

*“Music is a higher revelation than
all wisdom and philosophy”*
~ Ludwig Van Beethoven ~

May 2017

Pro Arte Chorale

An Afternoon at the Opera

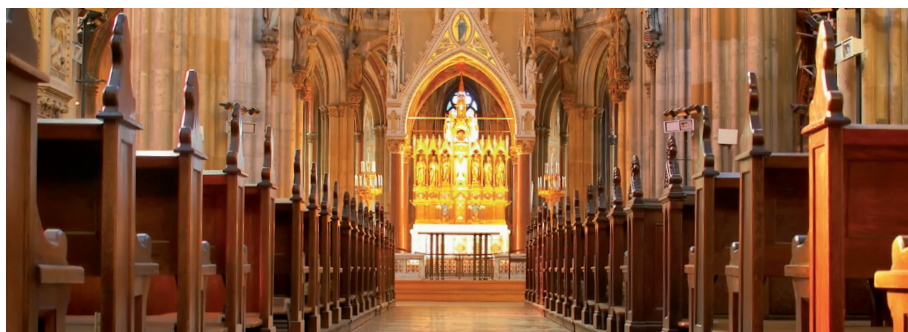


An Afternoon at the Opera with the Pro Arte Chorale was a resounding success! As one of our appreciative audience members said: “The Concert today was exceptional. It lifted my spirits and gave me goosebumps! My family members and friends who also attended were moved and expressed their great appreciation for great singing and piano accompaniment. Everyone needs to know about these performances - this group is a Northern NJ musical gem!” Under Maestro Steven Fox’s brilliant and sensitive direction, the Chorale blended beautifully and were clearly enjoying themselves as they performed opera chorus masterpieces. They were joined by two very talented soloists, baritone Philip Cutlip and tenor Marc Day, who each performed several solos, and joined their voices in a beautiful duet of “Danny Boy”. Accompanist Janet Montgomery’s fingers flew across the keyboard, especially on the Coronation Scene from Mussorgsky’s “Boris Godunov”.

“This concert was another high point for the Pro Arte Chorale” said Steven Fox. “The singers had such command of the music and the text that we were able to make music in a spontaneous, authentic way. The chorus communicated the drama of this operatic music to the audience with true conviction. Moments such as the Coronation Scene from “Boris Godunov” (in Russian!) were absolutely thrilling. It was a great joy to do this program with the chorale.”

And now, on to Bruckner! Don’t miss our concert season finale on June 10, when the Chorale will be joined by a brass and wind ensemble for an all-Bruckner concert.

Upcoming Concerts and Events



Pro Arte Chorale
Presents

Anton Bruckner *Choral Masterpieces*

Stunning choral works by the famed symphonic composer,
Anton Bruckner, including five *Motets* and his *Mass in E Minor*.
Featuring musicians from the Ridgewood Concert Band,
Dr. Chris Wilhjelm, Director


Steven Fox, Music Director


Saturday, June 10, 2017 at 8pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
155 Linwood Avenue, Ridgewood, NJ

For ticket information, please visit our website at
www.proartechorale.org or call (201) 497-8400

Tickets: \$35 / \$30 / \$10

 Performance venue is handicapped accessible.
Large print programs are available at every concert.

 This program is made possible in part by funds from the
New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State,
a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Pro Arte Chorale will be joined by members of The New Jersey Wind Symphony
(formerly the Ridgewood Concert Band), Dr. Chris Wilhjelm, Director,
for a glorious all-Bruckner concert featuring Five Motets and Mass in E Minor.

A pre-concert lecture will be given by Prof. Andrea Covais,
a DMA candidate at City University of New York.

Don't miss what promises to be a grand finale to our season!

Saturday, June 10, 2017 @8:00pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Ridgewood

To purchase tickets please visit our website at www.proartechorale.org



Noteworthy



Janet Montgomery

Janet Montgomery is celebrating over 20 years as Pro Arte Chorale's Assistant Conductor and Principal Accompanist. However, her time with Pro Arte goes back to 1975 when she would substitute for then-accompanist Lowell Lacey. In addition to working with past Pro Arte conductors Roger Nierenberg, Barte Folse, David Crone and Joshua Greene, and current music director Steven Fox, she has also worked with Pro Arte's numerous guest conductors including Zdenek Macal (NJSO), David Wroe (Westfield Symphony and NJ Festival Orchestra) and John Nelson (Pro Arte's 50th anniversary Gala Concert). She has also performed with Pro Arte's guest orchestras including the NJ Festival Orchestra and Clarion Orchestra, as well as duets with guest soloists including most recently the very accomplished organist David Enlow (Organ Faculty, The Juilliard School and Dean, NY City Chapter A.G.O). "I've had the pleasure of playing duet accompaniments with Janet twice now, for music of Vaughan Williams and, more recently, Brahms' *German Requiem*" said David. "Janet combines a great commitment to excellence and thorough preparation with very fine musical instincts and the great sense of chamber music, musical cooperation, that can't really be taught. On top of all that, she's a super person and *fun* to work with, even in difficult moments in the repertoire. Imagine that!"

Pro Arte's Music Director, Steven Fox, remarks "Pro Arte is so lucky to have someone as gifted as Janet being part of the musical leadership of our organization. I personally greatly enjoy our warm and special partnership. She is a brilliant pianist and organist, and a great director herself. Working with Janet is a big part of what makes my work with the Chorale inspiring musically, and immensely rewarding."

Janet is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, holds a Masters degree from the Manhattan School of Music, and received the AAGO certification from the American Guild of Organists. Over the span of her career, she has won acclaim as a pianist, organist, coach, and conductor. In addition to her work with Pro Arte, she has appeared in concert at venues ranging from Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center to Washington National Cathedral, and the Juilliard School. She has accompanied such groups as the New York Choral Society, the Washington Bach Consort, the Baltimore Choral Arts Society, HaZamir, and the International Jewish High School Choir. Not only is Janet a concert performer, she was also on the music faculty of the Dwight Englewood School, and is the director of music at the Community Church of Glen Rock and the choir director and accompanist at the Barnert Temple of Franklin Lakes.

Pro Arte's audiences are often treated to superb solo performances by Janet, and her sensitive accompaniment of the Chorale under Maestro Fox's brilliant direction brings our concerts to new levels of excellence. We are very fortunate indeed to be singing with such a fine musician!



Americans for the Arts

The Pro Arte Chorale encourages our friends and supporters to take action in advocating for the arts in these uncertain times. As has been reported in the news, the new Administration in Washington DC has proposed the elimination of the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and privatization of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Robert Lynch, the President and CEO of Americans for the Arts has sent a letter to President Trump asking him to preserve federal funding for these three national programs that are critical to the arts in America, and has also launched petitions for the same purpose. To help further explain what is, or isn't, happening right now, Americans for the Arts has prepared a few FAQs from questions the staff have already fielded.

In his message to Americans for the Arts Members and Friends, Mr. Lynch further stated:

I believe our collective job in the arts community is to tell our story and make our case again and again at the federal, state, and local levels. Below are the action steps I hope you will take as soon as possible:

- **Take two minutes to contact your two Senators and your House representatives now.**
Website: <https://www.votervoice.net/ARTSUSA/Campaigns/47344/Respond>
- **Join the Arts Action Fund (for free) so they can get alerts to you as quickly as possible and you can respond to decision-makers fast.** *Website: <https://secure.artsactionfund.org/page/s/join>*
- **Work to get other colleagues to join the Arts Action Fund.**
- **Inform Americans for the Arts of any specific actions impacting the arts in your community as a result of the President's new executive order on sanctuary cities. Please send an e-mail to Ruby Harper at rharper@artsusa.org.**

Americans for the Arts is committed to working with you to ensure that all Americans have access to the arts and that we protect and cultivate funding for the arts on the local, state, and federal level.

Please join the Pro Arte Chorale as we continue to advocate for keeping the arts alive in America! For more information about the Americans for the Arts, please visit their website: <http://www.americansforthearts.org>

The Pro Arte Chorale welcomes voices in all sections. We will be hosting auditions throughout the season on Monday nights @7pm. Singers interested in auditioning will be asked to prepare a piece of music that best highlights their voice, and will also be tested for range and reading ability. To schedule an audition, please contact us via email (info@proartechorale.org) or via phone (201) 497-8400. We rehearse on Monday nights, 7:30 – 10:00pm at The Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Ridgewood.

Did You Know?



Anton Bruckner

- Bruckner was deeply influenced by his Austrian Catholic upbringing. He began his musical studies as a choir boy at the Monastery of St. Florian, where he learned to play the organ. He later became the organist at the Cathedral in Linz. His motet *Locust Iste* (This place was made by God), was written for the dedication of the new votive chapel in the Linz Cathedral in 1869.
- Bruckner is mainly known as a composer of symphonies and religious vocal/choral music. He never wrote an opera or a concerto. Even his chamber music output is very small.
- Bruckner's motet *Christus Factus Est* (Christ Became Obedient) was first performed in 1873 at the Wiener Hofmusikkapelle for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary on December 8. Set for a capella choir, musicologist Leopold Nowak wrote "One has to value this composition as one of the most expressive and monumental works of Bruckner's sacred music."
- Bruckner was a subscriber of the Cecilian Movement in choral music of the nineteenth century. Cecilians believed in restoring Gregorian Chant and Renaissance polyphony to Austrian Choral Music. In his *Ave Maria* 1861, one can directly hear links to chant as well as Palestrina, Lassus, or Fux.
- If the opera could meet the symphony and the sacred Mass in one piece, it would be Bruckner's *Mass in E minor*. Standing alone, unlike other liturgical compositions of the nineteenth century, it combines musical ideas of the past, such as Renaissance polyphony, with incredibly lush Romantic harmonies, bold motivic development, and powerful contrasts of vocal and instrumental sound, found in Beethoven and Wagner.

Support the Pro Arte Chorale



The Pro Arte Chorale is committed to enriching the lives of its audience and the broader community by exploring a variety of classical musical traditions over more than six centuries, up to and including Opera Choruses, American Spirituals and Broadway Show Tunes. However, producing excellent musical experiences with talented leadership, soloists, and musical accompaniment is costly. Contributions from our loyal supporters and broader community are critical to our success as we continue to present quality concerts for our audiences. We hope you will join us in keeping the music alive by supporting the Pro Arte Chorale. Thank you!

For online donations, please visit our website at www.proartechorale.org.

To donate by mail, please make check payable to Pro Arte Chorale, PO Box 662, Ridgewood, NJ, 07450



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