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To Hope!
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by Dave Brubeck

I'm Gonna Sing!
by André Thomas

Tina Johns Heidrich
Music Director & Conductor

March 5, 2023

Our 22nd Season!

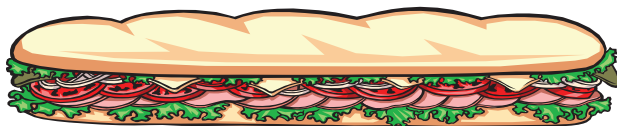
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Connecticut Master Chorale

Tina Johns Heidrich, Music Director and Conductor

Joseph Jacovino, Jr., Accompanist

Connecticut Master Chorale Holiday Brass and Steel

Connecticut Master Chorale Orchestra

2023-2024 Concert Season

Our 23rd Season!

Holiday Prelude Concert

We celebrate our 23rd concert season with a glorious array of holiday music, featuring "A Calypso Christmas" with the return of the ever-popular steel drums! We will offer an eclectic program of delightful and exciting, yet seldom performed compositions, plus unique and engaging arrangements of familiar carols, certain to prepare you for the holidays!

Sunday, November 19, 2023 - 3:00 pm

Spring Concert

LUX: The Dawn from on High - Dan Forrest

Written in 2018, the third major work from this master composer is filled with the exquisite harmonies, profound texts, and uplifting vocals that characterize his earlier compositions. An evocation of shimmering light, unconditional love, and heavenly joy!

Plus other new and inspirational works by Dan Forrest.

Sunday, March 10, 2024 - 3:00 pm

Both concerts at

First Congregational Church of Danbury

For tickets and information, call 203-740-9533

www.cmchorale.org

About the Connecticut Master Chorale

The Connecticut Master Chorale, founded and directed by Tina Johns Heidrich in 1999, is a premiere ensemble of professional caliber vocalists in Western Connecticut. As we continue into our third decade, we are especially grateful for the enthusiastic audiences who have contributed to our success, and we look forward to continuing our tradition of bringing dynamic and exciting music to the area.

As we look back at our achievements, we have had many special experiences in addition to our regularly scheduled concerts each year.

One of our most exciting honors was being invited to perform at the **White House** in December 2002. We were selected through a recorded audition and sang in the Grand Foyer for thousands of White House guests, including workers for Air-Force One and Marine-One, the Marine Corps, the Secret Service, and their families. We are extremely proud to have been granted this distinction!

We were invited to sing in the U.S. premiere of Karl Jenkins' ***Stabat Mater*** at **Lincoln Center** in New York City in January 2009. Meeting the composer, hearing his comments, and singing the piece in his presence added insight and inspiration to our performance in March 2009 in Connecticut.

On Easter Sunday 2002, we performed by invitation at **Carnegie Hall**, singing John Rutter's ***Magnificat*** under his direction. We returned to Carnegie Hall in January 2003 to sing Mozart's ***Coronation Mass***, and again in November 2005, when Rutter conducted us in a performance of his ***Mass of the Children***.

Another accomplishment was winning the annual McDonald's Gospelfest Competition for three consecutive years. In June 2004, we performed as a Regional Representative in Gospelfest 2004 at **Madison Square Garden**. Our 2001 Gospelfest performance was televised on ABC in July 2001.

We have also sung as invited guests at West Point Military Academy, and with the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. Our concert recordings have been featured on WMNR Fine Arts Radio, and recently on WJMJ in Hartford. The video can be found on our website.

It is a pleasure to welcome you to our performance, and we thank you for your support. We are especially grateful to the First Congregational Church of Danbury, our advertisers, our contributing members, our audience, and to the many individuals who help support us. For more information about the Chorale, please call 203-775-2602 or visit www.cmchorale.org.



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About Our Director



Tina Johns Heidrich is the Founder and Music Director of the Connecticut Master Chorale. A dynamic leader with her own distinct vision and style, she consistently produces memorable performances filled with sensitivity, emotion and passion, engaging both singers and audience. Her unique approach of “work hard but have fun” and her immense energy ensure an exciting and educational experience for her singers, while eliciting their very highest performance quality.

Ms. Heidrich has led the Chorale to artistic acclaim and recognition - including the great honor of being invited to sing at the White House in December 2002. The Chorale sang by invitation in January 2009 at Lincoln Center in the U.S. premiere of Karl Jenkins’ “Stabat Mater”. The Chorale has also performed at Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall (three times), West Point Military Academy, and with the Ridgefield Symphony as their guest chorus – all by invitation. They won the annual McDonald’s Gospelfest Competition for three consecutive years and appeared on ABC TV.

Born and raised in Danbury, Ms. Heidrich earned her Bachelor and Master of Science Degrees in Vocal Music Education from Western Connecticut State University.

With an extensive background and over 45 years of experience in choral and orchestral conducting, she has directed numerous school, church, and community choirs and orchestras, as well as musical theatre. She has directed choruses on tour in Eastern Europe, Canada, and Washington, DC, and on ABC’s “Good Morning America”, and has served as Guest Conductor for several groups, including the Danbury Music Centre’s annual “Messiah” performance, and Guest Clinician for the Western Connecticut State University Chamber Choir Festival.

From 1990 to October 2017, Ms. Heidrich was the Director of Music of the First Congregational Church of Bethel, where she served as organist and directed the Sanctuary and Handbell Choirs.

“As the Chorale continues into our third decade, I remain as excited as I was when the group began. We have performed over 500 unique pieces by over 400 composers in many venues, and worked with today’s leading composers. And what pleases me most both personally and professionally, is the music we create, the outstanding sound of the group, the satisfaction after each performance, and the enthusiasm and loyalty of our audiences.”

Connecticut Master Chorale

Memorable Moments

- Founded in 1999
- White House Christmas performance
- Guests of West Point Military Academy
- Carnegie Hall with John Rutter
1st time: 2002 Rutter's "Magnificat"
- Carnegie Hall with Terre Johnson
2nd time: 2003 Mozart's "Coronation Mass"
- Carnegie Hall with John Rutter
3rd time: 2005 Rutter's "Mass of the Children"
- Lincoln Center – U.S. Premiere of Karl Jenkins' "Stabat Mater"
- Madison Square Garden performance
- McDonald's Gospelfest winner
1st time: 2001
- McDonald's Gospelfest winner
2nd time: 2002
- McDonald's Gospelfest winner
3rd time: 2003
- ABC7 TV appearance
- Guests of Nutmeg Opera Company
Puccini's "La Traviata"
- Guests of Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra
"Viva Verdi" concert

About Our Accompanist

Joseph J. Jacovino, Jr. graduated from the Hartt College of Music with a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance and from the Manhattan School of Music with a Master's Degree in Music Education. He retired in 2014, after 35 years, as the Music Director at Holy Cross High School in Waterbury, where he directed the concert band, jazz band, guitar ensemble, handbell choir, piano keyboard class, and taught music theory.



Since 2000, Mr. Jacovino has been the organist/cantor/choir director at St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown, where he has conducted numerous concerts involving the St. Rose Festival Chorus and Orchestra. In 2005 the choir traveled to Italy performing concerts in Rome, Florence, and at the Vatican.

In addition to his 22 seasons as the Connecticut Master Chorale's extraordinarily talented accompanist, he is also a member of the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra.

This is also his 16th season as the Music Director of the Waterbury Chorale, which is currently celebrating its 54th season. He is also currently the Interim-Director of the Heritage Singers, Heritage Village, Southbury.

As a composer, Mr. Jacovino has written several sacred choral pieces and masses, including "Christmas at the Palace" (a tribute to the Waterbury Palace Theater), "Enshrined in the Grace of God", dedicated to Waterbury's Shrine of St. Anne, and "Something Beautiful for God", based upon a prayer by Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Mr. Jacovino has been an active piano soloist, having appeared with the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, Naugatuck Valley Community College Orchestra, the Connecticut Master Chorale and Orchestra, and the St. Rose Festival Chorus and Orchestra. He has appeared in recital on numerous occasions as a classical organist and pianist.

The Waterbury Chorale

Joseph Jacovino, Director
Susan Anthony-Klein, Accompanist

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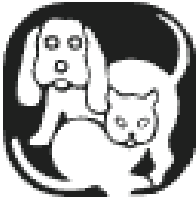
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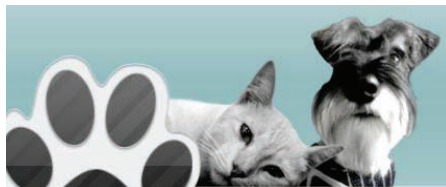
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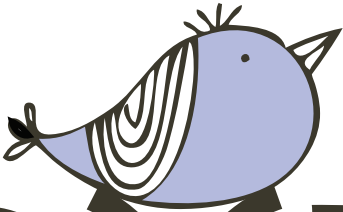
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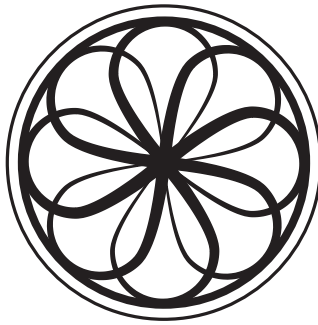
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# *Connecticut Master Chorale*

Tina Johns Heidrich, Conductor  
Joseph Jacovino, Jr., Accompanist  
Connecticut Master Chorale Orchestra

## **I'm Gonna Sing!**

**André Thomas**

I'm Gonna Sing  
Band of Angels  
Keep Your Lamps!  
Swing Down, Chariot  
Beautiful City  
Deep River  
If You're Happy/Amen  
John Saw Duh Numbuh

## *Intermission*

## **To Hope! A Celebration**

**Dave Brubeck**

Procession  
Lord Have Mercy  
The Desert and the Parched Land  
The Peace of Jerusalem  
Alleluia  
Father All Powerful  
Holy, Holy, Holy  
While He Was at Supper  
When We Eat This Bread  
Through Him, With Him  
Great Amen  
Our Father  
Lamb of God  
All My Hope  
Gloria

Chorus and Soloists  
Chorus and Soloists  
Mezzo-Soprano  
Chorus and Soloists  
Chorus and Mezzo-Soprano  
Tenor  
Chorus  
Tenor  
Chorus and Soloists  
Tenor  
Chorus and Soloists  
Chorus and Tenor  
Chorus  
Chorus  
Chorus and Soloists

Wendy Gerbier, Mezzo-Soprano  
Marques Hollie, Tenor

*Audio or video recording of any kind is prohibited.*

# *Connecticut Master Chorale*

Tina Johns Heidrich, Music Director and Conductor

Joseph Jacovino, Jr., Accompanist

## **SOPRANO**

Patricia Alworth  
Karrie Beaulieu  
Debbie Benham  
Ginnie Carey  
Sheila Corr  
Carina Decremer  
Emily Flower  
Rebecca Lewis  
Michele McDonald  
Robin Michalak  
Christine Michel  
Diane Peterson  
Kristen Schretzenmayer  
May Steinberg  
Michael Taylor  
Carol Wheeler  
Sarah Zamudio

## **TENOR**

Robert Bria  
Roy Deoss  
Steve Gardner  
Robyn Gray  
David Jurman  
David Nicholson  
Brad Peterson  
Tim Smith  
Daria Verelley  
Tom Wolff

## **ALTO**

Gale Barna  
Judy Bolduc  
Angela Caes  
Sandy Chadwick  
Anita Corbeil  
Teresa DeCarlo  
Sandy Johnson  
Bobbi Lyon  
Jocelyn Miller  
Janet Nazzaro  
Cathy Nickse  
Nancy Northrop  
Kate Peterson  
Julie Pope  
Nancy Raymond  
Leona Schwartz  
Kirstan Summers  
Jana Tvedt

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James P. Alworth III  
Chris Blake  
Mike Carbonneau  
Dana Demand  
Rich Drygas  
Eric Hudson  
Jack Kelly  
David Morey  
Steve Peterson  
Gary Sander

## About Our Soloists

**Wendy Gerbier** is a United States National Anthem Ambassador. Her mezzo-soprano voice, simply put, is sublime. The vibrant radiance of her three-octave range moves listeners deeply as they experience her full-bodied strength and warmth.



Even as a young child it was clear that Wendy had a natural gift for all things musical. So, it is no surprise that this accomplished musician, composer and producer has established herself as a successful opera singer.

Wendy's solo debut was in Danbury, CT as a soloist in a concert honoring Marian Anderson. Her audiences regularly find themselves deeply moved by her rich and colorful tones and her exceptionally expressive stage presence. She is a soloist who is eagerly sought out throughout this country and abroad.

Wendy performed at President Obama's "Moving America Forward" rally in Connecticut. She also performed at Governor Malloy's inauguration. Wendy made her European debut performing a solo concert in London and her Parisian debut when she performed her solo concert in Paris, France.

Wendy's voice is a voice not to miss. Her name is one that you are sure to hear again and again as she soars throughout the world of classical music one note at a time.

Wendy previously appeared with the Connecticut Master Chorale in Karl Jenkins' *Stabat Mater*, John Rutter's *Feel the Spirit*, and Martin Palmeri's *Misa a Buenos Aires*. Wendy is excited to return to the Connecticut Master Chorale a fourth time.

For more information, please visit Wendy's website at [www.WendyGerbier.com](http://www.WendyGerbier.com).

## About Our Soloists

**Marques Hollie**, hailed as a “triumphant tenor” by *Broadway World*, is a Philadelphia-based jewsician and theater artist. Since making his professional debut in Verdi’s *Aida*, Marques has sung more than 30 roles in the operatic canon, spanning a broad range of comedic and dramatic roles from classic and contemporary operas.



Highlights from previous seasons include: the world premiere of Whitney George and Bea Goodwin’s *Princess Maleine*, workshop performances of Alex Weiser’s *State of the Jews* and Felix Jarrar’s *Ulster County Songbook*, reprising his role as Gnat, the evil witch in Jarrar’s *Mother Goose: A Drag Comic Chamber Opera*, and a return to the New York Fashion Week runway as a singer for fashion house Pyer Moss.

Marques began singing professionally in the late 2000s and after a particularly meaningful Passover seder, began an artistic and spiritual exploration of their identities as a Queer, Black, and Jewish person, resulting in original music, prose, and a work-in-progress theatre piece called *Go Down, Moshe*. *Go Down, Moshe* explores the exodus from Egypt through Negro spirituals, civil rights-era music, the narratives of enslaved people, and traditional Jewish prayer modes.

Marques is a rabbinical student at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia, and in his spare time enjoys taking circus and aerial classes, playing dodgeball with Stonewall Sports, and dreaming about playing the Baker in *Into the Woods*.

For more information about Marques and what he’s up to, check out: [www.marques.hollie.com](http://www.marques.hollie.com).

# *Connecticut Master Chorale Orchestra*

## **Violin I**

Stephan Tieszen

Concertmaster

Cyrus Stevens

Marika Basagoitia

## **Violin II**

Larry Deming

Dana Takaki

Nathan Lowman

## **Viola**

Amy Jones

Tyler Gauruder

## **Cello**

Carolyn Engle

Matilda Petrella

## **Contra Bass/**

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## **Piano**

Joseph Jacovino, Jr.

**Personnel Manager, Walter Gibson**



# *Program Notes*

## **I'm Gonna Sing! - André J. Thomas**

André J. Thomas (b.1952) is a conductor, composer and arranger who is especially well known for his unique arrangements of traditional spirituals. After a long and distinguished teaching career at the university level, Dr. Thomas was appointed the visiting professor of choral conducting and interim conductor of the Yale Camerata at Yale for 2020 – 2021. In May 2022 he was appointed an Associate Artist with the London Symphony Orchestra for three years. During his tenure he will expand the repertoire that the LSO routinely performs, introducing the American gospel tradition and works by contemporary African American composers to audiences in the United Kingdom.

### ***I'm Gonna Sing!***

This version of the traditional spiritual has the Spirit telling us to sing, dance, pray and shout, but there is a long-standing custom in some churches and other situations of changing the words to match current issues or events.

### ***Band of Angels***

This piece is based on several different folk sources which describe enslaved peoples' beliefs about angels: *Angel Band*; *All Night, All Day*; *De Angel in Heab'n Gwintir Write My Name*; and *De Band of Gideon*. In Dr. Thomas' commentary, he suggests that these heavenly figures became particularly important because of the promise of a new life in heaven. The people held in bondage felt they could have contact with the angels, since they exist both in heaven and on earth, and that on their deaths those same angels would carry them to Glory.

### ***Keep Your Lamps!***

In the composer's note for this piece, Dr. Thomas relates that many songs of the enslaved people came from hearing sermons about the Bible, in this case the parable of Jesus in Matthew 25:1-13 about the bridesmaids waiting with their oil lamps for the bridegroom to arrive. Half of them did not bring enough oil to last until the bridegroom came. While they left to buy more oil, the bridegroom arrived and the

half who did have lighted lamps went inside with him for the feast and the others were locked out. The message of Jesus to always be ready for his return was of great importance to a people waiting for earthly as well as heavenly deliverance.

### ***Swing Down, Chariot***

Also known as *Swing Down, Ezekiel*, this spiritual tells of Ezekiel's vision of the chariot which would take the enslaved to their home in heaven "on the other side". Some scholars believe that "the other side" was also a euphemism for the Underground Railroad.

### ***Beautiful City***

*Oh, What a Beautiful City*, with the twelve gates to the city from Revelations 21, and *In Bright Mansions Above*, based on John 14:2 where Jesus speaks of the many mansions in His Father's house, have been combined by Dr. Thomas to create this splendid arrangement in which they flow together, forming a vision of heaven for the enslaved people who look forward to being there.

### ***Deep River***

First printed in the 1867 first edition of *The Story of the Jubilee Singers: With Their Songs*, *Deep River* is regarded by many as the most beloved of all spirituals. The use of metaphor and double meaning was useful for people who were not allowed to express themselves freely. The longing to be crossing over the river to a place of peace is understandable for people who are trapped in a life of slavery. It was recorded by Marian Anderson, Paul Robeson, Mahalia Jackson and many others.

### ***If You're Happy / Amen***

The traditional children's song, *If You're Happy*, is entwined by Dr. Thomas with the spiritual, *Amen*, resulting in uplifting enjoyment for all!

### ***John Saw Duh Numbuh***

This spiritual tells the story of John and his amazing vision in Revelations 7 of the crowd of 144,000 coming from all directions. Dr. Thomas creates a wonderful, dynamic setting for this remarkable event.

## To Hope! A Celebration – Dave Brubeck

Dave Brubeck (December 6, 1920 – December 5, 2012). When the Library of Congress designated Mr. Brubeck a “Living Legend” in 2003, he was recognized as “one of America’s all-time greats in the field of jazz and a seminal force in making jazz popular in the U.S. and throughout the world”. He also received many other prestigious awards, including the National Medal of the Arts, the Smithsonian Medal and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. President Barack Obama bestowed the Kennedy Center Award to him on his 89th birthday.

He was also a man of principle who led by example throughout his life. While serving in the Army in Europe during WWII he led an integrated band. In the segregated South he refused engagements rather than replace African American Eugene Wright as a member of his quartet and cancelled a television performance when he found that the directors were intending to film without showing Wright. In 1954, he was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine and was embarrassed because he thought that Duke Ellington was more deserving but was ignored because of his race.

Later, during the Cold War, his State Department-sponsored tours exposed people throughout the world to America through jazz music. In turn, his own music was also influenced by that of the different cultures he experienced during many international tours.

Dave Brubeck met Iola Whitlock when they were both students at the College of the Pacific. Today a plaque on campus marks the spot where they first met. She became his wife, his lyricist, and what he described as the strongest inspiration of his life. They moved to Wilton, Connecticut in 1960, raising their six children and living a life devoted to music and their family. The Wilton Library has the entire Brubeck Collection of musical recordings, correspondence, photographs, manuscripts and other memorabilia. Also in the library is the Brubeck Room, a 150-seat performance space that includes a sculpture of Mr. Brubeck.

Dave Brubeck became a legend in the 1950s for his iconic and revolutionary jazz, but most of those adoring fans were completely unaware that he was a classically trained musician. During a career

lasting more than six decades, he also created a substantial body of innovative secular and religious works integrating classical music with jazz.

***To Hope! A Celebration*** was commissioned by the Catholic publication *Our Sunday Visitor* in 1979. Mr. Brubeck often mentioned this work as one of the highlights of his career, and was especially pleased with the performances in St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna and in Moscow with the Russian National Orchestra and the Orloff choir. It has been performed throughout the English-speaking world and Europe.

An exciting work of grand proportion, ***To Hope!*** is a monumental affirmation of hope and exultation. It is powerful, multifaceted, and displays his superb choral writing ability with profoundly moving passages, dance-like rhythms, deep emotion and a strong sense of optimism.

Our program today was originally scheduled in 2020 as a part of the official world-wide celebration Dave Brubeck 100, commemorating what would have been his 100th birthday. We are delighted to finally present the concert we planned in honor of this remarkable man.

*Ginnie Carey*

Dave Brubeck's personal note on ***To Hope!***

The heart of the Mass is found in the words themselves, living language full of deep meaning, born from the very human need to know God. It is language shaped by tradition and honed fine by usage, embodying within it the seeds for understanding. I approached the composition as prayer, concentrating upon the phrases, trying to probe beneath the surface, hoping to translate into music the powerful words which have grown through centuries.

Emotions that are life, from sorrow to exaltation, were part of my experience in writing ***To Hope!*** When the work was completed, I felt a strong sense of wholeness and affirmation. I pray that those who experience the work will share my feelings.

# *Special Acknowledgements*

## **First Congregational Church of Danbury, CT**

We are delighted to have our concert today in this beautiful sanctuary! Our most gracious thanks to Reverend Pat Kriss, Pastor, Music Director Jim Moriarty, Church Administrator Rachel Gonzalez, Caretaker Ramon Howell, the staff, and the entire Congregation.

## **South Britain Congregational Church, South Britain, CT**

We are pleased to continue to have our rehearsal home at the South Britain Congregational Church. A very special thank you to Rev. Donna Cassity, the SBCC staff, committees, and the entire church family for their wonderful hospitality.

## **Auxiliary parking lots**

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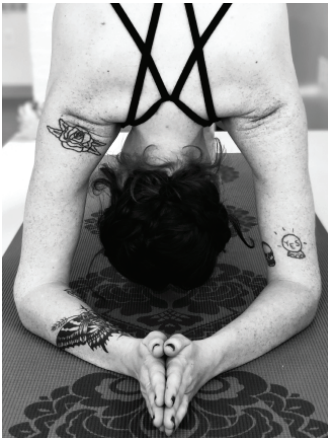


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