

Chorus *pro Musica*

October 9, 2009
For Immediate Release:

Sue Auclair, 617-522-1394
sue@sucaclair.com

Chorus pro Musica Music Director Betsy Burleigh's inaugural season features Durufle Requiem, Bloch *Sacred Service*, and *Carmina Burana*

BOSTON, MA—**Betsy Burleigh, Chorus pro Musica's fifth Music Director in its 61-year history**, begins her tenure with a subscription season of four concerts, including a celebration of great music for chorus and organ, a rare performance of Ernest Bloch's *Avodath Hakodesh (Sacred Service)* for chorus and orchestra as part of the first Boston Jewish Music Festival, and a presentation of Carl Orff's ever-popular *Carmina Burana* at NEC's Jordan Hall.

"I can't tell you how excited I am to take the helm of Chorus pro Musica as it launches its seventh decade!" notes Burleigh. "This season we'll explore great repertoire of the twentieth century: Orff's ever-green *Carmina Burana*, Bloch's sacred monument *Avodath Hakodesh*, Durufle's mystical, chant-inspired Requiem and a seldom heard gem from Hungary's Zoltán Kodály, his *Laudes organi*. We will partner with some of the great arts organizations of our culturally rich city, including the Zamir Chorale and the New England Philharmonic. We'll feature one of the great instruments and one of the great spaces in Boston, Old South Church and its magnificent Skinner organ, Op. 308. In addition, pursuing our mission, Boston's 'pro musica' chorus will premiere its first commission in many years, giving back to our great art."

The season begins on **Sunday, November 8 at 3 pm** at Old South Church, Copley Square, Boston, with a concert that includes **Maurice Durufle's Requiem, Zoltán Kodály's *Laudes organi*, and Johannes Brahms's motet, "Lass dich nur nichts nicht dauren."** The organist is **Ross Wood**, Associate Organist & Choirmaster at the Church of the Advent in Boston and a recitalist whose concerts have been broadcast on NPR and the BBC. The concert celebrates Old South's Skinner Opus 308 organ, a remarkable instrument with some 7,625 pipes, 110 stops and 115 ranks, which in 1985 was moved to Old South from the Ordway Civic Theater in St. Paul, Minnesota, before that building was demolished. The organ was silenced last year when MBTA construction work opened a large crack in the wall of the church, but repairs now permit the organ to play again.

Concert tickets for the **November 8** performance at Old South Church are **\$20, \$30 and \$45**, with discounts available on selected seats for groups, students, seniors and WGBH members. Reserved seats may be selected and tickets purchased at www.choruspromusica.org, or by phone (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) at 800-658-4CPM (800-658-4276). For wheelchair-accessible seats, call 617-267-7442.

Chorus pro Musica's annual Holiday Season Celebration is **Friday, December 18 at 8 pm** at Old South Church in Copley Square, Boston. The concert includes the traditional candlelight procession, brass chorale and carol singing with the audience. Regular-price tickets for the Holiday concert are \$20, \$30 and \$45.

On **Sunday, March 14, 2010 at 4 pm** at John Hancock Hall, Boston, **Chorus pro Musica joins with the New England Philharmonic and the Zamir Chorale of Boston** to present **Ernest Bloch's *Avodath Hakodesh (Sacred Service)***, and also performs the world premiere of a new work by composer **Andrew Rindfleisch** that was commissioned by the chorus. The performance is a part of the first Boston Jewish Music Festival, and commemorates the 50th anniversary of the composer's death. Regular-price tickets for the March 14 concert are \$25, \$40 and \$50.

The season concludes on **Sunday, June 6, 2010 at 3 pm** at NEC's Jordan Hall with works celebrating Spring, Love and the Tavern, including **Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana***, and **Dominick Argento's *Odi et amo (I Hate and I Love)***. The performance will feature Carl Orff's own arrangement of *Carmina Burana* for two pianos and percussion. Regular-price tickets for the June 6 concert are \$27, \$42 and \$57; the price includes a \$2 restoration fee for Jordan Hall.

Subscriptions are available for all four concerts or for any combination of three concerts, at 10% off single-ticket prices, and may be purchased at www.choruspromusica.org, or by phone (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) at 800-658-4CPM (800-658-4276).

Chorus pro Musica also appears this season on January 24, 2010 at Sanders Theatre in Cambridge with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras, Federico Cortese, Music Director, in W.A. Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, as part of a continuing partnership with BYSO that is not part of the chorus's subscription series.

Chorus pro Musica is a distinguished, independent Boston-based chorus recognized for versatility and excellence in performing traditional, adventurous and seldom-heard works. The chorus was founded in 1949 by the late Alfred Nash Patterson and quickly built a superb reputation for its professional-level musical standards and innovative programming. These strengths have led to collaborations with such organizations as the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra as well as with opera companies including the Opera Company of Boston and Commonwealth Opera.

Betsy Burleigh, in her debut season as Music Director, has been Music Director since 2005 of the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh, a renowned 115-voice chorus founded in 1908 that is the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's chorus of choice. She recently moved to Boston from Cleveland, where she was Assistant Director of Choruses for The Cleveland Orchestra and a full professor at Cleveland State University. For five years she served as Chorus Master for Cleveland Opera.

Ms. Burleigh is an active conductor, and has led the Pittsburgh Symphony, Opera Cleveland, the Akron Symphony, and the Canton Symphony Orchestras. She conducted the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus on an Emmy award-winning benefit concert for the 9/11 Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund, and received the Northern Ohio Live Achievement Award for music direction of Viktor Ullman's opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* with Cleveland Public Theater. In February 2009 she conducted the Mendelssohn Chamber Chorus on the Library of Congress concert series in Washington, D.C.

She is no stranger to Boston: She was Music Director of The Master Singers from 1985-1991 and Music Director for the Longy Chamber Singers and the Cambridge Madrigal Singers, among other positions. She holds a doctorate in choral conducting from Indiana University and a masters degree from the New England Conservatory of Music.

Visit the Chorus pro Musica online press kit at: <http://www.choruspromusica.org/press.html>

WEB LINKS:

OSC organ: <http://www.oldsouth.org/pubs/reporter/repsum08.html#organs>

Ross Wood: <http://www.theadvent.org/music/choirs.htm#rwood>

Andrew Rindfleisch: <http://www.andrewrindfleisch.com/>

Boston Jewish Music Festival: <http://bostonjewishmusicfestival.org/>