Symphony of Psalms

featuring

Princeton University Glee Club and Chamber Choir

Alexandra Rice and Gloria Yin, piano

Gabriel Crouch, director

Sunday, December 8, 2019 • 5:00pm • Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall
Program Note

The Book of Psalms sits squarely in the middle of the Old Testament – but unlike most of its neighboring books it’s not really meant to be read, or even recited: The word ‘Psalm’ derives from an ancient Greek word for music - *Psalmoi* – so it’s clear that the author, or authors, intended for the words to be carried on some form of music. Speaking of authorship, the Psalms are traditionally attributed to that most musical of Old Testament figures, David, so little wonder that they’ve always had a strong musical association. There are 150 Psalms in all, but two major systems of numeration – the Hebrew system and the Greek (or ‘Vulgate’) system - which can make the issue of labelling a psalm text somewhat confusing. Nowadays most traditions adhere to the Hebrew numeration – but the Eastern Orthodox churches still use the Vulgate numeration, and the Catholic church only stopped using it 50 years ago. This explains why a composer exposed to Orthodox practice (and to pre-1969 Catholicism) such as Igor Stravinsky would use the Vulgate numeration for the texts of his *Symphony of Psalms*. For today’s performance we’ve adhered to the labeling indicated by the composer.

As a tool of worship, the Psalms have an extraordinary range of uses. There are psalms of thanksgiving, psalms of praise, psalms about royalty which are traditionally sung at coronations, psalms for funerals such as the 23rd Psalm ‘The Lord is my Shepherd’ (performed today in Schubert’s beautiful setting), psalms which prophecy the coming of a Messiah, psalms of pilgrimage and homecoming such as Psalm 84 ‘O how amiable are your dwellings’ (Caroline Shaw’s haunting setting of this text – ‘and the swallow’ - was written in response to the ongoing refugee crisis in the Middle East); and the largest category by far - psalms of penitence. The first half of today’s program concludes with a focus on the most iconic of these penitential psalms – number 51, known as the *Miserere*. According to tradition, these are the words David composed to atone for his most egregious sin – his adultery with Bathsheba and complicity in the death of her husband. The psalm plays a prominent role in Judaic, Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant liturgies and has been set to music hundreds of times, including one of the most popular pieces of choral music ever written – the setting of the Miserere by the otherwise little known 17th Century Roman, Gregorio Allegri. The piece is famous in choral circles for the solo quartet verses which contain a prolonged top C for a treble or soprano soloist, but it seems unlikely that this top C was Allegri’s idea. In fact, Allegri’s composed music was just a framework upon which the skilled singers of the Sistine Chapel in the 1630s added their own improvised embellishments (*abbellimenti*). It is most likely that the famous top C was just one of these embellishments, but for reasons which will be clear to anyone who has heard it sung well, this was an embellishment that stuck through the centuries. Ten years ago, the Scottish composer James MacMillan wrote his own setting of this text for the British choir ‘The Sixteen’. Like much of his unaccompanied choral work, it reaches back to the past for ideas and models in a transformative spirit, and with a musical language which reflects two of MacMillan’s most identifiable characteristics – his Scottishness, and his devout Catholicism – with an obvious homage to Allegri thrown in for good measure. The Glee Club presented the US premiere of this work in October 2019.
The other text which features repeatedly today, and which provides welcome levity amidst the gloom, is the very last Psalm – number 150. This is the text known colloquially as The Musician’s Psalm, and a quick look at the text should tell us why: *Praise him with the sound of the trumpet; praise him upon the lute and harp; praise him in the cymbals and dances; praise him upon the strings and pipe; praise him upon the well-tuned cymbals; praise him upon the loud cymbals.*

For obvious reasons there are dozens of settings of this text for a huge assembly of performers, from Schütz to Debussy and beyond. But William Byrd’s setting of the 150th psalm, *Laudibus in Sanctis*, is written in only 5 parts, and the virtuosity of the part-writing suggests that it should be sung by a small group, or even by individual voices. The infectious joy of the text leaps out of the score, buoyed on the sort of playful rhythmic wizardry which Byrd mastered better than anyone else of his time. Listen in the short first section to how simple the beginning feels, and how complex and syncopated it quickly becomes. In the second section, consider the gorgeous word painting of the text ‘alta sacri’, sung in soaring high voices, closely followed by an earthy explosion of joy in the text that follows ‘Laude Dei’. And in the third section, a breathless sequence of ‘Alleluias’, growing ever louder to a grand finish.

The same text appears again at the conclusion of our main work in today’s program. Composed in 1930 for Serge Koussetvitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra for their 50th Anniversary, *Symphony of Psalms* was actually premiered in Brussels by Ernest Ansermet after illness prevented Koussevitzky from taking the podium, and it has mesmerized audiences ever since. Rather than indulge in theatrical gestures of religiosity, or construct his music around pre-existing chant, Stravinsky’s approach is introverted and austere, his original orchestral score leaning heavily on the percussive and gravelly qualities of wind instruments and doing away all together with upper strings. The final movement where we find the 150th Psalm begins with a sort of refrain – heard again at the end – *Alleluia, Laudate Dominum*, after which the instruments let fly in a blistering Allegro with the singers retaining a more resolute pose, chanting out the lines of the psalm with metrical steadiness, and returning to the early refrain periodically. And at its coda, as the text urges us to offer praise on the loud cymbals, Stravinsky creates a deliciously sensuous picture, sonorous cluster chords in the accompaniment, and a jazzily chromatic melody for the sopranos. Stravinsky describes this as ‘agitation, followed by the calm of praise’.

Today, we will be singing *Symphony of Psalms* in the rarely-heard version created by Igor Stravinsky’s son, Soulima Stravinsky, for two pianos. This has been made possible thanks to Gloria Yin ’18, who has created a viable performing edition from Soulima’s autograph, and who will be playing one of the piano parts tonight.

*Gabriel Crouch*
Program

Psalms of Hope

Ioseb Bardanashvili
b. 1948
Gott ist mein Hirt
Mariana Corichi Gómez, conductor

Franz Schubert
1797-1828
and the swallow

Caroline Shaw
b. 1982

William Byrd
1543-1623
Laudibus in sanctis
Princeton University Chamber Choir

Psalms of Penitence

Gregorio Allegri
1582-1652
Miserere (abridged)
Maddy Kushan, Sloan Huebner, Corinna Brueckner
Danny Pinto, and Rupert Peacock, soloists

James Macmillan
b. 1959
Miserere
Lulu Hao, Ishani Kulkarni, TJ Li,
and Kevin Williams, soloists

INTERMISSION

Arvo Pärt
b. 1935
Da pacem, Domine
Princeton University Chamber Choir

Igor Stravinsky
1882-1971
Symphony of Psalms
I. Exaudi orationem meam, Domine
II. Expectans expectavi Dominum
III. Alleluia, laudate Dominum
Alexandra Rice and Gloria Yin, piano

Join us for a reception downstairs in the Richardson lounge immediately following the performance.
Ioseb Bardanashvili

Psalm 121

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills: from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh even from the Lord: who hath made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: and he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel: shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord himself is thy keeper:
the Lord is thy defense upon thy right hand;
So that the sun shall not burn thee by day:
neither the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil:
yea, it is even he that shall keep thy soul.
The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in:
from this time forth for evermore.

Franz Schubert

Gott ist mein Hirt | Psalm 23

God is my Shepherd,
I will lack nothing.
He keeps me in a green pasture
And leads me by quiet streams;
He refreshes my fainting courage.
He leads me on the right paths
To the honor of His Name.
And although I wander
In the valley of the shadow of death,
Yet I wander without fear,
For You protect me,
Your rod and staff are always my comfort.
You prepare joyous meal for me
In front of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil,
And give me an overflowing cup,
Blessing and happiness
Will follow me in this life,
And one day I will rest forever
There in the house of the Eternal.
Caroline Shaw

**and the swallow** | adapted from Psalm 84

how beloved is your dwelling place, o lord of hosts
my soul yearns faints
my heart and my flesh cry
the sparrow found a house, and the swallow, her nest
where she may raise her young
they pass through the valley of bakka
they make it a place of springs
the autumn rains also cover it with pools

William Byrd

**Laudibus in sanctis** | Psalm 150

Laudibus in sanctis Dominum celebrate supremum:
Firmamenta sonent inclita facta Dei.
Inclita facta Dei cantate, sacraque potentis
Voce potestatem saepe sonate manus.
Magnificum Domini cantet tuba martia nomen:
Pieria Domino concelebrate lira.
Laude Dei resonent resonantia tympana summi:
Alta sacri resonent organa laude Dei.

Hunc arguta canant tenui psalteria corda,
Hunc agili laudet laeta chorea pede.
Concava divinas effundant cymbala laudes,
Cymbala dulcisona laude repleta Dei.
Omne quod aethereis in mundo vescitur auris
Halleluia canat tempus in omne Deo.

Celebrare the Lord most high in holy praises:
Let the firmament echo the glorious deeds of God.
Sing ye the glorious deeds of God, and with holy voice
Sound forth oft the power of his mighty hand.:.
Let the warlike trumpet sing the great name of the Lord:
Celebrate the Lord with Pierian lyre.
Let resounding timbrels ring to the praise of the most-high God,
Lofty organs peal to the praise of the holy God.:.
Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam; et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.

Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato meo munda me.

Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco, et peccatum meum contra me est semper.

Tibi soli peccavi, et malum coram te feci; ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis, et vincas cum judicaris.

Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum: et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.

Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti; incerta et occulta sapientiae tuae manifestasti mihi.

Asperges me hyssopo, et mundabor; lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.

Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam: et exsultabunt ossa humiliata.

Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis, et omnes iniquitates meas dele.

Cor mundum crea in me, Deus, et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis.

Ne projicias me a facie tua, et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.

Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui, et spiritu principali confirma me.

Docebo iniquos vias tuas, et impii ad te convertentur.

Libera me de sanguinibus, Deus, Deus salutis meae,
et exsultabit lingua mea justitiam tuam.

Domine, labia mea aperies, et os meum annuntiant laudem tuam.

Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium, dedissem utique;
holocaustis non delectaberis.
Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus; cor contritum et humiliatum, Deus, non despicies.

Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion, ut aedificentur muri Jerusalem.

Tunc acceptabis sacrificium justitiae, oblationes et holocausta;
tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.

Miserere | Psalm 51

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness: according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offenses.

Wash me throughly from my wickedness: and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified in thy saying, and clear when thou art judged.

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness: that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Turn thy face from my sins: and put out all my misdeeds.

Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence: and take not thy holy Spirit from me.

O give me the comfort of thy help again: and stablish me with thy free Spirit.

Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked: and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou that art the God of my health: and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord: and my mouth shall shew thy praise.

For thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee: but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise.

O be favourable and gracious unto Sion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with the burnt-offerings and oblations: then shall they offer calves upon thine altar.
Arvo Pärt

Da pacem, Domine | adapted from Psalm 72

Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris
Quia non est alius
Qui pugnet pro nobis
Nisi tu Deus noster.

Grant peace, Lord, in our time;
for there is none else
who would fight for us
if not you, our God.

Igor Stravinsky

Symphony of Psalms

I. Exaudi orationem meam, Domine,
et deprecationem meam.
Auribus percipe lacrimas meas. Ne sileas, ne sileas.
Quoniam advena ego sum apud te et peregrinus,
sicut omnes patres mei.
Remitte mihi, prius quam abeam
et amplius non ero.

Psalm 38 (13-14)

II. Expectans expectavi Dominum, et intendit mihi.
Et exaudivit preces meas;
et exudit me da lacu miseriae,
et de lato faecis.
Et statuit super petram pedes meos:
et direxis gressus meos.
Et immisit in os meum canticum novum,
carmen Deo nostro.
Videbunt multi, videbunt et timabunt:
et aperabunt in Domino.

Psalm 39 (2-4)

III. Alleluia.
Laudate Dominum in sanctis Ejus.
Laudate Erum firmamentis virtutis Ejus.
Laudate Dominum.
Laudate Eum in virtutibus Ejus
Laudate Eum secundum multitudinem
magnitudinis Ejus.
Laudate Eum in sono tubae.
Laudate Eum. Alleluia.
Laudate Dominum. Laudate Eum.
Laudate Eum in timpano et choro,
Laudate Eum in cordis et organo;
Laudate Eum in cymbalis bene jubilantionibus.
Laudate Eum, omnis spiritus laudate Dominum.
Alleluia.

Psalm 150
Princeton University Glee Club

Gabriel Crouch, director
Stephanie Tubiolo, associate director

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| **Concert Manager** | Mariana Corichi Gómez |
| **Publicity Chairs** | Zoe Kahana, Ishani Kulkarni |
| **Archivist** | Hannah Bein |
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Ulysses S. Grant was president, Verdi’s Requiem was premiered, and the Battle of Little Big Horn was still two years in the future when the Princeton University Glee Club was founded in 1874 by Andrew Fleming West, the first Dean of the Graduate College. In its early years, the group consisted of a few young men and was run entirely by its student members, but in 1907, Charles E. Burnham became the first of a long line of eminent professional musicians to lead the Glee Club. Since that time, the ensemble has established itself as the largest choral body on Princeton’s campus, and has distinguished itself both nationally and overseas.

The Glee Club first achieved national recognition under famed organist Alexander Russell, when it performed the American premiere of Stravinsky’s Oedipus Rex with Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1931. Further accolades saw performances of Bach’s Mass in B Minor at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1935, and with the Vassar College Choir, the first United States performance of Rameau’s Castor et Pollux in 1937. The custom of joining together with the women’s choirs of Vassar, Bryn Mawr, Wellesley, Mount Holyoke, and Smith colleges continued until the advent of coeducation. In the 1950s, under the direction of its longest-serving conductor, Walter L. Nollner, the Glee club traveled outside the United States for the first time, establishing a pattern of international concert tours to Europe, Asia, South America, and the South Pacific. Two world tours followed, and most recently, PUGC has toured Hawai’i, Argentina, Paris, Germany, Prague, South Africa, and northern Spain.

Nowadays the Glee Club performs frequently on Princeton’s campus, enjoying the wonderful acoustic and aesthetic of Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall. Perhaps the choir’s most celebrated performing tradition began in 1913, with the annual concerts presented jointly with the Glee Clubs of Harvard and Yale on the eve of the respective football games. A more recent tradition has seen the establishment of annual performances of choral masterworks with professional soloists and orchestra, now supported by an endowment fund to honor Walter Nollner. In the last few years these have included Orff’s Carmina Burana, Mendelssohn’s Elijah, Bach’s St. Matthew and St. John Passions and Mass in B Minor, Mozart’s Requiem, Honegger’s Le Roi David, and Faure’s Requiem.

The choir embraces a vast array of repertoire, from Renaissance motets and madrigals, Romantic partsongs, and 21st century choral commissions to the more traditional Glee Club fare of spirituals, folk music, and college songs. The spectrum of Glee Club members is perhaps even broader: undergraduates and graduate students, scientists and poets, philosophers and economists – all walks of academic life are represented, knit together by their belief in the nobility and joy of singing together.

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Princeton University Chamber Choir

**SOPRANO**

Hannah Bein ‘22  
Katie Chou ‘23  
Lizzie Curran ‘23  
Alex Giannattasio ‘22  
Sloan Huebner ‘23  
Zoe Kahana ‘21  
Madeline Kushan ‘20  
Noel Peng ‘22  
Charlotte Root ‘22  
Bass: Catherine Sweeney ‘20  
Molly Trueman ‘23

**ALTO**

Eli Berman ‘20  
Harry Bound ‘21  
Corinna Brueckner ‘23  
Grace Collins ‘21  
Marina Corichi Gómez ‘21  
Natalie Dietterich GS  
Meredith Hooper ‘20  
Ishani Kulkarni ‘22  
Megan Ormsbee ‘20  
Shruti Venkat ‘23

**TENOR**

Adam Ainslie GS  
Thomas Hemler ‘20  
Matthew Higgins Iati ‘22  
TJ Li ‘21  
Ashwin Mahadevan ‘22  
Benjamin Musachio GS  
Daniel Pinto ‘20  
Josh Seo GS

**BASS**

Julius Foo ‘21  
Tynan Gardner ‘20  
Thomas Jankovic ‘20  
David Kim ‘20  
Rupert Peacock ‘23  
Liam Seeley ‘23  
Dustin Swonder GS  
David Timm ‘22  
Kevin Williams ‘21  
Michael Yeung ‘21
The Princeton University Chamber Choir is a select group of mixed voices that sings a range of challenging music from the Renaissance period through the twenty-first century. This ensemble performs in concert with the Princeton University Glee Club as well as on a separate concert series, and is frequently invited to perform off campus. Recent repertoire has included Bach’s Jesu meine Freude, Lassus’ Magnificat Praeter Rerum Seriem, Parry’s Songs of Farewell, and Handel’s Dixit Dominus. Upcoming engagements include a performance of Poulenc’s Figure Humaine this coming April.

Gabriel Crouch is Director of Choral Activities and Senior Lecturer in Music at Princeton University. He began his musical career as an eight-year-old in the choir of Westminster Abbey, where he performed a solo at the wedding of HRH Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson. After completing a choral scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, he was offered a place in the renowned a cappella group The King’s Singers in 1996. In the next eight years he made a dozen recordings on the BMG label (including a grammy nomination), and gave more than 900 performances in almost every major concert venue in the world. Special collaborative projects saw him working and performing with some of the world’s most respected artists, including percussionist Evelyn Glennie, pianists Emmanuel Ax and George Shearing, singer Barbara Hendricks and ‘Beach Boy’ Bruce Johnston.

Since moving to the USA in 2005, first to run the choral program at DePauw University in Indiana, and now at Princeton University, he has built an international profile as a conductor and director, with recent engagements in China and Australia as well as Europe and the United States. In 2008 he was appointed musical director of the British early music ensemble ‘Gallicantus’, with whom he has released four recordings under the Signum label to rapturous reviews, garnering ‘Editor’s Choice’ accolades in Gramophone and Early Music Review, and, for the 2012 release ‘The Word Unspoken’, a place on BBC Radio’s CD Review list of the top nine classical releases of the year. When the academic calendar allows, Mr. Crouch maintains parallel careers in singing and record production, crossing the Atlantic frequently to appear with such ensembles as Tenebrae and The Gabrieli Choir, and in the US, performing recitals of lutesong with such acclaimed lutenists as Daniel Swenberg and Nigel North. As a producer his latest credits have included Winchester Cathedral Choir, The Gabrieli Consort and Tenebrae.

His achievements in the choral world have led to many invitations to adjudicate choral competitions, notably the mixed choir final of ‘Sainsbury’s Choir of the Year’ (televised by the BBC). His work as a singer, coach and musical director has led to his name appearing in the London Times’ list of ‘Great British Hopes’.

20-year-old Alexandra Rice is a junior in the economics department at Princeton University. She currently studies with Dr. Margaret Kampmeier from the Manhattan School of Music as part of the certificate program in music performance. She was previously a student of Zena Ilyashov in St. Louis, Missouri for 10 years. Her achievements include first prizes in the 2016 SIUE Young Pianists Competition and 2016 US New Star Etude Competition, and being named a finalist in the 2016 Midwest International Piano Competition. She has had multiple solo performances in the St. Louis Classical All-Stars series at the prestigious Sheldon Concert Hall in St. Louis, and was invited to perform with the St. Louis Youth Symphony at Powell Hall in 2015. She is also a current G.A., Jr. and Kathryn M. Buder Foundation scholarship recipient, and has twice performed live on Kansas Public Radio. At Princeton, she served as the 2018 Music Director of the Princeton Pianist Ensemble, an ensemble of 40+ members, and also performs with Opus 21, Princeton’s premier chamber music society.

Gloria Yin graduated from Princeton in 2018, where she majored in Mathematics and received certificates in Piano Performance and Computer Science. The first experience that sparked her love of music was the opportunity to play her first piano duet, long after she started learning piano as a solo instrument. Since then, musical collaboration has been a passion of hers, and she firmly believes that music is best made when not alone. While at Princeton, she was music director and president of the Princeton Pianists Ensemble, student conductor of the Glee Club, and co-director of Contrapunctus XIV (though not all at the same time). She also sang in Chamber Choir, conducted several premieres of undergraduate compositions, and accompanied whenever she could. She is grateful for the opportunity to return to Princeton (yet again!) to collaborate with some fabulous people for this fabulous concert.
Our concert series The Glee Club Presents, in which world class choral ensembles visit campus to engage and collaborate with our students and perform for our community, has already made a huge impact on the Glee Club’s life. We rely on donations to the Glee Club Fund to build and sustain this innovative series, and we hope that you will consider supporting our effort to raise $25,000 to cover the costs of our 2019-2020 season.

Your support of the Glee Club Fund will directly impact:

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- our traditions which are cherished by generations of Princeton alumni, friends, and parents
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