

Valley Concert Chorale News Release

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“In Remembrance of 9/11” – A Unique Choral Experience Performance to Commemorate the Tragedy’s 10th Anniversary, Remember the Fallen

LIVERMORE, CALIF. –

*“Sometimes mere words cannot express what’s in our hearts.
This is when music comes in”*

Valley Concert Chorale, in collaboration with Ohlone Chamber Singers and San Francisco Concert Chorale will present a unique and memorable choral experience on **March 18, 2011, called “In Remembrance of 9/11,”** to commemorate the upcoming 10th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 tragedy. Details are as follows:

- **Friday, March 18, 8pm.**
- **Valley Community Church, 4455 Del Valle Parkway, Pleasanton**

The combined forces of the three choruses, approximately 100 singers with chamber orchestra, will offer this choral tribute under the direction of John Emory Bush and Dennis Keller

“Through the beauty of the choral art we hope to bring a sense of harmony and peace as we mark this 10th anniversary year of 9/11,” says John Emory Bush, Artistic Director for the Valley Concert Chorale and San Francisco Concert Chorale. “We’ll perform moving choral works to honor the thousands of lives lost on 9/11. The music was specifically selected to capture the spirit and essence of that most tragic day as a way to memorialize those lost.”

The idea for this collaboration was that of Ohlone’s choral director Dennis Keller, who has been working with Bush over the past year refining the program and selecting music

that they believe represents the emotion and importance of the 9/11 anniversary this September.

“We felt it was important to offer a concert in remembrance of this tragic event which impacted so many families here in the Bay Area,” says Bush. “Music is a very powerful way to convey a message, often speaking stronger than words to reach the heart of the subject.”

The great American composer Stephen Paulus will be represented by two beautiful and appropriate works for this concert: “Hymn to America” and “The Road Home.”

“‘The Road Home’ with its deep harmonies and a text that is so moving, it’s amazing any of us can get through the song without our voices breaking,” says soprano and VCC Vice President Barbara Pelletier. “The words truly touch your soul.”

The first verse of “The Road Home”:

*Tell me where is the road I can call my own,
That I left, that I lost, so long ago.
All these years I have wandered, oh when will I know,
There’s a way, there’s a road that will lead me home?*

Herbert Howell’s “Requiem”, featured in the first half of the program, will be directed by Bush. “This Requiem,” explains Bush, “written for a’capella double choir, is a Requiem for the living, similar to the idea of Brahms’ “Requiem” and is filled with comfort, hope and thanksgiving.” Though the work was written in 1935, it was not released for performance until 1980, only three years before Howell’s death. “The work radiates glorious lush chords and harmonies that transcend the spirit. It is one of the great choral gems of the 20th century.”

The second half of the program features Arthur Honegger’s “King David,” directed by Keller. “I chose this piece as it typifies the ultimate and historical example of the conflict/resolution dynamic,” explains Keller.

Honegger’s masterpiece depicts the biblical story of King David’s life from the time he was a shepherd, to his conquests in battle, his rise to power, his lust for another man’s wife, his agony over his son’s death, his disobedience to God, and finally to his own death. The work is separated into twenty-seven sections or movements and depends heavily on thematic elements.

“We are very fortunate to have secured David Cox as our narrator as his voice will carry the drama of the story, as further illuminated by the musical expression of the choral voices and instrumental accompaniment. My hope is that we will all take a moment and reflect not only on the tragic events, but how we are all changed by world events and the importance of ‘seeing’ a larger picture of our place in this world.”

Tickets

Tickets are \$20 if purchased in advance, \$25 at the door. High school and college students \$10 with valid student ID. Children 14 and under are free.

Advance tickets may be ordered by calling (925) 866-4003, by visiting the Chorale's website at www.valleyconcertchorale.org, or at Towne Center Books in downtown Pleasanton.

More information about the Valley Concert Chorale is available at www.valleyconcertchorale.org or by calling the general information line at (925) 866-4003.

Additional performances

The concert will also be performed on these additional dates:

Saturday, March 19, 2011 8:00 PM
Ohlone College, Smith Center
43600 Mission Boulevard, Fremont, CA

Sunday, March 20, 2011 4:00 PM
Mission Dolores
3321 Sixteenth Street, San Francisco

About Valley Concert Chorale

The Valley Concert Chorale, now in its 47th season, is the Tri-Valley's premier chorus. Under the direction of John Emory Bush, the Chorale has offered a variety of musical performances to serve the diverse musical tastes of its audiences.

Valley Concert Chorale's mission is to engage audiences in the transforming power of music by sharing our passion and joy in live performance. We are dedicated to excellence in singing choral music of all genres, nurturing the next generation of singers, and supporting musical endeavors in our Tri-Valley community.

The Chorale's educational outreach program Music in the Schools presents original musical performances at Tri-Valley primary school assemblies to celebrate the joy of music and singing with area students. For information, call Pam Grove at 925-462-4205.

The all-volunteer, non-profit chorale receives financial support from grants, ticket sales, membership dues, and donations.

About the Directors

John Emory Bush has been the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Valley Concert Chorale since 1998. He holds a Master's degree from the Juilliard School of Music and is also trained as a pianist, organist and harpist. In addition, he is the Music Director and Conductor of the San Francisco Concert Chorale and former Director of Music for St. Matthew's Cathedral in Dallas, Texas. Mr. Bush was recently appointed Principal Organist at First United Methodist Church, McKinney, Texas. For the past twelve years,

Mr. Bush has divided his time between the Bay Area and Dallas, contributing to both musical communities.

Mr. Dennis Keller accepted the appointment as choral conductor and vocal instructor at Ohlone College in 1985, where he founded the Chamber Singers. Since that time Mr. Keller has achieved the academic ranking of Full Professor in Music and continues to serve in this capacity. In addition to conducting the Chamber Singers, Mr. Keller teaches vocal lessons and World Music on the Ohlone campus. His formal training includes: a Bachelor of Music Education from Mount Union College, a Masters in Music from the University of Arizona, and has completed graduate course work at the University of Southern California. Before accepting the position at Ohlone College, Mr. Keller had taught music at all levels of public schools, and continues to be active in church music, as Director of Music at the First Presbyterian Church in Livermore.

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