

the  
*Annex*  
singers

# SING. PRAY. LOVE!

SATURDAY,  
MAY 31,  
2025

AT 7:30 PM

GRACE CHURCH ON-THE-HILL  
300 LONSDALE ROAD



## Thank You!

For their invaluable assistance with tonight's concert, we wish to thank:

Steve Vargo, stage manager  
Sandy Miranda, front-of-house manager  
Dimana Kolarova, graphic designer  
Su Kim, livestream production  
Brian McDonagh, Plangere Editions  
Grace Church on-the-Hill

&

Our wonderful team of concert volunteers:

Negar Babaei	Aaliyah Schritt
Evangeline Churchill	Charlie Turco
Padmira Pour Abdi	Brooke Weigensberg
Victoria Rizo-Cubillos	Tommy Wylie
Emma Rusu	Lucy Xu



*Our home in the heart of Toronto has for thousands of years been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and, most recently, the Mississauga people of the New Credit First Nation. We are thankful for the opportunity to live, to work, and to sing on this land.*

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the  
**Annex**  
singers

2024-2025

*Celebrating  
45 years  
of singing*

## Director's Note

*Through all the tumult and the strife I hear the music ringing.  
It sounds an echo in my soul; how can I keep from singing?*



More than a few years ago, choir members decided that we should have t-shirts made so that we would have a casual “uniform” for when we were out singing in the community. A green background with gold lettering: on the front, our logo, and on the back the title of our then theme song, “How Can I Keep from Singing?” How, indeed?

Throughout the 2024-25 season, we have been celebrating a milestone — 45 years of singing. Apparently, we *cannot* keep from singing, nor do we intend to any time in the foreseeable future!

The theme of tonight's concert is, of course, inspired by Elizabeth Gilbert's bestselling memoir *Eat, Pray, Love*. The borrowed, though slightly adapted, title suggests a light-hearted programme of choral bonbons, and in some ways that is precisely what we are offering. But ‘sing,’ ‘pray,’ and ‘love’ are broad categories, and there is not much in the living history of western choral music — or in human experience for that matter — that cannot find a home in one of these “buckets,” if you will. They are three interconnected aspects of our humanity in which we both lose, and find, ourselves,

For more than one thousand years, choral singers have sung about the balm of music, the strength and comfort of faith, and the joys and sorrows of love. There is enough splendid music to fill up hundreds upon hundreds of such programmes without exhausting either the traditional repertoire or the riches of our intensely vibrant choral “now.” So, in some ways, tonight's concert is a personal history — some pieces are deeply connected to our choir, while others are new delights (for example, tonight we make our Spice Girls debut, and not a moment too soon!). And, as always, the music of Canada's choral landscape is well represented.

— Maria Case, Artistic Director

# Sing, Pray, Love!

## I. Sing

*My Spirit Sang All Day* Gerald Finzi

*Music, Spread Thy Voice Around* George Frideric Handel

*When Music Sounds* Katharine Petkovski

*How Can I Keep from Singing?* R. Lowry, arr. Gwyneth Walker

*Songbird* Sarah Quartel  
Annex Women

*All Ye Who Music Love* Baldassare Donato  
Annex Chamber Ensemble

*Nightclub, 1960* Astor Piazzolla  
Clara Yoon, violin



## II. Pray

*Laudate Dominum* Rihards Dubra  
Annex Women's Ensemble

*Hear My Prayer* Moses Hogan

*Ubi caritas* Maurice Duruflé

*My Eyes for Beauty Pine* Maria Case

*All the Diamonds* Bruce Cockburn, arr. Larry Nickels  
Annex Tenors and Basses

*Meditation* (from *Thaïs*) Jules Massenet  
Clara Yoon, violin



## III. Love

*Of A' the Airts* Maria Case  
Melanie Conly, soprano

*Romance* Amy Beach  
Clara Yoon, violin

*When I Fall in Love* Victor Young, arr. Kirby Shaw  
Annex Chamber Ensemble, Evelyn Hawes, solo

*The Turtle Dove* Trad., arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams  
Lutzen Riedstra, solo

*O, My Luve's Like a Red, Red Rose* René Clausen  
with Clara Yoon, violin

*Wannabe* The Spice Girls, arr. Nathan Howe

*Live with Me and Be My Love* George Shearing

*Summertime* George Gershwin, arr. Jascha Heifetz  
Clara Yoon, violin

*Love is Here to Stay* George Gershwin, arr. Mark Hayes  
Melanie Conly, solo

## Programme Notes

British composer Gerald Finzi believed that no fine text, however challenging, was incapable of being set to music. We begin our Song section with Finzi's ecstatic "My Spirit Sang All Day," the third in a set of seven settings of poetry by Robert Bridges. The composer demonstrates his keen sensitivity to words in restless harmonic movement and shifting metres which paint the radiant heart of joy.

We travel back to the Baroque with "Music, Spread Thy Voice Around," a chorus from George Frideric Handel's 1748 oratorio *Solomon*. With the economy of text we often find in a Handel chorus, the composer spins an imitative five-part texture of incomparable sweetness.

Our next three pieces are by living composers. "When Music Sounds," by Toronto-based Katharine Petkovski, is a luminous setting of a poem by Walter de la Mare that captures the experience of the sublime. American composer Gwyneth Walker's exuberant arrangement of Robert Lowry's hymn affirms that in the face of tyranny and oppression we not only can, but must keep singing: "Since I believe that love abides, How can I keep from singing?" Canadian Sarah Quartel's "Songbird" is a delightfully playful account of the goings-on of our melodious feathered friends.

We close this section with the villanella "All Ye Who Music Love" ("Chi la gagliarda" in the original Italian) by Baldassare Donato. Villanellas were the country cousins of the more sophisticated and vocally complex madrigals that flourished in the late Renaissance; with simpler texts and clear rhythms and harmonies, they were accessible to a broad audience. Scottish author and music editor Thomas Oliphant wrote the English lyrics in 1837.

Violinist Clara Yoon returns as our guest artist this evening with selections that weave in and around the themes of singing, praying, and loving. Our opening set, although wonderfully eclectic, is perhaps a tad chaste? Fortunately, the evocative "Nightclub, 1960" from *Histoire du Tango* by Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla provides some heat!

We turn now to prayer with contemporary Latvian composer Rihards Dubra's jubilant setting of Psalm 150, "Laudate Dominum," sung by a women's septet. With its lean texture, parallel lines, and hollow harmonies, Dubra evokes a deliberate archaism in this most musical of all the psalms.

Our next two selections are powerful expressions of faith and hope. "Hear My Prayer" is a much beloved work by the late American composer Moses Hogan, best known for his settings and arrangements of spirituals. We follow with "Ubi caritas," the first of French composer

Maurice Duruflé's choral set *Four Motets on Gregorian Themes*. Composed in 1960 and based on an ancient chant, it is a neo-Romantic gem.

Poet Robert Bridges makes another appearance in "My Eyes for Beauty Pine," premiered on our *What Will Remain* programme in November 2021. The poem's sense of quiet devotion is presented in simple harmonic language unfettered by modernity. The tenors and basses take centre stage in Larry Nickel's arrangement of the Canadian classic "All the Diamonds" by Bruce Cockburn, a piece equally at home in a rock concert, folk festival, or church service. We close this section with "Meditation" from Jules Massenet's opera *Thaïs* — a serenely beautiful wordless prayer for the violin.

Poet Robert Burns appears twice in our Love section; first with the solo song "Of A' the Airts." This is one of three Burns settings that I composed during the pandemic to be sung over Zoom at a virtual Robbie Burns Day celebration — all the fun, but none of the haggis!

Clara follows with Amy Beach's "Romance" for violin and piano, a piece that contains as much late 19th-century lyricism, chromaticism, and pure passion as can be compacted into the span of six minutes. The next three pieces express the optimistic view that true love is worth waiting for and endures forever. "When I Fall in Love," by Victor Young and Edward Heyman, has certainly stood the test of time since its release in 1952. Ralph Vaughan Williams' arrangement of the traditional English folk song "The Turtle Dove" and René Clausen's setting of Burns' "O, My Luve's Like a Red, Red Rose" are both declarations of fidelity and constancy in the face of separation and the passage of time.

We take a slightly more cynical turn with the next two pieces. The Spice Girls' mega-hit "Wannabe," arranged here by Nathan Howe as a witty madrigal, has endearing lines like "If you really bug me, then I'll say goodbye." Ah, the course of true love never did run smooth! George Shearing's "Live with Me and Be My Love" from his *Songs and Sonnets from Shakespeare* set has a "mash-up" text, containing lines from both Christopher Marlowe's original song of seduction, "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love," and Sir Walter Raleigh's tart response in "The Nymph's Reply," all served up in Shearing's sumptuous jazz harmonies and jaunty rhythms.

We end, as all things should, with music by the incomparable George Gershwin. Clara's final selection serves as a brief benediction on all our winter-weary heads, ushering us into "Summertime" in Jascha Heifetz's evocative and idiosyncratic arrangement. Last, the choir, having considered and weighed optimism vs. cynicism in this set, takes a valiant stand in Mark Hayes' arrangement of "Love Is Here to Stay":

*In time the Rockies may crumble, Gibraltar may tumble —  
They're only made of clay, but our love is here to stay.*

— Maria Case, Artistic Director

# Texts and Translations

## I. Sing

### **My Spirit Sang All Day** (*Robert Bridges*)

My spirit sang all day  
O my joy.  
Nothing my tongue could say,  
Only my joy!  
My heart an echo caught  
O my joy  
And spake,  
Tell me thy thought,  
Hide not thy joy.  
My eyes gan peer around,  
O my joy  
What beauty hast thou found?  
Shew us thy joy.  
My jealous ears grew whist;  
O my joy  
Music from heaven is't  
Sent for our joy?  
She also came and heard;  
O my joy,  
What, said she, is this word?  
What is thy joy?  
And I replied,  
O see,  
O my joy,  
'Tis thee, I cried, 'tis thee:  
Thou art my joy.

### **Music, Spread Thy Voice Around**

(*from Solomon, text attr. Moses Mendes*)

Music, spread thy voice around,  
Sweetly flow the lulling sound.

### **When Music Sounds** (*Walter de la Mare*)

When music sounds, gone is the earth I know,  
And all her lovely things even lovelier grow;  
Her flowers in vision flame, her forest trees  
Lift burdened branches, stilled with ecstasies.

When music sounds, out of the water rise  
Naiads whose beauty dims my waking eyes,  
Rapt in strange dreams burns each enchanted face,  
With solemn echoing stirs their dwelling-place.

When music sounds, all that I was I am  
Ere to this haunt of brooding dust I came;  
And from Time's woods break into distant song  
The swift-winged hours, as I hasten along.

### **How Can I Keep from Singing?**

(*adapted from "Always Rejoicing," publ. 1868, attr. to Pauline T.*)

My life flows on in endless song above earth's lamentation.  
I hear the real though distant song that hails a new creation.  
Through all the tumult and the strife I hear the music ringing.  
It sounds an echo in my soul, how can I keep from singing?

What though the tempest loudly roars, I hear the truth, it's living!  
What though the darkness round me close, songs in the night it's giving!  
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that rock I'm clinging.  
Since I believe that love abides, how can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble when they hear the bells of freedom ringing.  
When friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing?  
In prison cell, in dungeon dark, our thoughts to them are winging.  
When friends hold courage in their heart, how can I keep from singing?

### **Songbird** (*Sarah Quartel*)

I am a Songbird; I will sing anything.  
Give me a tune, I will spin you gold.  
Closer you come to the Songbird weaving,  
Stronger the thread of the music's hold.

Feel in the breeze a breath, a soaring  
Song to you, and hear me say:  
'I am a Songbird; I will sing anything.  
Follow the breeze and come my way!'

One little bird on a branch sits fanning  
Amber wings to the passersby.  
Two little birds in flight are threading  
Webs of gold in an endless sky.

Three little birds with brushes painting  
Moonlit sighs in the heart of day.  
Four little birds with voices gleaming  
Breathe to the wind singing 'come my way!'

Sing little bird so sweetly.  
Drown my fears completely.

Five little birds with feathers fluffing  
Stretch and spread in the midday sun.  
Six little birds are cooing, humming,  
Drawing the eyes of ev'ryone.

Seven little birds in fountains splashing.  
Droplets soar, they fawn and play.  
Eight little birds raise voices higher,  
Breathe to the wind singing, 'come my way!'

Fly, little Songbirds, to the horizon.  
Land meets sky and sky meets sea.  
Dance, little Songbirds, flick your feathers,  
Move the current, carry me!

Sing, little Songbirds, call to your lovers.  
Draw them in completely.  
You, little Songbirds, you can sing anything.  
I follow the wind and I come your way.

### **All Ye Who Music Love** *(English lyrics by Thomas Oliphant)*

All ye who music love,  
And would its pleasures prove;  
O, come to us who cease not daily,  
From morn till eve to warble gaily: Fa la la la...

Come, lads and lasses all,  
obey the tuneful call;  
O, come to use who cease not daily,  
From morn till eve to warble gaily: Fa la la la...

## **II. Pray**

### **Laudate Dominum** *(Psalm 150)*

Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius;  
laudate eum  
in firmamento virtutis eius.  
Laudate eum in virtutibus eius;  
laudate eum secundum  
multitudinem magnitudinis eius.  
Laudate eum in  
sono tubæ;  
laudate eum in psalterio  
et cithara.  
Laudate eum in tympano  
et choro;  
laudate eum in chordis  
et organo.  
Laudate eum in cymbalis  
bene sonantibus;  
laudate eum in cymbalis  
jubilationis.  
Omnis spiritus  
laudet Dominum! Alleluia.

*Praise the Lord in his sanctuary:  
Praise him  
in the firmament of his power.  
Praise him for his mighty acts:  
Praise him according to his  
immense greatness.  
Praise him with the  
sound of the trumpet:  
Praise him with the psaltery  
and harp.  
Praise him with the timbrel  
and dance:  
praise him with stringed instruments  
and organ.  
Praise him upon the  
loud cymbals:  
praise him upon the celebratory  
cymbals.  
Let everything that hath breath  
praise the Lord! Alleluia.*

### **Hear My Prayer** *(Moses Hogan)*

O Lord, please hear my prayer,  
In the mornin' when I rise.  
It's your servant bound for glory,  
O dear Lord, please hear my prayer.

O Lord, please hear my prayer,  
Keep me safe within your arms.  
It's your servant bound for glory,  
O dear Lord, please hear my prayer.

When my work on earth is done  
And you come to take me home,  
Just to know I'm bound for glory,  
And to hear you say well done.

Done with sin and sorrow,  
Have mercy, mercy. Amen.

### **Ubi caritas**

*(Catholic hymn, text attr. to Paulinus of Aquileia, ca. 796)*

Ubi caritas et amor,	<i>Where there are charity and love,</i>
Deus ibi est.	<i>God is there.</i>
Congregavit nos in unum	<i>The love of Christ has gathered us</i>
Christi amor.	<i>together as one.</i>
Exultemus, et in ipso jucundemur.	<i>Let us rejoice and be glad in Him.</i>
Timeamus et amemus	<i>Let us fear and love</i>
Deum vivum.	<i>the living God.</i>
Et ex corde diligamus	<i>And with a sincere heart,</i>
nos sincero.	<i>let us love each other.</i>

### **My Eyes for Beauty Pine** *(Robert Bridges)*

My eyes for beauty pine,  
My soul for Goddes grace:  
No other care nor hope is mine,  
To heaven I turn my face.

One splendour thence is shed  
From all the stars above:  
'Tis named when God's name is said,  
'Tis Love, 'tis heavenly Love.

And every gentle heart,  
That burns with true desire,  
Is lit from eyes that mirror part  
Of that celestial fire.

### **All the Diamonds** *(Bruce Cockburn)*

All the diamonds in this world  
That mean anything to me  
Are conjured up by wind and sunlight  
Sparkling on the sea.

I ran aground in a harbour town,  
Lost the taste for being free.  
Thank God He sent some gull-chased ship  
To carry me to sea.

Two thousand years and half a world away,  
Dying trees still grow greener when you pray.

Silver scales flash bright and fade  
In reeds along the shore.  
Like a pearl in a sea of liquid jade  
His ship comes shining.  
Like a crystal swan in a sky of suns  
His ship comes shining.

## **III. Love**

### **Of A' the Airts** *(Robert Burns)*

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw,  
I dearly like the west,  
For there the bonnie lassie lives,  
The lassie I lo'e best:  
There wildwoods grow, and rivers row,  
And mony a hill between:  
But day and night my fancy's flight  
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,  
I see her sweet and fair.  
I hear her in the tuneful birds,  
I hear her charm the air:  
There's not a bonnie flower that springs,  
By fountain, shaw, or green;  
There's not a bonnie bird that sings,  
But minds me o' my Jean.

### **When I Fall in Love** *(Edward Heyman)*

When I fall in love,  
it will be forever,  
Or I'll never fall in love.  
In a restless world like this is  
Love is ended before it's begun,  
And too many moonlight kisses  
Seem to cool in the warmth of the sun.

When I give my heart,  
It will be completely,  
Or I'll never give my heart.  
And the moment I can feel that  
You feel that way too,  
Is when I fall in love with you.

**The Turtle Dove** (*English folk ballad, 18th C*)

Fare you well, my dear, I must be gone,  
And leave you for a while;  
If I roam away I'll come back again,  
Though I roam ten thousand miles, my dear,  
Though I roam ten thousand miles.

So fair thou art, my bonny lass,  
So deep in love am I;  
But I never will prove false to the bonny lass I love,  
Till the stars fall from the sky, my dear,  
Till the stars fall from the sky.

The sea will never run dry, my dear,  
Nor the rocks melt with the sun,  
But I never will prove false to the bonny lass I love,  
Till all these things be done, my dear,  
Till all these things be done.

O yonder doth sit that little turtle dove,  
He doth sit on yonder high tree,  
A-making a moan for the loss of his love,  
As I will do for thee, my dear,  
As I will do for thee.

**O My Luve's Like a Red, Red Rose** (*Robert Burns, adapted*)

O my Luve's like a red, red rose  
That's newly sprung in June;  
O my Luve's like a melody  
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,  
So deep in love am I;  
I will love thee still, my dear,  
Till a' the seas gang dry.

I will love thee still, my dear,  
While the sands of life shall run.  
Till the seas gang dry, my dear,  
And rocks melt with the sun.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,  
So deep in love am I;  
I will love thee still, my dear,  
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

**Wannabe**

(*The Spice Girls with Matthew Rowebottom and Richard Stannard*)

Yo, I'll tell you what I want, what I really, really want,  
So tell me what you want, what you really, really want.  
I'll tell you what I want, I really, really, really wanna zigzag, ah.

If you want my future, forget my past.  
If you want to get with me, better make it fast.  
Now don't go wasting my precious time.  
Get your act together; we could be just fine.

If you want to be my lover, you gotta get with my friends.  
Make it last forever, friendship never ends.  
If you wanna be my lover, you have got to give.  
Taking is too easy, but that's the way it is.

O, what you think about that?  
Now you know how I feel,  
Say you can handle my love.  
Are you for real?  
I won't be hasty, I'll give you a try.  
If you really bug me, then I'll say goodbye.  
Dancing up and down and winding all around.

**Live with Me and Be My Love**

(*adapted from "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" by Christopher Marlowe and "The Nymph's Reply" by Sir Walter Raleigh*)

Live with me, and be my love,  
And we will all the pleasures prove  
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,  
And all the craggy mountains yields.

There will we sit upon the rocks,  
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,  
By shallow rivers, by whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There I will make thee a bed of roses,  
With a thousand fragrant posies,  
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle  
Embroidere'd all with leaves of myrtle.

A belt of straw and ivy buds,  
With coral clasps and amber studs;  
And if these pleasures may thee move,  
Then live with me and be my love.

If that the world and love were young,  
And truth in ev'ry shepherd's tongue,  
These pretty pleasures might me move  
To live with thee and be thy love.

### **Love Is Here to Stay** (*Ira Gershwin*)

The more I read the papers,  
The less I comprehend  
The world and all its capers  
And how it all will end.  
Nothing seems to be lasting,  
But that isn't our affair.  
We've got something permanent,  
I mean in the way we care.

It's very clear, our love is here to stay;  
Not for a year, but ever and a day.  
The radio and the telephone and the movies that we know  
May just be passing fancies and in time may go.

But, oh, my dear, our love is here to stay.  
Together we're going a long, long way.  
In time the Rockies may crumble, Gibraltar may tumble —  
They're only made of clay, but our love is here to stay.



## Biographies



Artistic Director **Maria Case** is a highly regarded artist and educator in Toronto's music community, working as a pianist, singer, choral conductor and composer. Maria maintains a busy private studio and is active as an examiner, adjudicator and lecturer on piano and theory pedagogy and musicianship for the Royal Conservatory, where she served as Chief Examiner of

Theoretical Subjects from 2006 to 2013. She is co-author of the nine-volume *Celebrate Theory* series, and has designed curriculum for theory, piano and musicianship. Maria has been the Artistic Director of The Annex Singers since 2005, leading the choir with dynamic and imaginative programming. She is also the Music Director of Glebe Road United Church in Toronto.

The majority of Maria's compositions celebrate the voice and are inspired by texts from a wide range of traditions. Recent works include choral pieces *In Winter*, *O Living Flame* and *Westron Wind*, and song cycles *Nightsongs*, *Into Flight*, *Songs of the Seasons* and *The Slow Hand of Time*. Maria holds ARCT Performance Diplomas in Piano and Voice, as well as a Bachelor of Music in Composition from the University of Toronto. Other studies include English literature, conducting, and jazz at the Berklee College of Music.



**Anne Lee**, collaborative pianist with The Annex Singers since 2011, began piano studies at a young age in Vancouver after an exhaustive search for a teacher willing to take on a pint-sized aspiring pianist with too-small hands. Her musical roots flourished through her school years as she explored a diverse portfolio of instruments, including clarinet, bassoon and

saxophone. She studied English literature and Music Performance at Queen's University and, along with her academic studies, participated in various musical ensembles as a chorister, accompanist and instrumentalist. She has studied with notable music educators such as Edward Parker, Gordon Craig and Dr. Christopher Foley. Anne is valued for her sensitive artistry and profound understanding of choral collaboration. Her intuitive and supportive musicality has been an asset in her accompanying and creative collaborations with students, soloists, and various organizations and ensembles.



Guest artist **Clara Haneul Yoon** is a versatile violinist who has been hailed by *New York Magazine* as having “Extraordinary technique” and by *Seoul Culture & Arts* as “Truly virtuosic, with amazing mastery of tone.” She is a sought-after strings clinician and adjudicator, regularly engaged in national and international competitions, festivals, and masterclasses across

North America and Asia, while balancing an active career as a performer, researcher, and educator.

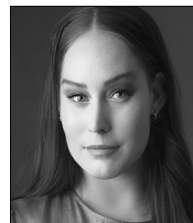
Dr. Yoon holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from The Juilliard School and a Doctorate from Columbia University. Her primary research focuses on subjectivity in music, experiences of the Asian diaspora in music education, and intersections of music and educational policies in North America. Her work has been generously supported by the Enid & Lester Morse Fellowship at Columbia University, and in 2022 she received the President’s Innovation Award from the NAMM Foundation for her contributions to music education. Currently, she serves as the Performance Chair for the College Music Society’s 2025 National Conference. As a recent arrival in Canada, Dr. Yoon is excited to collaborate with fellow artists and looks forward to contributing to the country’s vibrant and flourishing arts scene.



Lauded for her “passion and charm” (*Now Magazine*) and “sweet voice delivery” (*Toronto Star*), soprano section lead **Melanie Conly** is acclaimed for her distinctive voice and musical understanding. She trained in musical theatre and, later, classically, cultivating a diverse skill set that serves her wide range of work. An experienced chamber musician and

recitalist, she often solos with choirs and orchestras and is frequently sought out for her compelling performances of new music. She has performed in many series and festivals across Canada and creates and performs unique themed concerts in a wide range of musical styles.

Alongside performing, Melanie maintains a voice and piano studio in Toronto. She was the singer for the Frederick Harris Music recordings for the Royal Conservatory Vocal Series 2012 and 2019 editions. In 2019, she was a presenter and adjudicator at the Royal Conservatory of Music Summit in Toronto, and in 2020 became a member of the Royal Conservatory College of Examiners. She is a choral clinician, certified yoga instructor, and is currently cultivating workshops that explore tools for performance, creativity and life — a synthesis of her passions as a teacher, performer, yogi, and meditation practitioner.



Alto section lead **Meghan Symon** is praised for her “consistent beauty of singing and stage presence” and is noted for her “warm, velvety mezzo-soprano” (*Stage Door*). Recent engagements include the roles of The Duchess in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Gondoliers* and of Princess Bozena in *Countess Maritza* with Toronto Operetta Theatre, as well as Imelda in Verdi’s *La*

*battaglia di Legnano* with Voicebox: Opera in Concert, and Beethoven’s *Symphony 9* with Mandle Philharmonic.

Meghan holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Toronto where she studied under Canadian soprano Mary Morrison. She has sung with a number of companies including Manitoba Opera, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Cathedral Bluffs Orchestra, Manitoba Underground Opera, The Theatre of Early Music, Toronto Operetta Theatre and Voicebox: Opera in Concert. Notable roles include the title role in Handel’s *Rinaldo*, Le Prince in *Cendrillon*, Annio in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*.



Tenor section lead **Joshua Clemenger** began his training in the Theatre Aquarius Performing Arts Programme in Hamilton, Ontario, where he studied with Tom Oliver. He then earned a bachelor’s degree in Vocal Performance with Torin Chiles at the University of Western Ontario. After a few years teaching abroad, he returned to earn a master’s degree in Opera at the University of Toronto, studying with Lorna Macdonald.

Joshua’s recent opera credits include Koloman Zupan in Toronto Operetta Theatre’s *Countess Maritza*, L’Abete in *Adriana* and Fatty in *Rise and Fall of the City Of Mahagonny* with Opera in Concert, Count Belfiore in *La Finta Giardiniera* with UofT Opera, Ferrando in *Così Fan Tutte* at La Musica Lirica, and Ralph in TrypTych’s production of *H.M.S. Parliament* in Kenora. He can’t wait to join The Annex Singers in another fantastic !



Bass section lead **Lutzen Riedstra** was one of the Stratford Six in the closing concert of Stratford Summer Music’s 15th season and has also taken part in Stratford Summer Music’s Vocal Academy, where he received lessons with Michael Schade, Philip Addis, Nathalie Paulin, Krisztina Szabo, and Emily Hamper. He has appeared as the bass soloist in several

oratorios, including Mozart's *Requiem*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah* and Maunder's *Olivet to Calvary*. His opera credentials include Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Giove in Cavalli's *La Calisto*, as well as chorus work. A highlight of his career so far was singing in a concert with renowned mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe.

Lutzen can be heard singing every Sunday with the choir at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church in Toronto, and he has also served as the bass section lead/soloist at Kingsway-Lambton United Church and Trinity-St. Paul's United Church. His choral work includes four years with the Orpheus Choir of Toronto as a Sidgwick Scholar and, most recently, joining the Oakville Choral and The Annex Singers. He holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of Toronto and is completing a Master of Divinity degree at Wycliffe College, conjoint with the Toronto School of Theology and the University of Toronto.



**Dimana Kolarova**, creator of The Annex Singers' concert graphics, is a Toronto-based designer, photographer, and architect in training, currently working at an architectural firm in Saint John, New Brunswick. She holds a degree in Creative Advertising from Humber College as well as a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Architecture degree from the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto.

An avid long-distance hiker and nature enthusiast, Dimana has completed the Tour de Mont Blanc, the Laugavegur Trail in Iceland, the West Highland Way in Scotland, and the Salkantay trek in Peru. She finds her greatest source of inspiration and creative energy in the natural world.

## The Annex Singers

### Soprano

Tessa Cernik\*  
 ♦ Melanie Conly\*  
 Claire Durette\*  
 Laura Farrugia  
 Angelica Fenner  
 Victoria Fisher\*  
 Anna Golobic

Zena Gopal  
 Evelyn Hawes\*  
 Carol Hensley  
 Claire Jensen  
 Zoe Kelsey  
 Elizabeth Koester\*  
 Gloria Lipski

Sally McBeth  
 Carolyn Sealfon  
 Julia Weinland\*  
 Emma Whyte  
 Azelea Wong  
 Kathleen Wooder

### Alto

Jenna Abrams  
 Elizabeth Brubaker  
 Jane Dalziel  
 DeAnn deGruijter\*  
 Diane Faught  
 Erin Guerette  
 Christina Hough

Anne Lee\*  
 Barbara Leonard  
 Gail Littlejohn  
 Rachel Narcis  
 Yuliya Nastiuskhina  
 Katerina Petrovski\*  
 Patricia Rios\*

Maggie Rogow  
 Ann Rosenfield  
 Andrea Slane\*  
 ♦ Meghan Symon\*  
 Ruth Wahl

### Tenor

Elizabeth Block  
 ♦ Joshua Clemenger\*  
 Robyn Friedman\*

Brian Gottheil\*  
 Don Hanna\*  
 Dawn Keenan

Gerald Martindale\*

### Bass

Michael Bunce  
 Rizwan Dar  
 Mark Dodici\*  
 Billy Graydon

Cory Hill  
 Peter Kamphuis\*  
 Adam Palter  
 ♦ Lutzen Riedstra\*

Darryl Wadsworth\*  
 John Warden

### ♦ Section lead

\* Annex Chamber Ensemble

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## Sing with us! Auditions June 9th



If you love to sing and have strong musicianship skills and vocal/choral experience, we invite you to join The Annex Singers. Our next auditions will be held on Monday, June 9, 2025, at St. Thomas's Anglican Church, 383 Huron Street, and again in late summer, dates to be announced. All voices are welcome.

### About The Annex Singers

The Annex Singers of Toronto is a spirited, auditioned 60-voice community choir with an eclectic

repertoire that spans a thousand years and showcases a wide range of styles, from plainchant to jazz. This year we are celebrating our 45th season and our 19th year under the dynamic leadership of Artistic Director Maria Case. The choir is known for inventive, relevant programming and for collaboration with a wide array of guest artists and composers.

We rehearse on Monday evenings at St. Thomas's Anglican Church and perform three concerts each season, featuring guest soloists and instrumentalists, as well as our own Annex Chamber Choir and smaller ensembles. As a benefit of membership, we provide ongoing professional development to all choir members and encourage young singers with a sponsorship program.

*I had an amazing time with your lovely choir. I am so impressed by the openness, enthusiasm, and sense of community in The Annex Singers. Very few groups have achieved the sort of connection and social capital that you have fostered. It was so inspiring to be in their presence.*

— Dr. Gerard Yun,  
Choral Improvisation Workshop

To learn more about us, please visit us at [www.annexsingers.com](http://www.annexsingers.com).

If you love to sing, we would love to meet you.

**Schedule your audition now!**



### Become a donor and add your name to the list!

Donors play a vital role in the success of the choir, and we are grateful for all contributions, large or small. To learn more, please scan the code to visit our "Support Us" page at [annexsingers.com/support-us/](http://annexsingers.com/support-us/).



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