



Clark W. Joseph, Conductor

Clark W. Joseph, a Lafayette, LA native, earned BM and MM degrees in Piano Performance from University of Louisiana Lafayette. He's also earned a MS in Education from Fordham University in New York. He earned the MTS from Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX and was also awarded the DMin. from the Bell Grove Theological Seminary of Baton Rouge, LA. Finally he earned the DWS degree from Liberty University School of Music of Lynchburg, VA.

He served as Choir Master for the National Baptist Convention USA and the National Baptist Convention of America Board Meeting Musicals in Dallas. He serves as conductor for the Black Academy of Arts & Letters Black Music and Civil Rights Movement Concert at the Meyerson Symphony Hall in Dallas featuring recording artists CeCe Winans, Ledisi, Chrisette Michele, Reuben Studdard, Karen Clark-Sheard, Fantasia, Peabo Bryson, B Slade, Kim Burrell and Dorinda Clark-Cole. He was Choir Master for Gospel Goes Classical, featuring Marvin Winans, as well as Together We Sing with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra paying tribute to Richard Smallwood. His musical composition, We've Come To Praise The Lord was featured in the Fox Television Series, Filthy Rich. Clark has served as Minister of Music & Worship Arts at St. John Church of Grand Prairie/Southlake, TX, one church ministering in multiple locations since 1996.



Take our survey!

Let us know how you heard about this concert



For more upcoming concerts, visit **midamerica-music.com** or scan the QR code



**MidAm
International**

CLASSICA ORCHESTRA DA CAMERA FIORENTINA



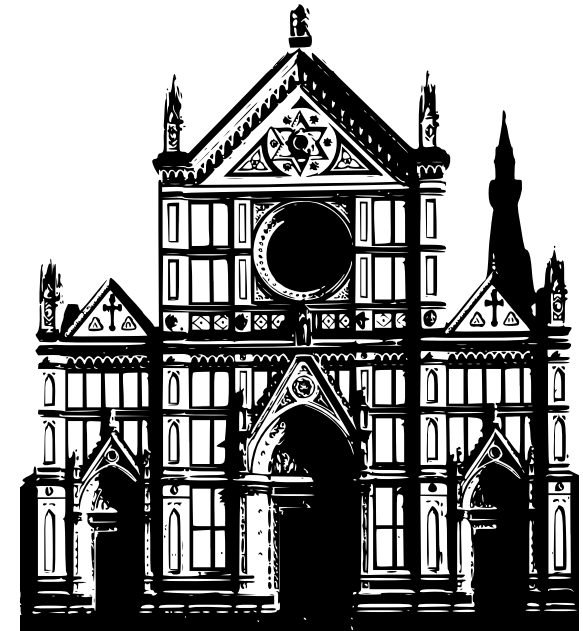
Clark W. Joseph, Conductor



Callin Marcel Manson, Conductor



Linda Mack Berven, Conductor



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2025, AT 8:30 PM
BASILICA DI SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE, ITALY

Classica Orchestra da Camera Fiorentina

Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at 8:30 PM
Basilica di Santa Croce, Florence, Italy

VIVALDI Gloria in D Major, RV 589

Eilana Lappalainen, Soprano
Licia Toscano, Mezzo-soprano
Linda Mack Berven, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Concord Choral, Concord, NH (Jenny Cooper, Director)
Durango Choral Society, Durango, CO (Rhonda Muckerman, Director)
Mater Academy Narcoossee Choir, Orlando, FL (Sarah Minckler, Director)
Providence School Chorale, Jacksonville, FL (Scott Giddens, Director)

MOZART Requiem in D minor, K.626

Eilana Lappalainen, Soprano
Licia Toscano, Mezzo-soprano
Federico Buttazzo, Tenor
Viktor Shevchenko, Bass
Cailin Marcel Manson, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Concord Chorale, Concord, NH (Jenny Cooper, Director)
Durango Choral Society, Durango, CO (Rhonda Muckerman, Director)
Mater Academy Narcoossee Choir, Orlando, FL (Sarah Minckler, Director)

Gospel Octavos:

TRINI MASSIE Praise Ye The Lord

CLARK JOSEPH We've Come To Praise The Lord

MYRON WILLIAMS Made To Worship

JAMES BIGNON I Can't Thank Him Enough

D. COREY SHIPLEY Hold On

Tramaul Love, Piano
Clark Wayman Joseph, Conductor

Participating Choruses:

Providence School Chorale, Jacksonville, FL (Scott Giddens, Director)
St. John Church Music Ministry, Grand Prairie, TX (Clark Wayman Joseph, Director)



Federico Buttazzo, Tenor

Born in Lecce, Federico Buttazzo graduated in Opera Singing from the "G. Paisiello" Music Institute in Taranto. He later refined his technique under the guidance of Maestros D. Raffanti, B. De Simone, and S. Cordella. In 2014, he was selected to perform the role of Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* by G. Rossini as part of the LTL OperaStudio project, promoted by the theaters of Lucca, Pisa, and Livorno. He has specialized in the bel canto

repertoire and has performed leading roles in numerous operas, including *Don Giovanni* (W.A. Mozart), *The Barber of Seville*, *La Cenerentola*, *La Scala di Seta*, *L'inganno felice*, *La cambiale di matrimonio*, *I puritani*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Don Pasquale*, *Les Pêcheurs de perles*, and *Gianni Schicchi*. He is also an active concert performer, with a repertoire spanning both sacred and secular works. His performances have included *Stabat Mater* by G. Paisiello, *Coronation Mass* and *Requiem* by W.A. Mozart, *Petite Messe Solennelle* and *Stabat Mater* by G. Rossini, *Requiem* by G. Donizetti, *Carmina Burana* by C. Orff, and *Navidad Nuestra* and *Misa Criolla* by A. Ramirez. He has appeared on the stages of prestigious theaters such as the Opéra Royal de Wallonie in Belgium, the Astana Opera House in Kazakhstan, the Cairo Opera House in Egypt, Teatro Aurora in Malta, the Scharoun Theater in Wolfsburg, Politeama Greco in Lecce, Teatro Grande in Brescia, and Teatro G. Verdi in Trieste.



Viktor Shevchenko, Bass

Ukrainian bass Viktor Shevchenko, born in Mykolaiv, began his musical training as a violinist before studying choral and symphonic conducting. He graduated in opera singing from the National Academy of Music in Odessa and launched his career at the Odessa Opera Theater. He made his debut at the Wiener Staatsoper as Soljony in Peter Eötvös's *Three Sisters* and has since appeared as a guest soloist at major European venues, including the Prague State Opera, Teatro

Verdi (Trieste), Teatro Pavarotti-Freni (Modena), Teatro Comunale (Bologna), Teatro Lirico (Cagliari), Teatro Municipale (Piacenza), and Teatro Petruzzelli (Bari). His repertoire spans major bass roles in works by Mozart, Rossini, Donizetti, Verdi, Bizet, Puccini, Wagner, Gounod, Musorgsky, Borodin, and Tchaikovsky. He has also performed in Mozart and Verdi's *Requiem Masses* and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. Festival appearances include Arena di Verona, Wiener Festwochen, Terme di Caracalla (Rome), and Berlin's Classic Open Air at Gendarmenmarkt.



Licia Toscano, Mezzo-soprano

Calabrian mezzosoprano Maria Felicia Toscano began studying opera in 2015 at the Stanislao Giacomantonio Conservatory of Cosenza with Maria Pia Piscitelli. She later graduated with honors and distinction from the P.I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music and is currently continuing her vocal training with soprano Daniela Bruera. Since 2016, she has performed regularly as a soloist. Her operatic debut was as Flora in *La Traviata* at Teatro

Rendano in Cosenza. She has since appeared in numerous productions, including *Carmen* (Mércèdes and title role), *Rigoletto* (Maddalena), *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Ulrica), *Zigeunerbaron* (Czipra), *La Traviata* (Flora Bervoix), *Madama Butterfly* (Suzuki), and *Aida* (Amneris). She has performed across Italy and Europe, including venues such as the Teatro Politeama in Catanzaro, Teatro dell'Opera Romana Craiova (Romania), Theater am Ring in Villingen (Germany), and the Greek theaters of Taormina, Syracuse, and Tindari as part of the Festival Lirico dei Teatri di Pietra. Her concert appearances include *Stabat Mater* (Pergolesi), *Oratorio de Noël* (Saint-Saëns), and *Messa Homme Armé* (Karl Jenkins), the latter broadcast live on Rai. In 2023, she recorded Bellini's chamber arias for Radio Rai 3 and was honored with a lifetime achievement award by the Municipality of Cosenza. A finalist in the XVII Premio Nazionale delle Arti in 2023, Toscano continues to earn acclaim for her vocal depth, stage presence, and versatility across the Italian and European operatic scenes.



Cailin Marcel Manson, Conductor

Cailin Marcel Manson, baritone and conductor, a Philadelphia native, has toured as a soloist and master teacher at major concert venues throughout the US, Europe, and Asia with many organizations, including the Radio-Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart, SWR Sinfonieorchester, Taipei Philharmonic, Bayerische Staatsoper—Münchner Opernfestspiele, Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Teatro La Fenice, Teatro

San Carlo, Konservatorium Oslo, and the Conservatoire de Luxembourg. He recently made an acclaimed Carnegie Hall conducting debut with MidAmerica Productions in March 2023, leading Giuseppe Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*. Cailin Marcel Manson is currently Professor of Practice in Music and Director of Music Performance at Clark University, Chair of Vocal Studies at the Longy School of Music of Bard College, Music Director of Opera Vermont, Conductor-in-Residence at the Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Artistic Consultant and Conductor for MidAmerica Productions and MidAm International, and Artistic Director and Chief Executive Officer of the New England Repertory Orchestra. Manson is a frequent guest conductor, clinician, presenter, panelist, and adjudicator for conventions, conferences, competitions, and music festivals. Manson studied voice performance at Temple University, and opera performance and orchestral conducting at the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg

The Program

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Requiem in D minor, K.626

In the summer of 1791, a man dressed in dark gray appeared at Mozart's door and handed him an unsigned letter asking him to compose a requiem and to name his own price for it. With some trepidation, Mozart accepted the commission, and part of the fee was immediately paid to him. The balance was to be paid when the completed work was delivered. Mozart was about to begin work on the Requiem when he received a commission from the city of Prague for an opera, *La Clemenza di Tito*, which had to be ready in four weeks for the coronation of Emperor Leopold II as King of Bohemia. He also had to finish *The Magic Flute* because the premiere was to take place in Vienna less than a month after that of *La Clemenza di Tito*. As Mozart was getting into his carriage to go to Prague, the mysterious stranger appeared again and asked when the Requiem would be finished. The composer, whose health and spirits were low, is said to have believed that the gray-cloaked stranger was a messenger of Death, and that the Requiem was to be his last work. After the first performance of *The Magic Flute* on September 30, he began diligently working on this Mass for the Dead. On December 4, he was still laboring over it. He even sang parts of it for his family and a few friends, but at the opening of the *Lacrymosa*, he burst into tears, and the impromptu performance came to an end. In a few hours, he was dead. It was soon learned that the stranger in gray was in the employ of Count Franz Walsegg von Stuppach, a dilettante who commissioned works from prominent composers and sometimes tried to pass them off as his own. After Mozart's death, his widow looked for someone to finish the composition. The assignment fell to Mozart's pupil, Franz Süssmayr. Köchel, the cataloger of Mozart's works, wrote that "Süssmayr copied everything that Mozart had only sketched and then filled out the instrumentation in the manner that seemed to conform with Mozart's intentions." The first public performance of the Requiem took place in Vienna in 1792. — Susan Halpern

ANTONIO VIVALDI

Gloria, RV 589

Antonio Vivaldi's musical journey began under the tutelage of his father, a renowned violinist at St. Mark's orchestra in Venice. Later ordained as a priest, Vivaldi assumed multiple roles – director of music, composer, teacher, and violinist – at a Venetian orphanage for girls, where he remained for years. Tasked with composing two new concertos monthly for the orphans, Vivaldi produced a vast repertoire including operas, oratorios, and over five hundred concertos for various instrument combinations. In 1939, composer and conductor Alfredo Casella stumbled upon Vivaldi's Gloria in the National Library.

The Program

TRINI MASSIE

Praise Ye The Lord

A vibrant declaration of worship, Trini Massie's Praise Ye The Lord opens with the jubilant cry, "Praise ye the Lord, all ye people, lift Him up!" Driving rhythms and layered vocal parts echo traditional gospel with a contemporary flair. This energetic anthem invites full-bodied praise and unifies the choir and congregation in a celebration of God's greatness.

CLARK JOSEPH

We've Come To Praise The Lord

"We've come to praise the Lord and lift His holy name!" This bold opener sets the tone for Clark Joseph's dynamic gospel work. With a steady groove and call-and-response phrases, the piece builds momentum, urging singers and listeners alike into active praise. It's a joyful, communal statement of purpose and celebration.

MYRON WILLIAMS

Made To Worship

In Made To Worship, Myron Williams reminds us of our spiritual identity: "We were made to worship You, Lord, in spirit and in truth." A smooth, soulful ballad with expressive harmonies and warm textures, the song draws worshippers into a contemplative yet passionate encounter, affirming that worship is not just an act, but our divine calling.

JAMES BIGNON

I Can't Thank Him Enough

James Bignon's testimony of gratitude shines in this stirring gospel anthem: "When I think of all He's done for me, I can't thank Him enough!" Blending traditional gospel harmonies with a driving rhythm section, the song builds in intensity as it recounts blessings and deliverance, offering a heartfelt, contagious spirit of thanksgiving.

D. COREY SHIPLEY

Hold On

A powerful anthem of encouragement, Hold On urges the faithful to persevere: "Trouble won't last always—hold on, help is on the way." D. Corey Shipley's piece combines a soulful melody with uplifting lyrics and rhythmic drive, offering reassurance and strength for anyone facing trials. It's both a prayer and a promise.

The Artists



Linda Mack Berven, Conductor

Linda Mack Berven earned her doctoral degree from the University of Illinois. She enjoyed many years of teaching in the Music Department at Fort Lewis College. Linda served for 25 years as Artistic Director and Conductor of the Durango Choral Society and the Durango Women's Choir. Her engagements as a conductor, singer, and pianist have included the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, San Juan Symphony, the Durango Bach Festival, and the Music in the Mountains

Festival, where Linda also serves as the pre-concert lecturer. Her professional conducting engagements have ranged from performances with MidAmerica Productions at Carnegie Hall to concerts in Prague, Greece, Zagreb, Salzburg, Innsbruck and Linz. Linda has sung with the Robert Shaw Festival Singers, Santa Fe Pro Musica, Carnegie Hall Choral Workshop, New Texas Festival, Victoria Bach Festival, and local and regional choral ensembles in addition to solo recitals, adjudication, and vocal clinics in Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Arizona.



Eilana Lappalainen, Soprano

Finnish-Canadian soprano Eilana Lappalainen has performed title roles to critical claim in the world's premier opera venues, including Teatro alla Scala, Opera di Roma, Hamburgische Staatsoper, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opéra de Montréal, Bellas Artes, Teatro Verdi Trieste, New Israeli Opera, Lithuanian National Opera, Finnish National Opera, Polish National Opera, Bergen Opera (Norway), Opera North, Staatstheater Essen, Prague State Opera, Gran Teatre del Liceu Barcelona, New York City Opera, Seattle

Opera, San Francisco Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Michigan Opera, Minnesota Opera, Nashville Opera, Kentucky Opera, Portland Opera, Virginia Opera, Opera Hamilton, Opera Ottawa, Marin Opera, Tulsa Opera, Arizona Opera, and Opera San Jose; and in cities such as Macau, Peralada, Belluno, Firenze, Frankfurt, Berlin, Munich, Köln, Düsseldorf, Wiesbaden, Dessau, Halle, Mannheim, Bremen, Würzburg, Bielefeld, Taluca, Istanbul, Olomouc, Bucharest, Kielce, Katowice, Warsaw, Paris, Vienna, Zurich, Bern, Winterthur, and 10 cities in Japan. Her repertoire includes leading roles in Salome, Der Rosenkavalier, Arabella, Der Fliegende Holländer, Lohengrin, Fidelio, Peter Grimes, Wozzeck, Der Freischütz, Jenůfa, Giovanna D'Arco, Un ballo in maschera, Il trovatore, Pagliacci, Cavalleria rusticana, Medea, Andrea Chénier, Madama Butterfly, Il tabarro, La fanciulla del West, Turandot, and Tosca. She has recorded a CD with Italian Aria's and Salome live. Her recording of Zanetto was released in 2008, and a CD of Mahler songs in 2013, both on Elysium Recordings; a new CD, "Dramatic Divas," is in preparation. Ms Lappalainen also works in Music Administration as the Associate General/Artistic Director of MidAmerica Productions and MidAm International. She is the General Director of the International Festival of the Aegean, the Greek Opera Studio & Berlin Opera Studio.