musicians of the day including Myra Hess, Adila Fachiri, André Mangeot, Gordon Bryan, Adolphe Hallis, Guilhermina Suggia and Mukle. In 1927 the English Ensemble was formed, a piano quartet made up of Clarke, Marjorie Hayward, Kathleen Long and Mukle. Clarke also performed as a soloist and ensemble musician in BBC broadcasts, and made several recordings. The quantity of her compositional output decreased in the late 1920s and 30s, possibly because of the discouragement she faced as a composer. With the onset of World War II, Clarke found herself stranded in the USA, where she lived alternately with her two brothers and their families. During this period she returned to composing. Her productivity ended, however, when she accepted a position as a nanny in 1942. In a note preserved in a scrapbook of the 1942 ISCM conference (Berkeley, CA), Clarke describes the Prelude, Allegro and Pastorale she had written for the festival, and also mentions her modest circumstances of employment. She was particularly proud that her work was included, as she was one of only three British composers represented and, as she and others noted, the only woman. In the early 1940s Clarke became reacquainted with James Friskin, a member of the piano department at the Juilliard School, whom she had first known as a student at the RCM; the couple married in 1944. Her last compositional projects include God Made a Tree (1954), an arrangement of her song Down by the Salley Gardens and, around her 90th birthday, revisions of earlier scores, including Cortège and The Tiger.

- Adapted from Dr. Liane Curtis, president, Rebecca Clarke Society



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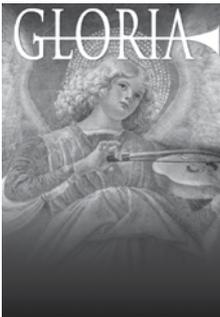
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PROGRAM NOTES - REBECCA CLARKE AND HER CIRCLE

- by Amelia LeClair

This is an important, even historic, program: the first performances in Boston, and perhaps nationally, of the complete choral music of Rebecca Clarke, a repertoire that is virtually unknown by a composer who was among the most important British composers of the 20th century. In 1998, almost twenty years after her death, "Ave Maria" became the first of any of her choral works to be published. All were at one time available from Oxford University Press, but they now show only 3. Some scouting and inquiries sent us to Banks Music, UK which prints OOP scores on demand.

Rebecca Clarke, who called her prize-winning Viola Sonata of 1919 her "one little whiff of success", wrote twelve a cappella choral pieces between 1906 and 1943. Each piece is a microcosm of the musical world she was intellectually inhabiting at the time. Her homages to Dowland, Shakespeare, Thomas Campion, to Ernst Bloch, to English carol and folk tune, are spot on, and yet completely original. Three of her choral works are arrangements of her own solo songs – "Weep You No More," "Come, Oh Come," "There is no Rose". Her incredible ear for language is evident in every piece. Reading through the page, one might not see how complex and harmonically mesmerizing the harmonies are. Her lines are faultless, but unexpected, veering into surprising yet completely logical and satisfying harmonic territory. There isn't a moment of filler; every note counts. These are pieces that every choral group could and should be singing.



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ILLUMINATIONS

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It should come as no surprise that this composer/violist loved altos; you can hear that in the lovely inner lines she writes for them. It is skill like this that sets her work apart from so much other choral literature: ask any alto about using her part as a straight edge. But she doesn't so much favor the altos as understand that each part is important, integral to the whole, and not simply harmonic fill. She clearly learned this from having had so much experience singing and then, in her studies with Stanford, writing in the style of Palestrina. Palestrina was important to her as evidenced by her request to Vaughan Williams, then an already famous RCM alum, to conduct her and some fellow students in singing Palestrina. We hear this in her use of imitation, suspension, and voice leading, hallmarks of pure renaissance style that Palestrina embodies. We include in this program a Palestrina setting of "Ave Maria," one of four Palestrina settings of that text, a motet written in 1575 based on the original chant.

Ralph Vaughan Williams was the leader of the "English Renaissance" of the early 20th century, a movement meant to renew British music through the rediscovery of authentic folk tunes. Where Vaughan Williams chose to embellish and arrange traditional tunes, Clarke's "authentic" folk tunes were in fact newly composed. Vaughan Williams's "Rest" was dedicated to the Magpie Madrigal Society, and has a refined, timeless quality reflecting Vaughan Williams' style at the time. Set in 1902 on a poem by Christina Rossetti, a favorite poet of his, it features a narrator who prays that a woman who has just died might find peace, but the sentiment goes well beyond the usual. Rossetti's deep Christian faith promises the Day of Judgment and a new paradise for all the living and dead, but this text can also be an imagining that this world is but a moment in our infinite lives, and that the troubles we have here on earth will amount to a small interruption once we "wake" and return to our true form. "Rest" is a true English part song, i.e., there is little in the way of imitative writing, but the harmonies are truly lovely, simple, and pure.

Benjamin Britten, also a product of the Royal College of Music and the English Renaissance, imbued his early music with familiar hymn tunes and like Clarke, delicately wrought polyphony. The Britten piece we have chosen, which may be of particular interest in this, his centenary year, is his famous "Hymn to St. Cecilia," because it bears so much resemblance to Clarke's works.

The "Hymn to St. Cecilia" sets a powerful and deeply moving poem W.H. Auden wrote for Britten in honor of the patron saint of music on whose feast day Britten was born. Auden risked writing it as a personal letter to Britten, feeling that Britten's refusal to acknowledge his sexual orientation stood in the way of his artistic and personal growth, keeping him locked in an artificial childhood ("I only play"), avoiding the full range of adult responsibilities and emotions. In a time when open homosexuals were at great risk, especially in England, Auden nevertheless gently scolds, "I shall never be different, love me." The Hymn, written in 1942, shares its musical affect with Britten's "Ceremony of Carols," from the same period. One can also hear a harmonic language similar to that of Clarke, with the surprising twists and rhythmic vitality that characterize both composers.

Now we turn to Clarke's pieces. Clarke uses a broad language of 9th chords, all kinds of 7th chords, parallel 4ths and parallel diminished chords, and a sort of fauxbourdon (parallel 6/4 chords). This use of harmony is unsettling, never landing, always afloat, and in danger, like a keel-less boat, of sliding sideways unpredictably. It's a wonderful sensation, and yet Clarke's skill is so assured we willingly slide sideways with her.

"Weep You No More" is a setting of the famous lutenist/composer John Dowland's words to Clarke's music; it is a perfect mirror of his style (one can almost hear the lute) yet remains completely Clarke. Listen for her characteristic imitation, and her use of a singular tailing voice - the tenors on "waste", and "sets". You will hear this tailing quite a lot in her pieces.

"Music, When Soft Voices Die," a setting of Percy Bysshe Shelley, is essentially in B flat but doesn't approach that harmony until a few bars in, beginning on a C flat 6th chord. Even then the approach is minute, really not settling into B flat until 11 measures in. (What fun she was having with us!) Written in 1910, it very much reflects her studies with Stanford and Parry, and her singular fascination with slippery harmonies.

"My Spirit Like a Charmed Bark Doth Float," another setting of Shelley, with some musically determined word changes (e.g. substituting "float" for "swim"), may have been written as a quartet, and is distinct in its use of the phrygian lowered second tone, and raised 3rd tone, giving the piece both a medieval tinge as well as an Eastern European one. The word painting is divine, especially

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on the final word “winding” as she uses that phrygian motif to twist all four parts around each other, which so perfectly suggests the river sweeping away the helpless bark.

“When Cats Come Home and Light is Come,” a setting of Tennyson, dates to her final year of study at the RCM. It is a madrigal, fully tonal and strophic, with dissonances in the passing tones; in other words, very traditional. But its lively setting of a nonsense text suggests the composer to be: unorthodox and humorous. Listen for the unsettled resolution on the word “sits”. That owl is about to leap off his belfry.

“Come, Oh Come, My Life’s Delight” is a setting of Thomas Campion. Clarke wrote the tune in 1923 and arranged it for chorus in 1926, “just for practice” she says, harking back to Elizabethan songs, much like “Weep You.” But she obviously could not leave well enough alone: here we have a lovely tune in the soprano, but, oh my, what those altos get to do!

“Ave Maria,” written 1937, was the first of Clarke’s choral pieces to be published. For sopranos and altos, it is reverent and soaring, with Clarke’s characteristic parallel stepwise harmonies. Musically it bears no resemblance whatsoever to the original chant, as does the motet of Palestrina that precedes it, however both Palestrina and Clarke chose to set this version of the prayer, which existed along with many other versions prior to the Council of Trent (1563) which standardized the now familiar text.

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“A Lover’s Dirge,” a Shakespeare setting, is a dirge in renaissance style, beginning in minor and ending in major. It’s an early piece, and thus not yet rife with dissonance and sliding harmonies, but the word painting is unmistakable, and the setting of text is so natural one might forget it was painstakingly done. “There is no Rose” is our one medieval example, based on the famous 15th c. English text in praise of Mary; however, Clarke’s tune is original. She sets it for solo baritone and a chorus of men, and in single canon form. “Now Fie on Love,” a humorous setting on words by Edward Phillips for men’s voices, is almost completely in canon and clearly meant for a large chorus, because the low bass gets absolutely no

breath in the entire piece.

The setting for "Philomela" is the Greek myth in which Tereus, husband of Procne, rapes Procne's sister, Philomela. Procne, in anger, kills her own son, son of Tereus. The narrator is Procne, who tells Philomela, who is now pregnant, that she should take heart that she is at least more fortunate than Procne whose child is gone, "since wanting is more woe than too much having". Clarke so understood lament in her exquisite setting of both "mournfully bewailing what grief her breast oppresseth" (Philomela) and "I, who daily craving cannot have to content me" (Procne) with very slithery chords indeed, parallel 4ths, moving up a bit and down some more by half step.

"He That Dwelleth in the Secret Place of the Most High" (Psalm 91) is our final piece, set during a flurry of interest in psalms. It's an homage to Ernest Bloch, a composer she very much admired. She uses similar bitonality, a cantorial tenor, and a medieval technique of rhythmic expansion where a tune is sung at one speed in one part, and the note values are doubled in other parts to create a complex rhythmic canon. It is essentially in ABACA form, climaxing at "ten thousand at thy right hand." The solo tenor brings us into the piece and leads us out, ending on a rather surprising, stark, completely tonal G major chord. It is a tour de force, and her most ambitious piece among the choral works. She did, in fact, show it to Bloch who, she says, "criticized it severely" and suggested many changes, none of which she made.

ABOUT THE ENSEMBLE



Amelia LeClair,
Director, Visiting Scholar
at the Women's Studies
Research Center of Brandeis
University for 2012-14,
received her Bachelors in

Music Theory and Composition from UMass Boston in 1975, with some post-graduate studies at Longy School of Music during which time she explored conducting as an option. Having noticed throughout her education the dearth of female conductors as well as composers in the historical canon, she lost faith in her own ability to do either and moved on to raising a family.

25 years later she received her master of music in choral conducting from New England Conservatory in 2003, studying with Simon Carrington. She made her conducting debut in Jordan Hall in March of 2002.

In 2004, LeClair founded Cappella Clausura, an ensemble of voices and period instruments specializing in music written by women from the 8th century to the present day. In spring of 2013 Ms. LeClair presented a paper on Cappella Clausura's historic and innovative performance of Hildegard Von Bingen's Ordo Virtutum sponsored by the International Society of Hildegard von Bingen Studies at the annual Medieval Studies Institute in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Ms. LeClair has conducted workshops on chant and renaissance singing, and is contract director of choirs at the Church of St Andrew in Marblehead, and director of Vermilion, a quartet singing a uniquely Unitarian Vespers service for the First Unitarian Society in Newton. She is former director of Schola Nocturna, a compline choir at the Episcopal Parish of the Messiah in Newton, of Coro Stella Maris, a renaissance a cappella choir in Gloucester, and of the children's choirs for First Unitarian Society in Newton. She lives in Newton with her husband, graphic designer Garrow Throop. Her daughter, Julia, who lived in China for five years, now resides in Washington, DC. Her son, Nick, a classical guitarist, lives in

Brooklyn, NY.

Aliana de la Guardia, soprano

Soprano Aliana de la Guardia is a frequent performer of New Music. She has been singing with the Ludovico Ensemble since 2004 and has performed composers such as: Birtwistle, Gorecki, Harvey, Kurtág, Sciarrino, Schoenberg, and frequently collaborates with many local composers. She is the Artistic Director of Dirty Paloma and is a founding artist and General Manager of Guerilla Opera with which she co-produced and premiered seven world premiere operas with roles written specifically for her.

Additional Credits: Firebird Ensemble, Harvard Group for New Music, I/O Ensemble at Williams College, Xanthos Ensemble, LOST-WAX Dance Co. at FirstWorks Providence, Boston Lyric Opera, Granite State Opera, Cape Cod Opera, MetroWest Opera, and guest starting on ABC's *Body of Proof*. Artistic residencies: Hubbard Hall Opera Theater, The Boston Conservatory, and University of Memphis. (www.aliandelaguardia.com)

Elizabeth Mitchell, mezzo soprano

Originally from Central Massachusettes Elizabeth holds two bachelors in music education and Vocal performance from the University of New Hampshire. She took masters level classes in early music performance practice at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland Ohio studying with Ellen Hargis and Aaron Sheehan.

In addition to singing with Capella Clausura, Elizabeth is a freelance musician subbing in several different churches in the city. She works at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical center as a Practice Assistant and has recently been pursuing musical interests such as folk and bluegrass.

Susan Paxson, mezzo soprano

Susan Byers Paxson maintains an active career in opera, oratorio and recital, and has appeared regularly with many of Boston's renowned music organizations. She has been a featured artist with the Handel & Haydn Society and Boston Baroque (formerly Banchetto

Musicale) for many years, and has toured and recorded with these ensembles. Ms. Paxson is a longtime performer with Emmanuel Music and the Boston Early Music Festival, and was a founding member of Ensemble Abendmusik and the Castle Hill Music Festival. In addition to her work in early music, Ms. Paxson has performed in opera with many companies, including the Boston Academy of Music, Monadnock Music, and Opera Aperta. She holds a BM degree in Harpsichord Performance and an MM degree in Performance of Early Music (voice and harpsichord) from the New England Conservatory of Music, and has studied voice with such early music specialists as Jantina Noorman, Andrea von Ramm, and Max von Egmond, and keyboard with John Gibbons, Mireille Lagacé and Gustav Leonhardt. Ms. Paxson can be heard on recordings for the Arabesque, Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, l'Oiseau Lyre, Northeastern, and Telarc record labels.

Adriana Repetto, Soprano

Adriana Repetto's voice has been described by critics as "...radiant tones sung from the heart" (Munich), and as having a "melting bloom" (Thomas Garvey, **The Hub Review**). As soprano soloist, she has performed in Germany and Italy with the Philharmonic Orchestra of Bad Reichenhall and the Bell-Arte Baroque Orchestra of Salzburg in the passions and cantatas of Bach, Mozart's *Solemn Vespers*; Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*, Mendelssohn's *Paulus*, Händel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *Creation*, among others. At the 'Festival of Sacred Music' in Lucca, Italy, Adriana was featured as Dalila in Händel's *Samson*. Regionally, her orchestral work has focused on the oratorios and operas of Haydn and Mozart with various chorales and university ensembles. In Boston, she has sung and/or recorded with Philovox, King's Chapel Singers, Longwood Opera, and Boston Secession. An avid recitalist, she has concertized in Europe and the U.S., most recently in Boston for the world premiere of *Toward Shalom: Songs for Peace* (Gustafson). She is a native Bostonian and holds Bachelor's degrees both in music (voice) and religion from Oberlin College and Conservatory and a Master of Music in voice from Boston University. She has studied with

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in the Boston area and in France. Past roles include Marcellina, Cherubino, Cousin Hebe, Giovanna in Rigoletto, L'Aurore in Elizabeth Claude Jacquet de la Guerre's Cephalé et Procris, and Eponine with Opera by the Bay, Riverside Theatre Works, the Newton Symphony Orchestra and at the Longy School of Music. On the concert platform she has appeared as soloist in Messiah, Bach's Magnificat and Vivaldi's Gloria. She is on the roster of Opera On Tap, sings regularly with Boston Baroque and is a member of the Choir of the Church of the Advent. Other ensemble work includes the Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Academy of Music and the Orpheus Singers. For many years she held the post of Choir Director and Cantor at Sacred Heart Church in Roslindale. She teaches privately. She holds a Master's Degree with Distinction, in Vocal Performance, from the Longy School of Music in Cambridge MA, where she was an Honor's winner in 2004.

Will Prapestis, Baritone, is quickly establishing himself as a viable member of the Boston music community, performing frequently as a soloist and ensemble member throughout New England. He recently made his professional opera debut with Helios Opera as Indamoro in Cavalli's Artemisia. Will was also part of the critically-acclaimed male ensemble in Benjamin Britten's Prodigal Son, with Intermezzo Opera. Will has had the pleasure of singing with such ensembles as Boston Baroque, appearing on their recent recording of Haydn's "Creation" as a chorister, Boston's Cantata Singers, as both a soloist and chorister, Emmanuel Music, the Orpheus Singers, a soloist and chorister with Oriana Consort, Boston University Chamber Chorus, and the Fredonia College Choir, performing at a number of venues. Will also takes part in a number of more up-and-coming ensembles, such as Boston SoHIP and Amherst Societatis-Oratorio, for which he has performed several, one-on-a-part Early Music pieces, ranging from composers like John Blow and Henry Purcell to Dieterich Buxtehude and J.S. Bach. He has had the opportunity to perform as a chorister and as a soloist in Boston, with his solo credits including Schlendrian

Richard Miller, Phyllis Curtin and Helen Hodam. Currently, she is a soprano soloist at the Old South Church in Boston's Copley Square, serves on the voice faculties of Emerson College and Buckingham, Browne & Nichols Upper School, and manages her own voice studio. Adriana sang her first concert with Cappella Clausura in December of 2009 and is pleased to add her voice to its roster of gifted singers.

Letitia Stevens, mezzo soprano, recently appeared as the Witch in Hansel and Gretel, with Just Love to Sing! in New Hampshire, and as the Fairy Queen in Iolanthe, with the MIT Gilbert and Sullivan Players. In the summer of 2013 she also appeared in Longwood, and New England Light Operas' former Concert Series as well as making a return visit to Hadlock Field in Portland, Maine to sing the Irish (in Gaelic) and U.S. National Anthems, opening the Portland Sea Dogs' (AA affiliate of the Red Sox) Irish Night. In 2012 and 2013 she has been heard in solo and chamber music recitals

in Bach's Kaffee Kantate and baritone soloist in Giovanni Gabrieli's In Ecclesiis, under the baton of Martin Pearlman and Ann Howard Jones, respectively. His accolades not exclusive to Early Music, Will has performed a number of operatic roles, including Marcello in Puccini's *La Bohème*, Papageno in Mozart's *Magic Flute*, and Father in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* with the Hillman Opera, as well as the eponymous role in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, John Proctor in Ward's *The Crucible*, and Rocco in Beethoven's *Fidelio* with Fredonia's Student Opera Theatre Association. Will is also a very busy bass player, thoroughly active in the Boston and New York City Pop Music scenes, performing with as many as five bands as a bass guitarist, vocalist and arranger, and he is also a highly-sought session artist. Will is a native of Elmira, NY and he earned his BM in Music Performance at SUNY Fredonia.

Alexander Nishibun, *tenor*, a Kentucky native, is an emerging young artist. His varied roles have included Nemorino from *L'Elisir d'amore* (Donizetti), Prunier from *La Rondine* (Puccini), Fenton from *Falstaff* (Verdi), Tamino and Monstatos from *Die Zauberflöte*

(Mozart), and Frederic from *The Pirates of Penzance* (Gilbert & Sullivan). Nishibun has sung with the Portland Opera YAP (2010), the Boston Early Music Festival YAP (2011) during their nationally acclaimed *Niobe, Regina di Tebe* (Steffani) production, and continues to perform widely in the greater Boston area. His vibrant, youthful instrument and sensitive stage presence have been characterized as "a delight..." and "capable of stealing the show with a gesture" (Portland Press Herald). On the concert stage, Nishibun has recently performed with the Carr Collegium and Boston University in performances of Bach BWV 211 (*Coffee Cantata*), BWV 25 (*Es ist nichts Gesundes an meinem Leibe*), and BWV 106 (*Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*). Nishibun received his Bachelor's degree in music from Huntingdon College in the heart of Montgomery, AL. He then received his Master's degree with high honors from the New England Conservatory in Boston, MA. Nishibun continues his vocal studies with Mark St. Laurent – head of the Vocal Pedagogy Department at NEC. This marks his third season with Capella Clausura.

Peter Schilling, *tenor*

In addition to singing with Cappella Clausura, Peter has performed solo and ensemble works in the Boston area in concerts and vesper/compline services with a multitude of early music ensembles, including A Joyful Noyse, Schola Nocturna, Night Song, and Vermilion. He also sings regularly with St. Paul's Chancel Choir in Dedham. He is a founding member of Vermilion, a new quartet in residence at the First Unitarian Society of Newton, whose monthly vesper services provide a fresh take on an ancient rite. This season Peter's was a featured tenor soloist in performances of Faure's Requiem and baritone soloist in performances of *Campra's Messe de Requiem*. Originally from Cheshire, CT, Peter holds a BA in Computer Science and Linguistics & Cognitive Science from Brandeis University, where he sang with the Chamber Choir, studied as a lyric baritone with Pamela Wolfe, played french horn in the orchestra for Gilbert & Sullivan productions, and was a founding member of Company B, an cappella jazz octet. He received Brandeis' Phyllis & Lee Coffey Award in Music in 1987. During his



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youthful studies to become a concert pianist, Peter studied privately with Leo Rewinski (Choate Rosemary Hall) and Professor Renato Premezzi (Beloit College), among others.

Elijah Hopkin, *tenor*, obtained his BA in Vocal Performance from Brigham Young University-Idaho in 2011 before moving to Boston to dive into singing full time. Shortly after arriving in Boston he travelled to New York City to sing with the Copley Singers at the ten year anniversary of 9-11 hosted by Trinity Wall Street. He participates in multiple chamber ensembles including Canto Armonico, Camerata Obscura, and the Video Game Orchestra. What a thrill it is to begin his experience with Capella Clausura this season!

He has been a featured soloist with the St. Paul's parish at Harvard Square and the Copley Singers, and was a principal organizer of the schola singers at First Lutheran Church Boston. He has recently begun a Masters in Early Music Vocal Performance degree at Longy School of Music of Bard College and is thrilled to be working with such knowledgeable faculty and peers there. He began his first semester of undergraduate taking Latin and Music Theory with the goal of learning to write his own Gregorian chant. :) It was another couple of years before was allowed into a music history course wherein he first learned about the nuts and bolts of chant and early polyphony. Now he sings them every day in classes or performing ensembles and plans to continue for a long time.

Anthony Garza, *bass-baritone*, graduated from New England Conservatory of Music in 2010 with a Bachelor's Degree in Vocal Performance and Music History. Operatic roles with the undergraduate opera studio include Donna Agata in Donizetti's Viva la Mama and Gorgibus/The Magistrate in Signor Deluso by Pasatieri. His most recent operatic role was Pangloss/Voltaire in Bernstein's Candide with Harvard's Lowell House Opera. He currently studies with baritone Michael Meraw.

James Dargan, *baritone*, received degrees in literature, religion, and musicology from

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Boston and Leeds Universities, and was a choral scholar at York Minster Cathedral (UK). Mr. Dargan studied voice with Dr. Jerrold Pope, Liz Anker, and Luellen Best, and participated in master classes given by Lynn Torgove, Sondra Kelly, and Penelope Bitzas. He has sung roles with Lowell House Opera, Boston Opera Collaborative, Helios Early Opera, Juventas New Music Ensemble, Greater Worcester Opera, and OperaHub, and he has presented recitals at King's Chapel, St. John's Episcopal Church, and Trinity Cathedral in Miami. Mr. Dargan is a member of the professional choir of The Church of the Advent, is a member and frequent soloist with the Cantata Singers, is on the roster of Emmanuel Music, and is a member of the Xerces Blue Ensemble. As a violinist, Mr. Dargan studied early music, improvisation, and all eras of chamber music. He has worked closely with Judy Tarling, Nicholas Kitchen, and members of the Juilliard String Quartet, and he has premiered music by T.J. Anderson, Rodney Lister, and Penka Kouneva. In November, Mr. Dargan will make his chorus debut with Boston Baroque.

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