



CASCADIAN
CHORALE

Conducted by Dr. Gary D. Cannon

Music of the Baltic Sea

Saturday, March 23, 2024

7:30 PM

St Margaret's Episcopal Church

4228 Factoria Blvd SE

Bellevue, WA

Sunday, March 24, 2024

3:00 PM

Eastside Baha'i Center

16007 NE 8th St

Bellevue, WA

The Cascadian Chorale

Sopranos

Cravixtha Acheson
Frances Acheson
Debra DeFotis
Hannah Durasoff
Heather Irwin*
Sue Maybee
Marilyn McAdoo
Genie Middaugh
Tessa Ravagni
Jenifer Rees
Pam Silimperi
Cami Woodruff

Altos

Annie Doubleday
Christine Dunbar
Carol Fielding
Alecia Hawthorne-Heyel*
Nicole Kister
Ann Marten
Joy Porter
Tara O'Brien Pride
Jacquelin Remaley
Debbie Roberts
Nikki Schilling
Dale Schlotzhauer
Elaine Tsang

Tenors

Dustin Kaspar
Tim MacNary
Brian Matthewson
Özer Özkaraoğlu
Kalinda Pride
Fred Williams

Basses

Alazel Acheson
Ken Black
Gustave Blazek
Jeremy Kings
David Nichols
Glenn Nielsen
Trevor Tsang
Doug Wyatt*

* *Section leader*

Artistic Staff

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Program notes by Gary D. Cannon
Program produced by Doug Wyatt
Cover design by Cami Woodruff

MUSIC OF THE BALTIC SEA

Aftonen (1942)..... Hugo Alfvén (1872–1960)

Suite de Lorca (1973).....Einojuhani Rautavaara (1928–2016)

1. Canción de jinete

2. El grito

3. La luna asoma

4. Malagueña

Muusika (2008)..... Pärt Uusberg (b.1986)

Tribute to Caesar (1997)Arvo Pärt (b.1935)

 *intermission* 

Aleidi floriasti (1993)..... Thomas Jennefelt (b.1954)

Pūt, vējiņi arr. Jurjānu Andrejs (1856–1922)

September (1890) Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871–1927)

Jaanilaul (1967)..... Veljo Tormis (1930–2017)

Cascadian Chorale
Gary D. Cannon, *conductor*

Gary D. Cannon, Artistic Director



Dr. Gary D. Cannon is one of Seattle's most versatile choral personalities, active as conductor, singer, and musicologist. Since 2008 he is Artistic Director of Cascadian Chorale and of the 100-voice Vashon Island Chorale. In 2016 he founded the Emerald Ensemble, a professional chamber choir. At the invitation of the Early Music Guild, he founded and directed a Renaissance choir, Sine Nomine (2008–15). He has conducted for Vashon Opera three times, and has also directed Anna's Bay Chamber Choir, Choral Arts, Earth Day Singers, Kirkland Choral Society, and the Northwest Mahler Festival.

As a tenor soloist, he has appeared with Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle Philharmonic, and the Auburn, Eastside, Rainier, and Sammamish Symphony Orchestras, as well as many Seattle-area choirs. He lectures for Seattle Symphony and provides program notes for choirs across the country. His independent musicological research has a special emphasis on the music of William Walton. A California native, Dr. Cannon holds degrees from the University of California at Davis and the University of Washington.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHOIR'S DECORATIVE SPRAY?

The musical notes rising above barbed wire demonstrate the power of singing. In the 1980s and 90s the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania battled to free themselves from the dominion of the Soviet Union. What is extraordinary about this struggle was how singing supported the revolutionaries and confounded the Soviet forces. This became known as the Singing Revolution. It is reported that while many lives were lost in the battle for freedom, Estonia obtained its independence without the loss of a single life, relying solely on passive resistance founded in music. The Baltic states faced the mighty force of Soviet tanks and troops with peaceful resistance and thousands of voices raised in song. During Soviet occupation, and in fact every 5 years since the 1800s, the Baltic states celebrate their folk music in festival. Over 30,000 singers in the Estonian festival perform to an audience of 80,000. See www.singingrevolution.com and Wikipedia.

Singing not only has the power to alter the history of nations, it has the ability to change individuals. Studies show singing reduces cortisol levels, which reduce stress and increase levels of immunoglobulin A, an antibody essential for a healthy immune system. Evidence shows that singing releases endorphins, serotonin, and dopamine—chemicals that boost your mood and sense of well-being. Singing is being used in dementia care to help improve mental alertness, memory, and concentration.

Physically, singing improves posture and muscle tension. It increases lung capacity and strengthens the muscles around the ribcage. Singing is used in rehabilitation for people suffering from lung conditions and people suffering from long COVID.

And finally, the power of singing in a group has its own special benefits. Jacques Launay from Oxford University notes "music might be an evolved behavior for creating community cohesion." "In light of mounting concerns about loneliness and isolation and the increasing urgent search for solutions, it is fascinating that people [are] returning to an interest in connecting with one another through singing. So ... finding the right choir could prove the perfect way to improve your health, well-being and social life."

—Genie Middaugh



Aftonen [Evening] (1942)

by **Hugo Alfvén** (1872–1960)

Hugo Alfvén was unquestionably the leading choral musician in Sweden during the first half of the twentieth century. As director of choirs in the region of Dalarna, as music director at Uppsala University, as conductor of the men's chorus Orphei Drängar, and as composer of dozens of choral miniatures, he almost single-handedly established the Swedish choral tradition that took flight after the Second World War. Among his most performed works is *Aftonen*, to a text by the lyric poet (and orthopedic surgeon) Herman Sätherberg. The stillness of the woods opens in subtle F major, shifting to wordless cascades to depict the gently lulling shepherd's horn. Unison tenors and altos reflect the sinking sun, as echoes of the horn linger across the land.

To sing praises of Alfvén's choral music alone is to neglect much of his central output. He wrote five very fine symphonies, and the orchestral *Midsummer Vigil* (1903) is a popular favorite. Alfvén also composed many solo songs and a substantial body of chamber music. We choral folk are fortunate that such a major voice devoted himself so much also to our own craft.

Skogen står tyst, himlen är klar.
Hör huru tjugande vallhornet lullar.
Kvällsolens bloss sig stilla sänker
ner uti den lugna, klara våg.
Ibland dälдер, gröna kullar
mångdubbelt eko kring nejden far...

—Herman Sätherberg (1812–1897)

The forest is silent, the sky is clear.
Hear how bewitchingly the shepherd's horn lulls.
The evening sun's flame slowly sinks
down into the calm, clear wave.
Through old, green hills,
multiple echoes around the fatherland...

Suite de Lorca, op. 72 (1973)

by **Einojuhani Rautavaara** (1928–2016)

The leading Finnish composer since Sibelius, Einojuhani Rautavaara studied musicology at the University of Helsinki and composition at the Sibelius Academy, where he later taught. When twelve-tone serialism came to Finland (and much of Europe) in the 1950s, he joined the bandwagon, but he never abandoned tonality fully. By the '70s, his language combined postwar dissonance with more approachable modality, as in the orchestral *Cantus arcticus* (1972), achieving remarkable synthesis by his Seventh Symphony, *Angel of Light* (1994). Most of his vast body of vocal music sets his own texts, but we can be grateful that he turned also to the Spaniard Federico García Lorca.

His suite of Lorca settings is ripe with passion and text-painting. We hear the *clip-clop* of the horse en route to Córdoba, and the mighty scream heard at night over the hills. The sopranos rise with the moon, and the basses depict the noisy pattering of a tavern in Malaga. Death lurks at every corner in this cycle, whether preventing the horseman from reaching Córdoba or playing the guitar in the tavern.

Suite de Lorca

1. Canción de jinete

Córdoba.
Lejana y sola.

Jaca negra, luna grande,
y aceitunas en mi alforja.
Aunque sepa los caminos
yo nunca llegaré a Córdoba.

Por el llano, por el viento,
jaca negra, luna roja.
La muerte me está mirando
desde las torres de Córdoba.

¡Ay, qué camino tan largo!
¡Ay, mi jaca valerosa!
¡Ay, que la muerte me espera,
antes de llegar a Córdoba!

Córdoba.
Lejana y sola.

2. El grito

El eclipse de un grito
va de monte
a monte.

Desde los olivos,
será un arco iris negro
sobre la noche azul.

¡Ay!

Como un arco de viola,
el grito ha hecho vibrar
largas cuerdas del viento.

¡Ay!

(Las gentes de las cuevas
asoman sus velones.)

¡Ay!

Song of the horseman

Córdoba.
Distant and alone.

Black pony, large moon,
and olives in my saddlebag.
Even though I know the roads,
I never will arrive at Córdoba.

Through the plains, through the wind,
black pony, red moon.
Death is staring at me
from the towers of Córdoba.

Oh, such a long road!
Oh, my valiant pony!
Oh, but death awaits me
before I arrive at Córdoba!

Córdoba.
Distant and alone.

The scream

The arc of a cry
goes from hill
to hill.

From the olive trees
will be a black rainbow
over the blue night.

Oh!

Like the bow of a viola
the cry has set to vibrating
the long strings of the wind.

Oh!

(The people of the caves
bring out their oil lamps.)

Oh!

3. La luna asoma

Cuando sale la luna
se pierden las campanas
y aparecen las sendas
impenetrables.

Cuando sale la luna,
el mar cubre la tierra
y el corazón se siente
isla en el infinito.

Nadie come naranjas
bajo la luna llena.
Es preciso comer,
fruta verde y helada.

Cuando sale la luna
de cien rostros iguales,
la moneda de plata
solloza en el bolsillo.

4. Malagueña

La muerte
entra y sale
de la taberna.

Pasan caballos negros
y gente siniestra
por los hondos caminos
de la guitarra.

Y hay un olor a sal
y a sangre de hembra
en los nardos febriles
de la marina.

La muerte
entra y sale,
y sale y entra
la muerte
de la taberna.

The moon rises

When the moon rises
bells fade out
and there appear paths
that are impassable.

When the moon rises,
the sea covers the land
and the heart feels
like an island in the infinite.

No one eats oranges
beneath the full moon.
It is necessary to eat
fruit green and frost-cold.

When the moon rises
with its hundred similar faces,
silver coins
sob in pockets.

From Malaga

Death
enters and exits
the tavern.

Passing by are black horses
and sinister people
along the deep roads
of the guitar.

There is an odor of salt
and of woman's blood
in the feverish tuberose plant
along the shore.

Death
enters and exits
and exits and enters,
Death
in the tavern.

—Federico García Lorca (1898–1936)

Muusika [Music] (2008) by **Pärt Uusberg** (born 1986)

Anyone who doesn't believe in the power of choral music to change lives should consider the case of Estonia. This small nation on the Baltic Sea was conquered by the Soviet Union in 1940. The Estonians maintained a national identity largely through preservation of their traditional folksongs. Despite Soviet attempts to halt the tradition, an annual songfest took place wherein thousands of singers converged on the capital, Tallinn, to sing traditional music. When Estonia finally regained independence in 1991, group singing was given much of the credit. The annual songfest continues—the year when I sang in it, 2000, was considered a light year, as a mere 15,000 singers participated.

International lovers of choral music know Estonia largely through the output of two composers: Arvo Pärt and Veljo Tormis. But the younger generations have brought forth a great many choral composers, including Pärt Uusberg. He comes from the small town of Rapla, where his mother conducted youth choirs and he played trumpet in the church brass band. Now a graduate of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre and of the prestigious Georg Ots Tallinn Music School, Uusberg has gained much acclaim in Estonia and abroad. He founded and conducts the chamber choir Head Ööd, Vend, which the Estonian Choral Association named as Choir of the Year in 2021. The present setting of a text by the Estonian national poet Juhan Liiv embraces the metrical flux of Tormis and the minimalistic oscillations of Pärt.

Kuskil peab alguskokkukõla olema,
kuskil suures looduses, varjul.
On tema vägevas laotuses,
täheringide kauguses,
on tema päikese sära sees,
lillekeses, metsakohinas,
emakõne südamemuusikas
või silmavees –
kuskil peab surematus olema,
kuskilt alguskokkukõla leitama:
kust oleks muidu inimese rinda
saanud ta – muusika.

—Juhan Liiv (1864–1913)

Somewhere must be the original sound,
somewhere in great nature, hidden.
Is it in the mighty infinite,
in star-orbits distant,
is it in the sun's internal shine,
in a little flower, in leaves' rustling,
in a mother's song, in a heart's music,
or in tears –
somewhere must be immortality,
somewhere the original sound must be found:
how otherwise could the human heart
have received – music.

Tribute to Caesar (1997) by Arvo Pärt (born 1935)

The Baltic composer who is currently biggest on the international stage is Arvo Pärt, an Estonian who lived in Berlin from 1981 to 2010. While studying at the Tallinn Conservatory he also worked as a sound engineer for Estonian Radio and wrote for documentaries and animated films. The highlight of his early output is the orchestral *Credo* (1968), which mingles atonal music with Bach quotes, after which he reevaluated his musical craft through a study of Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony. This shift coincided with his conversion to the Orthodox Church. What emerged was a new composer entirely, focusing on sacred choral works in a style he called tintinnabulation: a melody line moves stepwise while a supporting line limits itself to the tonic triad. The musical phrases are short and homophonic, the tempo is slow and unchanging, the mood is soft and peaceful, interjections of silence are common.

Pärt has employed his tintinnabulation style in forms large (such as *Passio* of 1982) and small, as in the present work, *Tribute to Caesar*. It is an unusual choice of text, but suits his style neatly. We begin in A minor as the Pharisees and Herodians attempt to entwine Jesus in a trap of logic. The steady building of tension in the Pharisees' question is palpable, as the sopranos slowly rise from B to F. Pärt invokes an ancient tradition of assigning the voice of Christ to the bass voice, punctuating it with sopranos and altos on alternate syllables. In the end, the Pharisees' deflated departure sounds as empty as their souls.

Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.
And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying:
“Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth,
neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.
Tell us therefore, what thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?”
But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said:
“Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute of money.”
And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them:
“Whose is this image and superscription?” They say unto him: “Caesar’s.”
Then saith he unto them: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s,
and unto God the things that are God’s.”
When they had heard these words, they marvelled and left him, and went their way.

—Matthew 22:15–22

∞ intermission ∞

Aleidi floriasti from *Villarosa Sequences* (1993)
by **Thomas Jennefelt** (born 1954)

The 1960s and '70s brought the so-called "Swedish choral miracle." At its center was the conductor Eric Ericson, whose chamber choir performed and recorded the avant-garde unaccompanied music that many considered virtually impossible to perform. One of his singers was the composition student Thomas Jennefelt, who came to international acclaim with his choral *Warning to the Rich* (1977). Among his more prominent works is the *Villarosa Sequences*, a series of seven unaccompanied vocal works united only in their minimalist techniques and use of nonsense syllables. Even though the text may occasionally sound like known Latin words, the meaning is entirely abstract.

The movement "Aleidi floriasti" begins with a cluster filling in the diatonic pitches between two As. Simple enough. Jennefelt then divides these clusters with eighth-note pulsations of an A chord with a seventh. Bit by bit the sopranos and altos add splashes of "lao," and eventually intone a florid line in parallel thirds that sounds like what Handel might have written had he been a 1990s minimalist. Dissonant sopranos lead to a blistering climax interrupted by *piano* phraselets. Handel returns, with pulsations underneath, leading to a grand bright arrival in which the sopranos and altos intone repeated cascades in four parts. Just when we think that all will revert to calm A minor, Jennefelt closes on a mysterious B. What does all of this mean? That's up to you.

Pūt, vējiņi Latvian folksong
arranged by **Jurjānu Andrejs** (1856–1922)

Latvia, like Estonia as described above, is a land for whom music-making is not merely a cultural activity: it can become an act of political activism. During the Soviet era, central authorities attempted to crush the cultural identities of the various Soviet republics. Songs hailing a beautiful motherland were forbidden, and only the most innocuous of tunes were allowed to be performed publicly. One such ditty was Pūt vējiņi, a drinking song that tells the story of a man who marries his beloved despite her parents' wishes. It became an unofficial anthem of self-determination. We will sing this ancient tune in an arrangement that is often sung at the Latvian songfest that takes place every five years.

Pūt vējiņi, dzen laiviņu,
aizden mani Kurzemē.
Kurzemniece man solīja
sav' meitiņu malējiņ'.
Solīt sola, bet nedeva,
teic man' lielu dzērājiņ'.
Teic man' lielu dzērājiņu,
kumeliņa skrējējiņ'.
Kuru krogu es izdzēru?
Kam noskrēju kumeliņ'?'
Pats par savu naudu dzēru,
Pats skrēj' savu kumeliņ'.
Pats precēju ligaviņu
Tēvam, mātei nezinot.

Blow, winds—drive the boat,
drive me to Kurzeme.
A woman of Kurzeme promised me
her daughter as my bride.
Promised, but broke her promise,
calling me a drunkard.
She called me a drunkard
and a pony-racer.
At which pub did I drink?
Where did my horse run?
I drank with my own money,
I raced my own horse.
I married my bride
Without her parents' knowledge.

September from *Tre körvisor* [Three Choral Songs] (1890)
by **Wilhelm Stenhammar** (1871–1927)

The late nineteenth century saw the rise of nationalism in Scandinavian music. The emergence of world-class composers such as Edvard Grieg in Norway, Jean Sibelius in Finland, and later Carl Nielsen in Denmark, put the Nordic lands on the musical map. Today, it seems that Sweden somehow missed out, but such a cursory view overlooks the equally worthy contributions of Hugo Alfvén, Otto Olsson, and especially Wilhelm Stenhammar. During his lifetime, Stenhammar was hailed as Sweden's leading pianist and conductor: as director of the Göteborg Orchestral Society (1902–22), he developed that city's musical culture to rival Stockholm's. His Brahmsian ear for the orchestra is best heard in the Serenade (1913) and the Second Symphony (1915).

Stenhammar is unusual among the so-called nationalist choral composers in that he focused his efforts on composing original works rather than adapting or arranging Swedish folksongs. From early in his career comes "September," on a text by the Danish naturalist poet J.P. Jacobsen. The tune could almost be a folksong, were its reach not quite as high. And the harmonization is almost typical of its era, but for subtle chromatic elements that highlight the shine of the night sky or the dreams of the clouds. The sopranos evoke the wind, soft in their highest register. All closes in a quiet F-sharp minor, the sun having set in the forest.

Alle de voksende Skygger
har vævet sig sammen til en,
ensom paa Himmelen lyser
en Stjerne saa straalende ren.
Skyerne have saa tunge Drømme,
Blomsternes Øjne i Duggraad svømme,
underligt Aftenvinden
suser i Linden.

All the lengthening shadows
have woven themselves into one,
alone in the sky shines
a star so radiantly pure.
Clouds have such heavy dreams,
flowers' eyes overflow with dew,
the strange evening wind
sighs through the linden tree.

—Jens Peter Jacobsen (1847–1885)

Jaanilaul [St. John's Song], from *Eesti kalendrilaulud* [Estonian Calendar Songs] (1967)
by **Veljo Tormis** (1930–2017)

When I first met Veljo Tormis in 2000, he handed me a business card that read “Composer Emeritus,” announcing and celebrating his recent retirement from composition. It could just as well have read “Composer Laureate,” such was his stature in Estonia. His mature output is almost entirely for unaccompanied choir, and even when he isn't arranging actual folksongs, his original melodies could easily be mistaken for them. He was especially passionate about preserving the folk melodies of Baltic ethnicities whose culture had all but disappeared over the course of the twentieth century: the Livonians, Izhorians, Ingrians, and Vepsians, for example. One cycle celebrating these people is the *Estonian Calendar Songs*, of which “Jaanilaul” is the culmination.

This song commemorates Midsummer Eve, which in the Estonian folk calendar is second in importance only to Christmas. The custom is to build a huge bonfire, its glow being believed to encourage the growing of grain. The fire would stay lit through the night—which admittedly isn't very long so far to the north—amid drinking, eating, dancing, and general merriment. The text invokes St. John the Baptist (called “Jaani” or its diminutive “Jaanika”) and the good luck he brings. This particular tune comes from Hargla parish, far to the south, along the Latvian border. Tormis harmonizes it in triads moving in parallel motion; often the sopranos and altos are in triads spaced a fourth apart, creating a harmonious cluster. At the climax the choir splits into twelve parts, each acclaiming St. John the Baptist: “Jaani, Jaanika!”

Läämi vällä Jaani kaima,
kas om Jaanil kahhar pää,
sis omma kesvä keerulidse,
kaara katsõkandilidse.

Jaan tull' põldu müüdü
kõnde kullast kondu müüdü,
ligi tõie liiaõnne,
kaasa tõie karjaõnne.

Jaan tõi pika piimäpütü,
madaligu võiupunna,
rüä tõie rüpügä,
kaara tõie kaindlõn.

Läämi vällä Jaani kaima...

Let's go out to see John,
and see if he has bushy hair—
then the barley will curl
and the oats be double-eared.

John came across the field,
walked across the golden chaff,
brought with him much good luck,
brought with him cattle-luck.

John brought a tall churn of milk
and a hundredweight pat of butter,
brought in his lap rye
and oats under his arm.

Let's go out to see John...



BELLEVUE CHAMBER CHORUS

2023-2024 CONCERT SEASON

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YouTube premiere: Saturday, Nov. 25, 2023, 7 pm

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Saturday, March 9, 2024, 7:30 pm

Sunday, March 10, 2024, 3:00 pm

YouTube premiere: Saturday, March 23, 2024, 7 pm

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YouTube premiere: Saturday, June 1, 2024, 7 pm

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2023 - 2024 SEASON

Handelian Holidays

December 2nd & 3rd, 2023 3pm

with *Philharmonia Northwest*

Bastyr University Chapel, Kenmore

All You Need is Love

February 26, 2024 - 3pm

Bastyr University Chapel, Kenmore

Three Bs and One E

April 27, 2024 - 2pm

with *Philharmonia Northwest*

Benaroya Hall, Seattle



www.kirklandchoralsociety.org



2024 Season

Sound Imaginarium: It's About TIME!

Sunday March 17th, 2024, 3:00 PM

Our Saviour Lutheran Church

745 Front St S

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Sunrise Mass!

Sunday May 19th, 2024, 3:00 PM

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All-American Independence Celebration

Sunday June 30th, 2024, 3:00 PM

Pickering Barn

1730 10th Ave NW

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Firesong Madrigals

CASCADIAN CHORALE

Saturday, June 1, 7:30 pm – Redmond

Sunday, June 2, 3:00 pm – Bellevue

This concert explores the connections between the Renaissance and the modern era. Morten Lauridsen's *Madrigali* employ Renaissance texts to new sonorities. Renaissance masters Claudio Monteverdi and Nicolas Gombert have been inspirations to current composers like Lauridsen and Cascadian's own Artistic Director, Gary D. Cannon. And a new work by Cascadian singer Tara O'Brien Pride reminds us that there is always room for levity in choral music.

Claudio Monteverdi: *Se per havervi, oime*

Nicolas Gombert: *Lugebat David Absalon*

Gary D. Cannon: *O Absalon*

Maurice Duruflé: *Ubi caritas*

Tara O'Brien Pride: *Free toes [premiere]*

Morten Lauridsen: *Madrigali: Six Fire Songs*

www.CascadianChorale.org

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Our Mission

is to express and nurture a love of choral music by:

- inspiring and educating our singers, our audience and the broader community;
- presenting quality performances of fine choral music from various historical, cultural and stylistic traditions; and
- collaborating with composers, professional musicians and other arts organizations.

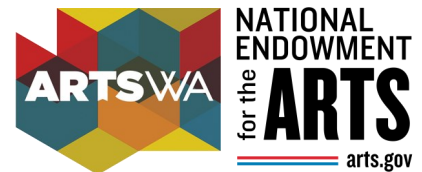
Our Vision

is a community engaged in great choral music performed with passion and skill.

Find our web site and
links to our social media
at CascadianChorale.org.



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