

Westchester Oratorio Society

David Štech, Artistic Director

Presents



PAGANS

PITCHFORKS

& PSALMS

AN ALL MENDELSSOHN PROGRAM

Verleih' uns Frieden

Psalm 42, Op. 42

Die erste Walpurgisnacht, Op. 60

Saturday, May 9, 2026 at 7:30 PM

Presbyterian Church of Mt. Kisco

605 Millwood Rd, Mt. Kisco, NY





In loving memory of

Elizabeth McDonald

March 18, 1936 – March 18, 2026

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AN ALL MENDELSSOHN PROGRAM

Saturday, May 9, 2026 7:30 PM
Presbyterian Church of Mount Kisco

David Štech, Conductor

Accompanied by the WOS Orchestra

Felix Mendelssohn

Verleih' uns Frieden

Mendelssohn

*Psalm 42: Wie der Hirsch schreit
nach frischem Wasser, Op. 42*

Elizaveta Kozlova, Soprano

~ Intermission ~

Mendelssohn

Die erste Walpurgisnacht, Op. 60

Michael Anderson, Tenor

MunTzung Wong, Mezzo-Soprano

Brian J. Alvarado, Baritone

David Salsbery Fry, Bass

Notes from the Podium

For the Westchester Oratorio Society, a concert is never simply a performance. It is the culmination of months of shared discovery, of learning music from the inside out. What we hope to offer you this evening is a window into that experience: the particular joy of inhabiting these three works by Felix Mendelssohn, a composer whose music rewards the singer and the listener in equal and generous measure.

Verleih uns Frieden opens the evening with quiet authority. To sing it is a deeply grounding experience. For the listener, it arrives like a hand placed gently on the shoulder.

Psalm 42 is a work whose architecture is more intricate than it first appears. The Psalms are written in couplets — paired lines in which the second restates, deepens, or answers the first. “As the hart pants for water, so longeth my soul after thee.” This is not mere repetition; it is a form of thinking, a way of arriving at meaning through reflection rather than declaration. There is something quietly paradoxical about it: the constraint of the couplet does not limit expression but concentrates and amplifies it. Similarly, Mendelssohn uses fugues and canons, structural forms built on rule and repetition, to generate not rigidity but an extraordinary sense of momentum and inevitability, until something larger and more luminous emerges. The solos and chorus answer one another with the intimacy of a conversation, and when the final pages come into focus, there is a sense of arrival, of having traveled somewhere meaningful together.

Die erste Walpurgisnacht is simply one of the most fun things we’ve ever sung. Goethe’s poem imagines a band of ancient Druids who, harassed by Christian patrols on the eve of their sacred spring rites, devise a gloriously unhinged solution: they dress as demons and monsters, light fires in the forest, and send the interlopers fleeing in terror. Mendelssohn was captivated by this text for nearly two decades before setting it, and the music that finally emerged crackles with that long-held enthusiasm. There is dark menace in the lower voices and driving orchestral writing, but also flashes of comedy, and a final triumphant blaze that tends to leave singers grinning behind their folders.

Great choral music, sung with care and performed for an engaged community, is one of the genuine pleasures of civic life. Concerts like this one are made possible by the generosity of audiences who believe in that mission. If this evening moves or delights you, please consider supporting the Society with a gift. Information on how to donate can be found in this program. We are a community endeavor in the truest sense, and every contribution, of whatever size, helps ensure that this music continues to find its way to you.

Thank you for being part of our community,

David Štech
artistic director
and conductor

Westchester Oratorio Society

SOPRANO

Jen Barone
Helen Berman
Martha Brozski
Denise Cossu
Marvel Griep
Peggy Gryska
Julia Korell
Meg Allyn Krilov
Toni LaPietra
Lisette Meyers
Donna Ray
Liz Ryan

ALTO

Irene Alcoforado
Maev Brennan
Sally Brunner
Christina Cowles
Jane Freeman
Anastasia Leopold
Vicki Lucas
Joanne Marcus
Sherry Marvaso
Anna Mergen
Irene Muller

ALTO (cont.)

Marianne Pei
Anna Marie Spallina
Kathy Stillson
Linda F. Travis
MunTzung Wong

TENOR

Tim Brunner
Laurie Friedman
Aaron M. González
Geoffrey Kidde
Alyssa Reit
Liza Travalino
David Thomas Walker

BASS

Ken DeLuca
Jim Fogel
Robert Kessler
Jim Phelan
Peter Reit
Sol Schepps
Joe Spallina

FLUTE

Justin Lee
Dirk Wels

OBOE

Sarah Davol
BJ Karpen

CLARINET

Francis Novak
Leslie Jay

BASSOON

Yuki Higashi
Atsuko Sato

HORN

Rusty Handman Robison
Raúl Rodríguez

TRUMPET

Dylan Schwab
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Declan Wilcox

The WOS Orchestra

TIMPANI AND PERCUSSION

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Nikoforos Pothos

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James Hopkins

VIOLIN I

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Eli Spindel
Marisol Zapata
Melanie Anne Riordan

VIOLIN II

João Felipe
Katie von Braun
Peter Borten

VIOLA

Caeli Smith
Brian L. Thompson

VIOLONCELLO

Isabella Palacpac
Joanne Choi

DOUBLE BASS

Morton Cahn

President's Message

What better way to culminate our 28th season than with an all Mendelssohn celebration!

Our artistic director David Štech leads us on our fourth concert together – combining excellence and high standards with great spirit and fun. We are also thankful for our assistant artistic director and accompanist MunTzung Wong, for her strength and leadership in rehearsals.

Having our full WOS concert orchestra here tonight is a treasure!

The marriage of the two great musical forces of voices and instruments is an honor to be a part of. We look forward to our next season and more exciting programs to come.

None of this, of course, would be possible without support from our dedicated volunteers, and people like you, our audience. Please see our website, WestchesterOratorio.org for ways to donate and to join our mailing list.

Thank you and enjoy the performance!

Joe

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We also acknowledge and are grateful for the tremendous contributions made by our late board member, Dean Travalino

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847) – *Verleih' uns Frieden*
Martin Luther (1483–1546) – “Antiphon for Evening Prayer”

Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich,
Herr Gott, zu unsern Zeiten.
Es ist doch ja kein anderer nicht,
der für uns könnte streiten,
denn du, unser Gott, alleine.

Graciously grant us peace,
Lord God, in our time;
There is surely no other
Who could fight thus for us
Than you alone, God our Lord.

*Mendelssohn – Der 42 Psalm, Wie der Hirsch schreit
nach frischem Wasser, Op. 42*

1. Chor: Wie der Hirsch schreit
nach frischem Wasser, so schreit
meine Seele, Gott, zu dir.

1. Chorus: As the stag screams
out for fresh water, so my soul, O
God, screams out to Thee.

2. Sopran-Arie: Meine Seele
dürstet nach Gott, nach dem
lebendigen Gotte.
Wann werde ich dahin kommen,
dass ich Gottes Angesicht schaue?

2. Aria (soprano): My soul thirsts
for God, for the living God.
When will I reach that distant
place where I behold God's
countenance?

3. Sopran-Rezitativ: Meine Tränen
sind meine Speise Tag und Nacht,
weil man täglich zu mir saget:
Wo ist nun dein Gott?
Wenn ich dess inne werde, so
schütte ich mein Herz aus bei mir
selbst!

3. Recitative (soprano): My tears
are my food by day and by night,
For every day I am asked,
“So where is thy God?”
When I contemplate this,
I pour out my heart in solitude.

Sopran-Arie und Chor:
Denn ich wollte gern hingehen
mit dem Haufen und mit ihnen
wallen zum Hause Gottes, mit
Frohlocken und Danken unter
dem Haufen die da feiern.

Aria (soprano, with women's
chorus):
For I truly wanted to go with the
multitudes on pilgrimage
To the house of God,
With rejoicing and with thanks,
And make pilgrimage to the
house of God, with all the people
that are celebrating.

4. Chor: Was betrübst du dich,
meine Seele, und bist so unruhig
in mir?
Harre auf Gott!
Denn ich werde ihm noch danken,
dass er mir hilft mit seinem
Angesicht.

4. Chorus: Why art thou
disquieted, my soul,
And art so restless within me?
Have faith in God!
For I shall yet thank Him
For the help of His countenance.

5. Sopran-Rezitativ: Mein Gott,
betrübt ist meine Seele in mir,
darum gedenke ich an dich!
Deine Fluten rauschen daher,
dass hier eine Tiefe und dort eine
Tiefe brausen:
Alle deine Wasserwogen und
Wellen gehen über mich.

5. Recitative (soprano): My God,
my soul is disquieted within me,
Therefore I remind myself of Thee!
Thy waters rush along,
So that here the depths,
And there the depths roar;
All the billows and waves of thy
waters wash over me.
My God, my soul is troubled
within me.

6. Quintett (2 Tenöre, 2 Bässe,
Sopran):
Der Herr hat des Tages verheißen
seine Güte, und des Nachts
singe ich zu ihm und bete zu dem
Gotte meines Lebens.
Mein Gott, betrübt ist meine
Seele in mir, warum hast du
meiner vergessen?
Warum muss ich so traurig gehn,
wenn mein Feind mich drängt!

6. Quintet (men's TTBB quartet
with soprano solo):
Men: By day the Lord
Has ordained his loving kindness,
And by night I shall sing to Him
And worship the God of my life.
Solo soprano: My God, my soul is
disquieted within me,
Why hast thou forgotten me?
Why must I go mourning
When my enemy oppresses me?

7. Chor: Was betrübst du dich,
meine Seele, und bist so unruhig
in mir?
Harre auf Gott,
denn ich werde ihm noch danken,
dass er meines Angesichts Hülfe
und mein Gott ist.
Preis sei dem Herrn, dem Gott
Israels,
von nun an bis in Ewigkeit!

7. Final chorus: Why art thou
disquieted, my soul,
And art so restless within me?
Have faith in God!
For I shall yet thank Him,
Who is the help of my
countenance,
And my God.
Praised be the Lord, the God of
Israel,
From now and in all eternity.

Mendelssohn – *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*, Op. 60
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832)

Overture

- I. Das schlechte Wetter
- II. Der Übergang zum Frühling

1. Es lacht der Mai!

*Ein Druid (Tenor) Chor der
Druiden und des Volkes*

Es lacht der Mai!
Der Wald ist frei
von Eis und Reifgehänge.
Der Schnee ist fort;
am grünen Ort
erschallen Lustgesänge.
Ein reiner Schnee
liegt auf der Höh';
doch eilen wir nach oben,
begeh'n den alten heil'gen
Brauch,
Allvater dort zu loben.
Die Flamme lodre durch den
Rauch!
Begeht den alten heil'gen
Brauch.
Hinauf! Hinauf!
Allvater dort zu loben.
So wird das Herz erhoben.

**2. Könnt ihr so verwegen
handeln?**

Eine alte Frau aus dem Volk (Alt)
Könnt ihr so verwegen handeln?
Wollt ihr denn zum Tode
wandeln?
ennet ihr nicht die Gesetze
unsrer strengen Überwinder?
Rings gestellt sind ihre Netze
auf die Heiden, auf die Sünder.

Overture

- I. Bad Weather
- II. The transition into Springtime

1. May smiles at us!

*A Druid (Tenor) and a Chorus of
Druids and of the Townsfolk*

May smiles at us!
The woods are free
of ice and hoarfrost
The snow is gone,
every green place resounds
with songs of pleasure.
A pure snow
lies on the peaks,
we haste upward,
to celebrate the ancient sacred
rites,
to praise there the Father of All.
Let the flame blaze through the
smoke!
Perform the old, sacred
custom,
Upward! Upward!
to praise there the Father of All.
Our hearts will be lifted.

2. Can you act so rashly?

*The sage woman of the townsfolk
(Mezzo-soprano)*
Can you act so rashly?
Do you want to go to your
death?
Do you not know the laws
of our stern conquerors?
Their nets are set all around
for the townsfolk, the 'sinners'.

Chor der Weiber aus dem Volk

Ach, sie schlachten auf dem
Walle
unsre Väter, unsre Kinder.
Und wir alle
nahen uns gewissem Falle,
auf des Lagers hohem Walle
schlachten sie uns unsre Kinder.
Ach, die strengen Überwinder!

3. Wer Opfer heut'

*Der Priester (Bariton) und Chor
der Druiden*

Wer Opfer heut'
zu bringen scheut,
verdient erst seine Bande!
Der Wald ist frei!
Das Holz herbei,
und schichtet es zum Brande!

Der Priester

Doch bleiben wir
im Buschrevier
am Tage noch im Stillen,
und Männer stellen wir zur Hut,
um eurer Sorge willen.
Dann aber lasst mit frischem Mut
uns unsre Pflicht erfüllen.

Chor der Druiden

Dann aber lasst mit frischem Mut
uns unsre Pflicht erfüllen.
Hinauf! Hinauf!

Der Priester

Verteilt euch, wackre Männer,
hier!

Chorus of women

On the battlements they'll
slay
our fathers, our children.
And we are all
nearing this sure trap.
On the camp's high battlements
they'll slaughter our children.
Ah, the stern conquerors!

3. Whoever this day

*The Druid priest (Baritone) and the
choir of Druids.*

Whoever this day
fears to bring a sacrifice,
deserves his chains.
The forest is free!
The wood is ready,
prepare it for the burning!

The Priest

But we'll remain
in our wooded hideout
silently during the day,
and keep the men on their guard
for the sake of your concerns.
But then, with fresh courage,
let us fulfill our duty.

Chorus of men

Then let us with fresh courage
let us fulfill our duty.
Let's go!

The Priest

Spread out up here, brave men.

4. Verteilt euch, wackre Männer
Chor der Wächter der Druiden
Verteilt euch, wackre Männer, hier,
durch dieses ganze Waldrevier,
und wachet hier im Stillen,
wenn sie die Pflicht erfüllen.

5. Diese dumpfen Pfaffenchristen
Ein Wächter der Druiden (Bass)
Diese dumpfen Pfaffenchristen,
lasst uns keck sie überlisten!
Mit dem Teufel, den sie fabeln,
wollen wir sie selbst erschrecken.

Chor der Wächter der Druiden
Kommt! Kommt mit Zacken und
mit Gabeln,
und mit Glut und Klapperstöcken
lärmn wir bei nächt'ger Weile
durch die engen Felsenstrecken!
Kauz und Eule, Heul' in unser
Rundgeheule,
Kommt! Kommt! Kommt!

6. Kommt mit Zacken und mit Gabeln
*Chor der Wächter der Druiden und
des Heidenvolkes*
Kommt mit Zacken und mit Gabeln
wie der Teufel, den sie fabeln,
und mit wilden Klapperstöcken
durch die engen Felsenstrecken!
Kauz und Eule,
heul in unser Rundgeheule.
Kommt! Kommt! Kommt!

7. So weit gebracht
*Der Priester (Bariton) und Chor der
Druiden und des Heidenvolkes*
So weit gebracht,
dass wir bei Nacht
Allvater heimlich singen!

4. Spread Out, Brave Men
Chorus of druid guards
Spread out here, brave men,
through the entire forest,
and watch here silently
as they perform their duty.

5. These silly Christians
One druid guard (Bass)
These stupid Christians -
let us boldly outsmart them!
With the every devil they invent
we'll terrify them.

Chorus of the Druid Watchmen
Come! With stakes and
pitchforks
and with flames and rattling sticks,
we'll make noise through the
night
in these empty rocky gorges.
The owls will howl at our racket!
Come! Come! Come!

6. Come With Stakes And Pitchforks
*Chorus of druid guards and
townsfolk*
Come with stakes and pitchforks
like the Devil, that they fable,
and with flames and rattling sticks,
we'll make noise through the night
in these empty rocky gorges.
The owls will howl at our racket!
Come! Come! Come!

7. We've been brought so far
*The Priest and Chorus of druids
and townsfolk*
We've been brought so far,
that by night we
sing in secret to the Father of All!

Doch ist es Tag,
sobald man mag
ein reines Herz dir bringen.
Du kannst zwar heut'
und manche Zeit
dem Feinde viel erlauben.
Die Flamme reinigt sich vom Rauch:
So reinig' unsern Glauben!
Und raubt man uns den alten
Brauch,
Dein Licht, wer will es rauben?

8. Hilf, ach hilf mir, Kriegsgeselle!
Ein christlicher Wächter (Tenor)
Hilf, ach hilf mir, Kriegsgeselle!
Ach, es kommt die ganze Hölle!

Chor der christlichen Wächter
Sieh', wie die verhexten Leiber
durch und durch von Flamme
glühen!
Menschen-Wölf' und Drachen-
Weiber,
die im Flug vorüberziehen!
Welch entsetzliches Getöse!
Lasst uns, lasst uns alle fliehen!
Oben flammt und saust der Böse.
Aus dem Boden
dampfet rings ein Höllenbroden.
Lasst uns flieh'n!

9. Die Flamme reinigt sich vom Rauch;
*Der Priester (Bariton) und allgemeiner
Chor der Druiden und des
Heidenvolkes*
Die Flamme reinigt sich vom Rauch;
so reinig' unsern Glauben!
Und raubt man uns den alten
Brauch,
dein Licht, wer kann es rauben?

Yet when it is day,
as soon as we may,
we bring you a perfect heart.
Today indeed,
and many times,
you've granted the foe success.
As the flame is purified in smoke,
so purify our faith!
And even if they rob us of our
ancient ritual,
who can take your light from us?

8) Help, Oh Help Me
A Christian guard (Tenor)
Help, oh help me, fellow soldier!
Alas, all hell is coming!

Chorus of Christian watchmen
See, how the bewitched bodies
glow with flames through and
through!
Werewolves and dragon women,
passing by in flight!
What a fearful scramble!
Let us, let us all flee!
Above flames and sparkles the
evil one,
out of the ground
steams a hellish brew.
Let us, let us all flee!

9. The flame is purified by smoke
*The Druid priest and the chorus of
druids and townsfolk*
As the flame is purified by
smoke,
so purify our faith!
And even if they rob us of our
ancient ritual,
who can take your light from us?

Program Notes

By Caroline Walker

Pagans and Pitchforks and Psalms An All Mendelssohn Program

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) was a German composer, pianist, organist and conductor of the early Romantic period. Although born to Jewish parents, Mendelssohn was raised in the Lutheran faith and professed himself to be a devout Christian throughout his life. A short-lived musical prodigy who is often compared to Mozart, he began writing masterpieces as a teenager but died of a stroke at the young age of 38. As the three works on our program will demonstrate, the range of this composer's versatile genius was very broad, spanning the gamut from sacred reverie to dramatic bravura.

Verleih' uns Frieden gnädiglich, ("Grant Us Peace Graciously") (1831), was composed by Mendelssohn shortly after a visit to the Vatican. The text is based on Martin Luther's German translation of the Latin antiphon *Da pacem, Domine*. Its fervent prayer for peace in troubled times expressed a sentiment that resonated deeply in war-torn 19th-century Europe.

Scored for choir and orchestra, the work unfolds with luminous restraint. Mendelssohn avoids dramatic display in favor of serene lyricism and subtle textures. The choral writing is largely homophonic, allowing the plea for peace to speak with clarity and unity. Subtle dynamic shading and warm harmonic color give the piece its expressive depth.

Though modest in scale, *Verleih uns Frieden* reflects Mendelssohn's lifelong reverence for sacred music of the past—especially that of Johann Sebastian Bach—combined with his own Romantic gift for melody. The result is music of heartfelt simplicity and quiet radiance.



Program Notes

CONTINUED

Psalm 42, Wie der Hirsch schreit ("As the Deer Cries") (1837), a dramatic chorale in seven movements, is considered one of Mendelssohn's finest sacred works. It depicts a spiritual journey from despair to hope, utilizing Romantic expression to illustrate the soul's desire for God. The opening chorus sets to music the famous simile contained in Psalm 42, "As the hart longs for flowing streams, so longs the soul for God."

Written for soprano solo, mixed chorus, and orchestra, the work blends dramatic fervor with spiritual depth. An example of tone painting is found in the first movement where the opening notes ripple gently in the orchestra, evoking water flowing beneath the choral lines.

The influence of Bach is evident in Mendelssohn's use of counterpoint, yet the emotional landscape is distinctly Romantic with its inclusion of lush harmonies, expressive orchestration, and a heightened sense of emotionality. The final chorus transforms uncertainty into confidence, ending not in despair but in joy.

Premiered in Leipzig during Mendelssohn's tenure as Conductor and Music Director at the Gewandhaus, *Psalm 42* helped solidify his reputation as a composer of sacred choral music and as a central figure in 19th-century German musical life.

Die erste Walpurgisnacht ("The First Eve of May Day") (1833) represents a very different side of Mendelssohn. Based on a ballad by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, this dramatic tale unfolds in the Harz Mountains of Germany. Pagan Druids, forbidden by Christian authorities from celebrating their spring rites, deviously disguise

Program Notes

CONTINUED

themselves as witches and demons to terrify their Christian occupiers, thereby successfully protecting their worship traditions.

Featuring a nine-movement structure, the cantata combines narrative vividness with theatrical flair. Stormy orchestral passages, urgent choral writing, and colorful characterizations evoke windswept mountaintops and supernatural mischief. Yet beneath the drama lies a deeper theme: the triumph of freedom of religion and the preservation of cultural identity. Brimming with the promise of spring renewal, this work presents a story of triumph over persecution.

Unlike the serene spirituality of Mendelssohn's sacred works, this piece abounds with rhythmic energy and bold contrasts. Mendelssohn's gift for orchestral color is especially apparent, as is his ability to shape large-scale musical architecture.

Completed in its final version in 1843, *Die erste Walpurgisnacht* stands as one of Mendelssohn's most imaginative choral-orchestral works—dramatic, atmospheric, and ultimately jubilant.

Taken together, these three works reveal the breadth of Mendelssohn's choral artistry. From the intimate plea for peace in *Verleih uns Frieden* to the deeply personal spiritual journey of *Psalm 42*, to the vivid dramatic storytelling of *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*, we encounter a composer equally at home in sacred devotion and theatrical expression. With his melodic inventiveness and emotional fervor, Mendelssohn continues to speak to audiences across centuries, offering music of faith, longing, and triumphant affirmation.

—Caroline A. Walker



David
Štech

Conductor

David Štech is a conductor, pianist, and organist in New York City, where he serves as organist at St. John's Anglican Church in Passaic, NJ. He is also co-artistic director of the Riverdale Choral Society and the associate conductor of Opéra Bastide in Aveyron, France.

He is Music Director Emeritus of the Astoria Symphony Orchestra and served as assistant conductor at Sarasota Opera, St. Petersburg Opera, Opera Southwest, Opera in Williamsburg, Charlottesville Opera, and several others throughout the country. Recent guest conducting engagements include The Florida Orchestra, Brooklyn Ballet, and the University of North Texas.

As a vocal coach, he has worked at the Opera Theater of Lucca, Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts, and at the Manhattan School of Music, where he served for eight years. David earned his Bachelor of Arts in organ performance at California State University, Chico, and his Master's in orchestral conducting from Northwestern University. He studied Collaborative Piano at the Manhattan School of Music, and is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of North Texas. He studied conducting at Tanglewood with Kurt Masur and Christoph von Dohnányi, and is an alumnus of the Pierre Monteux School.



Elizaveta Kozlova

Soprano

Described as “versatile” and “dramatically convincing” (Voce di Meche) and praised for her “impassioned phrasing” (OperaWire), soprano Elizaveta Kozlova is an active performer and music entrepreneur who has been presented nationally and internationally.

Elizaveta has appeared as a soloist in Bach’s Magnificat at the Moscow International House of Music as a member of Vladimir Spivakov’s Youth Foundation. She made her Lincoln Center debut as Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the New York Lyric Opera in 2018. Other operatic appearances include *Anna I (Seven Deadly Sins)* and *Servilia (La Clemenza di Tito)* with Dell’Arte Opera, *Doralice (Il trionfo dell’onore)* with Amherst Early Music Festival, *Gretel (Hänsel und Gretel)* with Chicago Summer Opera, *Pamina (Die Zauberflöte)* with the Manhattan Opera Studio and *Amore (L’incoronazione di Poppea)* with the Berlin Opera Studio.

Elizaveta won an Encouragement Award at the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition twice: at the Los Angeles District in 2026 and at the Arkansas Region in 2024. In the same year, she

was a finalist at the Concorso di Canto Barocco “Francesco Provenzale” in Napoli, Italy. She is the recipient of the Jaume Aragall Award and the Apròpera Award from the 2023 Camerata Sant Cugat Competition in Spain. She was a semifinalist at the Houston Saengerbund Competition in 2021.

Elizaveta is actively involved in New York City’s early music scene. She has performed with such ensembles and organizations as Bach Vespers, Juilliard415, Parthenia Viol Consort and Tenet Vocal Artists (as part of the Tenet Mentorship Program). In 2025, Elizaveta joined Instituto Cervantes as a curator of a concert series dedicated to the Baroque music of Spain and the Americas.

Elizaveta is an avid interpreter of new music. She collaborated with Carnegie Hall on a performance of *Into Air* by Alex Mills presented at the Montres Breguet lounge at Frieze New York art fair. In 2025, Elizaveta joined Parthenia Viol Consort in a recital fully dedicated to new music for viols, which included three world premieres. At the New Music New Haven concert series at the Yale School of Music, Elizaveta sang the

world premieres of two pieces for solo voice and orchestra: *Five Madrigals* by Arseniy Gusev and *Butterfly Hunt* by Kacper Madejek. Elizaveta frequently performs songs and chamber music by Valentin Silvestrov at concerts dedicated to fundraising for Ukraine.

Elizaveta Kozlova has performed at several events of major humanitarian

significance. Most notably, at the Center for Jewish History event “A Tribute to the Artists who Perished in the Holocaust”. She was also a part of the United Nations 75 Years Celebration Music Festival for Sustainable Development Goals in 2020. Elizaveta is based in NYC where she received her Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees at Mannes School of Music.



MunTzung Wong

Mezzo-Soprano

Recognized for her artistry and musicality versatility, Mun-Tzung Wong leads a professional career as a pianist, conductor, mezzo-soprano, vocal and instrumental coach, pedagogue, and recording artist. Ms. Wong is currently the Co-Music Director of the Riverdale Choral Society in New York City and Music Director and Choirmaster at St. John’s Anglican Church in Passaic, NJ. She also serves as faculty and head coach at Opéra Bastide Royale in Aveyron, France.

Recently, she was the guest conductor of Donizetti’s *Anna Bolena* with Dell’arte Opera Ensemble. She has served as assistant conductor at the International Vocal Arts Institute, St. Petersburg Opera Company, New Rochelle Opera,

Regina Opera, Norwalk Symphony Orchestra, Missouri Symphony Orchestra, Macau Youth Symphony, and Orchestra dell’Opera di Parma.

MunTzung has appeared as a pianist on WQXR and performed at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Symphony Space, Alice Tully Hall, Steinway Hall, and Lincoln Center. Featured in an article on music entrepreneurship in Forbes Magazine, Ms. Wong is the founding executive director of the New York Conducting Institute. She maintains a private instrumental and vocal coaching studio in New York City. She has been on staff at the Manhattan School of Music and also serves as an adjunct faculty at Columbia University.



Michael Anderson

Tenor

Tenor Michael Anderson will soon be appearing in the world premiere of *Directions for Making a Round Ark* playing the role of Atrahasis at the DiMenna Center in Rockaway Beach, New York. Most recently, he performed with Geneva Light Opera (GLO) as Camille in *Die Fledermaus*, debuted with the Choral Arts Society of New Jersey as a Soloist in the Lord Nelson Mass, and was a winner of the Opera Birmingham Vocal Competition in Birmingham, Alabama. Before returning to GLO to performing the lead role of Nemorino in their production of *L'elisir d'amore*, Michael joined the Metropolitan Opera Extra Chorus for their 2022-23 season singing *min Lohengrin* and *Der fliegende Holländer*. He has also performed with Nashville Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Dayton Opera, Opera Saratoga, Central City Opera, and Wolf Trap Opera, singing

Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Peter Quint (*Turn of the Screw*), King Kaspar (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*), David (Pepito), Pong (*Turandot*), Bardolfo (*Falstaff*); Gus Pollock and Professor Trixie (*The Cradle Will Rock*); Jimmy O'Keefe (*Later the Same Evening*); *Le Journaliste* (*Les mamelles de Tirésias*); the Baron – Opera Box Quartet and covering Count Almaviva (*The Ghosts of Versailles*). Other roles include Mayor Upfold (*Albert Herring*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), and Gherardo (*Gianni Schicchi*). He has performed the Tenor Solo in *Carmina Burana*, *Messiah*, *Lobgesang*, *St. John Passion*, *Farewell to Arms*, *Gounod Requiem*, *Mozart Requiem*, *King David*, *Beethoven Symphony No. 9*, and *Elijah*. Michael is also a voice teacher at the Yamaha Conservatory in Fair Lawn, New Jersey. He received a BM and an MM from Manhattan School of Music.



Brian J. Alvarado

Baritone

Singing as “a liquid baritone of great charm,” with “a highly attractive legato,” and “precise pater elocution” (*Parterre Box*), Brian J. Alvarado is an emerging interpreter of known, unknown, and new music. His portrayals have ranged from “vulnerable” (*Opera News*), “most moving” (*Oberon's Grove*), and “one to fall in love with” (*Petoskey News Review*), to “sardonic” (*Indie Opera Podcast*), “the perfect foil” (*Voce di Meche*), and “the quintessential self-adoring snob” (*Parterre Box*).

This season, he sings the Father in *Hansel and Gretel with Prelude Opera*, *Colline* in *La bohème* with *Opera Vermont*, *Alfio* in *Cavalleria Rusticana* with *Sotto Voce*, *Moralès* and *Le Dancaire* in *Carmen* with the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, *Sulpice* in *La Fille du Régiment* at Geneva Light Opera, and his solo concert appearances include *Handel's Messiah* with Bronx Concert Singers, and *Brahms' Ein Deutsches Requiem* with *Avanti Music*. He also appears in film as *Don Quixote* in *Liturgical the Musical*.

He appeared with Bronx Opera as *Guilherme* in *Così fan tutte*, *Leporello* in *Don Giovanni*, and as *The Earl of Mountararat* in *Iolanthe*, with *Opera Vermont* as

Angelotti in *Tosca*, with *New Rochelle Opera* and as *Silvio* in *Pagliacci*, with *Le festival d'art vocal de Montréal* as *Dr. Falke* in *La Chauve-Souris* and the Baritone in *The Four Note Opera*, with *Killer Queen Opera* as *Caronte* in *L'Orfeo*, with *Music on Site* as *Ivan Turgenev* in the Kansas premiere of *Michael Ching's Notes on Viardot*, with *Sotto Voce* as *Siméon* in *Debussy's L'Enfant Prodigue*, with *Amore Opera* as *Leporello* in *Don Giovanni*, and as *Ponce* in *Teatro Grattacielo's* world premiere of *Daniel Asia's The Tin Angel*. He appeared in concert at *Carnegie Hall* as a Vocal Mentor for the *National Children's Chorus*, and at the *Montpelier Arts Center* as a winner of their *Classical Recital Competition*. He also joined *Saint George's Choral Society's Summer Sings* as the bass soloist in *Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass*.

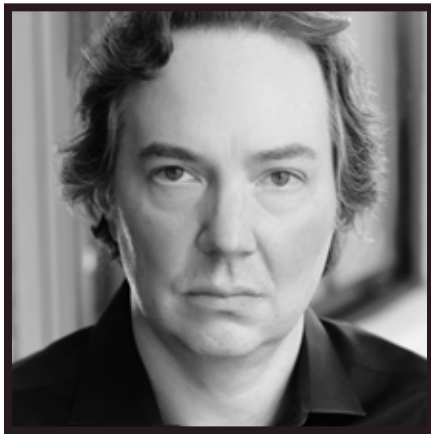
His early music and baroque roles include *Nettuno* in *La liberazione di Ruggiero* with *dell'Arte Opera Ensemble*, *Melisso* in *Alcina* with *OperaRox Productions*, *Seneca* in *Killer Queen Opera's* filmed production of *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Caronte* in *L'Orfeo* with the *New York City Guitar Orchestra*, and a forthcoming film appearance as *Thésée* in *Hippolyte et Aricie* with *Brooklyn Telemann Chamber Society*.

Roles within the realm of Operetta and Musical Theatre include the title role in *The Sorcerer* and Ludwig in *The Grand Duke* with Utopia Opera, Pish-Tush in *The Mikado* with Bronx Opera, Le Baron de Pictordu in *Cendrillon* with dell'Arte Opera Ensemble, Cascada in *The Merry Widow* at the Minuetto Music Festival, Lopez in *El Barbero de Sevilla* with New Camerata Opera, Magaldi in *Evita* at the Bay View Music Festival, Lieutenant Barri in *Passion* and Bob the Saw in *Threepenny Opera* at Susquehanna University, and the title role in *Sweeney Todd* with City Island Theatre.

In concert, he has sung bass solos in Handel's *Messiah* (Susquehanna University Symphony Orchestra; Brooklyn Contemporary Chorus; Bronx Concert Singers), Bach's *BWV 147* (St. Peter's Bach Collegium), Keiser's *Markuspasion* (Nahant Music Festival), Haydn's *Nicolaimesse* (Musikaphany), Mo-

zart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore* (Continuo Arts Symphonic Choir), *Pastoralmesse* (Schola Sine Nomine), *Spatzenmesse* and *Kleine Credomesse* (St. Josaphat's Schola Cantorum), Schubert's *Mass in G* (Susquehanna University Choir), and Gounod's *St. Cecilia Mass* (Collegiate Singers).

Brian has been an Apprentice Artist at Teatro Nuovo, a Voice Fellow at L'Institut Canadien d'Art Vocal, a Young Artist with dell'Arte Opera Ensemble, a Vocal Apprentice at the Nahant Music Festival, a Student Artist at the Bay View Music Festival, an Emerging Artist at the Minuetto Music Festival, and has participated in outreach performances for children with Bronx Opera, Opera Theatre of Montclair, and *Prelude Opera*. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing at Susquehanna University, and currently resides in his native New York City



David Salsbery Fry

Bass

Singer David Salsbery Fry continues to captivate audiences with each role. Acclaimed for his expressive, powerful bass voice, wide range and nuanced versatility, along with an authentic and engaging stage presence, Fry enjoys a diverse career as singer, actor, nar-

rator, and recording artist. Having performed throughout the United States, in Europe, Canada, Thailand, and Israel, Fry continues to expand his relationship with orchestras and opera companies through a broad range of repertoire, from Verdi, Mo-

zart, Rossini, and Britten, to Argento, Chen, Foss, Fussell, Honegger, Sondheim, and more.

As comfortable with new music as he is with established operas and arias, David Salsbery Fry has premiered works by numerous composers, including Robert Aldridge, Shawn Brogan Allison, Lembit Beecher, Justine F. Chen, Frank Corcoran, Chaya Czernowin, John David Earnest, Ruby Fulton, Juliana Hall, Jenny Olivia Johnson, Louis Karchin, Lowell Liebermann, Adam Maor, Eric Nathan, Osnat Netzer, Steve Potter, Arnold Rosner, Joseph Summer, Kristian Twombly, Nicholas Vines and Scott Wheeler. He has also collaborated with Mark Adamo, James Granville Eakin III, Oliver Knussen, Ari Benjamin Meyers, Nico Muhly, John Musto, Judith Shatin, and Charles Wuorinen.

With a voice that has been praised as "Incredible! ...Truly remarkable and astounding...", "darkly sonorous," and possessing "almost impossibly deep tones", Fry has created a name for himself in the recording arena as well. He can be heard on 11 CDs, appearing on recordings for Albany, Navona, BMOP/sound, Naxos, New World and Odyssey Opera. His most recent recording is Boston Opera Project's 2025 release of Dominick Argento and Charles Nolte's *The Voyage of Edgar Allan Poe*, BMOP/sound 1107.

The unique characteristics of Fry's cross-genre voice has attracted engagements in other fields. In 2023, he voiced the character of Charles Xavier (Professor X) in the new interactive series "X-Men: Age of Orchis" for Marvel Move, a new mobile interactive fitness adventure offering from Marvel Entertainment and Six to Start, the company behind "Zombies, Run!".

A passionate advocate for performers with disabilities, Fry has written articles for and been featured in such media outlets as *HowlRound*, *Classical Singer*, *The Liberated Voice*, and *Opera and Disability*. A supporter of inclusion and diversity in all art forms, particularly the classical music industry, he believes in the importance of accessibility in the arts for artists with disabilities, whether the disability be congenital or acquired.

Born in Pennsylvania, David Salsbery Fry earned his B.A. from The Johns Hopkins University, a M.M. in Opera Performance from the University of Maryland at College Park, and a Graduate Diploma in Voice from The Juilliard School. Fellowships included the Tanglewood Music Center Vocal Fellowship and The Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program. Among his numerous awards are Semifinalist, *Concours Musical International de Montréal*, Finalist, Middle Atlantic Region, The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and the Grand Prize of the Bidu Sayão International Vocal Competition.



About

Westchester Oratorio Society

Appointed summer of 2024, David Štech became WOS's artistic director, only the third since its founding in 1997 when a few individuals in South Salem joined with their neighbor, the noted choral conductor Harold Rosenbaum, to form a choral group that would create a high-quality musical experience for audiences and singers in Northern Westchester and surrounding areas. Since its inception, WOS has made a significant contribution to the musical fabric of the county, performing choral masterworks primarily of the 18th to 20th centuries accompanied by professional soloists and orchestras.

Benjamin Niemczyk was appointed artistic director in 2007. That year he conducted the Westchester premiere of James Bassi's *Wexford Carol*. In November 2010, WOS gave a widely praised presentation of Handel's *Messiah* with REBEL Baroque Orchestra. The 2011–12 season began with a moving performance of Mozart's *Requiem* with chamber orchestra and continued in March with WOS's first chamber music concert, which included a world premiere by local composer John Velonis. A stirring performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester concluded the season.

Other highlights include a May 2014 performance with REBEL featuring Vivaldi's *Gloria* and a November 2014 performance of

Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with James Kennerley at the Presbyterian Church of Mount Kisco and Mozart's *Requiem* with the WOS Festival Orchestra at the South Salem Presbyterian Church (May 2015). WOS began its 16th season with powerful performances of Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw* and Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem* at Temple Shaaray Tefila in Bedford. Highlighting the season was a festive gala featuring renowned violinist Ani Kavafian, and the Robert C. McDonald Memorial Concert which featured Beethoven's Choral Fantasy performed with the incomparable Hélène Grimaud. 2017 was highlighted with a performance of Bach's *St. John Passion* in South Salem with WOS Baroque Ensemble. The group's concert in May 2018 at Bedford Presbyterian Church featured renowned composer and organist Anthony Newman performing Bach's *Cantata No.29* and his own, original choral works and Mr. Niemczyk conducting the Mozart *Requiem*.

The 2019 season was highlighted by a spring performance of Hayden's *Creation in German (Die Schöpfung)* at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center on May 5, 2019, with soloists Catherine Steinbrink, Soprano, Jeffrey Strand, Tenor and David Salsbery Fry, Bass, accompanied by the WOS Festival Orchestra made possible with a grant from the Westchester Community Foundation.

Having been voted "Best Amateur Chorus in Westchester" by Westchester Magazine, WOS has also distinguished itself in guest appearances at Carnegie Hall with the Brooklyn Philharmonic (Verdi's *Requiem*), the Brooklyn Academy of Music (Messiaen's opera, *St. Francis of Assisi* premiere), and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Among the group's most notable post-Covid performances was its 25th anniversary concert in memory of Don Harder, entitled "Conqu'ring," on April 23, 2023, featuring works by Bach, Mozart,





and Handel. WOS gave its final performance under the baton of Mr. Niemczyk on May 4, 2024, entitled "Glorious Spring" featuring three of his favorite works, Brahms *Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52*, Brahms *Schicksalslied, Op. 54* and Mozart, *Mass in C Minor*, with Francesca Federico, soprano, Christine Browne-Munz, mezzo soprano, Blake Friedman, tenor and Harrison Hintzsche, bass, and the WOS Festival Orchestra.

WOS began its journey under the baton of David Štech with an acclaimed performance of Arthur Honegger's dramatic oratorio, "King David," on November 23, 2024 at Presbyterian Church of Mount Kisco. The performance featured soloists Olivia Greene, Soprano, Emily Geller, Contralto and Aaron Blankfield, Tenor, and narrated by David Salsbery Fry. WOS's May 4, 2025 concert, "Visions of Peace," presented at a time of tumultuous world affairs featured themes of peace, spiritual reflection, and enduring hope: Randall Thompson's *Alleluia*, Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* and Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem*. On November 21, the chorus presented "Sure on this Shining Night," a reflection of light and peace featuring works by Mendelssohn, Barber, Vaughn Williams, Bach, Thompson, and Stanford.



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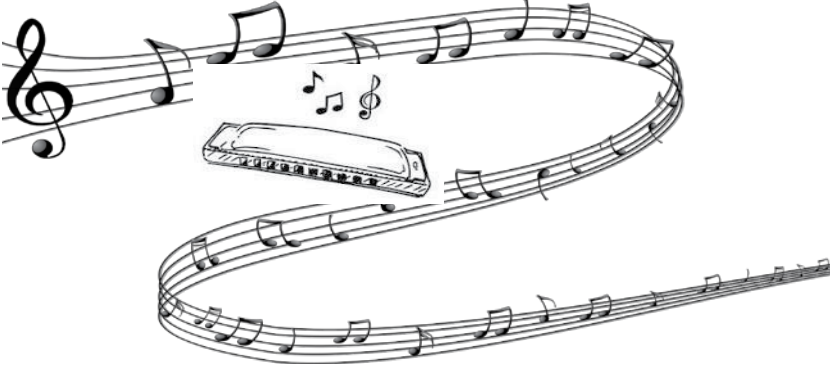


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– Jim & Meg



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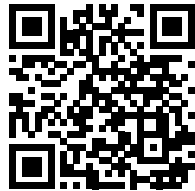
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