



directed by Leonard Enns

# O Earth, Return!

**Saturday March 7th, 8pm**

St. John the Evangelist, Kitchener

**Sunday March 8th, 3pm**

St. John's Lutheran, Waterloo

featuring

the premiere of the 2014 NewWorks winning entry  
*Night on a Starry Hill* by Matthew Emery

with guest pianist Catherine Robertson

and including

*Passing of the Year* by Jonathan Dove

*Magnificat* by Arvo Pärt

#dcEarth



@DaCapoChoir

## **Program**

**Mi'kmaq Honour Song - Lydia Adams**

**Constellation - Frank Ticheli**

- 1. From the sea**
- 2. The falling star**
- 3. There will be stars**

**Night on a Starry Hill (premiere) - Matthew Emery**

NewWorks 2014 winning composition

**Moonset - Jeff Enns**

**Silent Dawn - Timothy Corlis**

**Sudden Light - Robert Evans**

with Catherine Robertson, piano

*~ intermission ~*

**Magnificat - Giles Swayne**

**Magnificat - Arvo Pärt**

**The Passing of the Year - Jonathan Dove**

- 1. Invocation**
- 2. The narrow bud opens**
- 3. Answer July**
- 4. Hot sun, cool fire**
- 5. Ah, Sun-flower**
- 6. Adieu! farewell earth's bliss!**
- 7. Ring out, wild bells**

with Catherine Robertson, piano

*We'd love to visit with you after the concert...  
please join us to chat over some cider!*

## Notes & Texts

(notes written by L. Enns)

Our mid-season concert is a reflection on regeneration, taking its main thematic impetus from the fabulous *The Passing of the Year* cycle by British composer, Jonathan Dove. The concert marks the turning point between rest (November) and new beginning (May).

Our concert opens in the midst of a nature setting with *Mi'kmaq Honour Song* by Lydia Adams, the successor to Iseler himself as director of the Elmer Iseler Singers. This is followed by Frank Ticheli's (USA) *Constellation* (a setting of three poems by Sara Teasdale), and then a quartet of works by nationally known southern Ontario composers, beginning with the premiere of *Night on a Starry Hill* by the youthful Matthew Emery of London, the winning work in DaCapo's 2014 national NewWorks competition; Emery's text is by Marjorie Pickthall. The other three works are *Moonset* by Elmira's Jeff Enns (text by Pauline Johnson), *Silent Dawn* by KW's Tim Corlis (text by Corlis), and *Sudden Light* by the late Robert Evans of Elora (text by Dante Gabriel Rossetti). Though not intentionally so, the first half of the concert is all music by North American composers (all but one being from Ontario), while the second half is British and Estonian.

While one possible hearing of the first half of the concert might be as a journey from late day, through night, to the renewal of morning light, the second half presents a more "philosophical" perspective, celebrating spiritual regeneration with back-to-back performances of, first, the crazily energetic *Magnificat* of Britain's Giles Swayne, and then the mystical and ethereal setting of the canticle by Estonia's Arvo Pärt. The choice of this canticle for our theme may seem puzzling at first glance, but it reflects in a profound way the passing from the old to the new, a spiritual regeneration if you will. This twinning of the two versions of the *Magnificat* (definitely not identical twins as you will hear!) leads finally to Jonathan Dove's setting of a wonderful septet of poems reflecting both the loss and the hope at this "passing of the year". Dove has chosen poetry of William Blake, Emily Dickinson, George Peele, Thomas Nashe, all of it leading to the final call of Alfred Lord Tennyson to

*Ring out the thousand wars of old,*

*Ring in the thousand years of peace.*

The work is at times sparkling, pensive, deeply engaging and always profoundly compelling. It is a masterpiece.

Thank you for joining us on this musically and poetically rich journey, as we mark the still point of winter, as we await the awakening of hope, the awakening of new and renewed life in all its diversity.

### ***Mi'kmaq Honour Song* - Lydia Adams, 1997 (Canada)**

Lydia Adams is likely best-known as conductor of Canada's Elmer Iseler Singers. She writes that "the Mi'kmaq Honour Song is a chant dedicated to and in honour of the Creator. The employment of nature sounds and the call of the human voice honours this tradition of the Mi'kmaq peoples. The sounds are not in any particular language, but are perhaps a derivation of a text handed down through the ages."

### ***Constellation* - Frank Ticheli, 2009 (USA)**

Ticheli's compositions are mainly for band and orchestra, but he has given the choral world a clutch of exquisite pieces, of which this set is one.

#### *1. From the sea*

For us no starlight stilled the April fields,  
No birds awoke in darkling trees for us,  
Yet where we walked the city's street that night  
Felt in our feet the singing fire of spring,  
And in our path we left a trail of light  
Soft as the phosphorescence of the sea  
When night submerges in the vessel's wake  
A heaven of unborn evanescent stars.

#### *2. The falling star*

I saw a star slide down the sky,  
Blinding the north as it went by,  
Too burning and too quick to hold,  
Too lovely to be bought or sold,  
Good only to make wishes on  
And then forever to be gone.

#### *3. There will be stars*

There will be stars over the place forever;  
Though the house we loved and the street we loved are lost,  
Every time the earth circles her orbit  
On the night the autumn equinox is crossed,  
Two stars we knew, poised on the peak of midnight  
Will reach their zenith; stillness will be deep;  
There will be stars over the place forever,  
There will be stars forever, while we sleep

– Sara Teasdale (1884-1933; USA)

## **Night on a Starry Hill (premiere) - Matthew Emery, 2014 (Canada)**

This performance marks a special moment in our concert—the premiere of the winning work of DaCapo's 2014 NewWorks composition competition. This annual competition attracts submissions from seasoned and emerging composers alike from across Canada (from Victoria BC to St. John's NL in 2014) that are judged by three professionals from across Canada. It is a "blind" competition, and the winning composer's name is revealed only after the judges have agreed on the work. It was a wonderful moment when we found the current winner to be Matthew Emery, from "next door" in London (though he was at UBC at the time of his submission, studying with Stephen Chatman and Jocelyn Morlock, both composers whose works have been featured on previous DaCapo concerts).

The Vancouver Sun characterized Emery as a composer who "writes with an honesty which enchants"; you will hear this. While he has barely seen two dozen winters, Matthew has already gathered a number of honours apart from the current NewWorks win, including the 2013 ACDA Raymond W. Brock composition prize, and the 2014 Choral Canada Diane Loomer Award for Choral Writing, both of which are major national awards.

Currently, Matthew is Composer-in-Residence with the Amabile Choirs of London, Canada.

Give me a few more hours to pass  
With the mellow flower of the elm-bough falling,  
And then no more than the lonely grass  
And the birds calling.

Give me a few more days to keep  
With a little love and a little sorrow,  
And then the dawn in the skies of sleep  
And a clear to-morrow.

Give me a few more years to fill  
With a little work and a little lending,  
And then the night on a starry hill  
And the road's ending.

– Marjorie Pickthall (1883-1922; Canada)

### **Moonset - Jeff Enns, 2008 (Canada)**

*(premiered by DaCapo in 2008; recorded on the ShadowLand CD)*

Pauline Johnson's text identifies the reality of chronological time touching—ever so briefly—the vastness of eternity in "shadow-land," a word of hers that we borrowed for the title of our latest recording. Jeff Enns wrote Moonset in memory of a child whose life was marked in minutes rather than years, leaving us to ponder the meaning/lessness of time measured by the cold convenience of calendars and watches.

Idles the night wind through the dreaming firs,  
That waking murmur low,  
As some lost melody returning stirs  
The love of long ago;  
And through the far, cool distance, zephyr fanned.  
The moon is sinking into shadow-land.

The troubled night-bird, calling plaintively,  
Wanders on restless wing;  
The cedars, chanting vespers to the sea,  
Await its answering,  
That comes in wash of waves along the strand,  
The while the moon slips into shadow-land.

O! soft responsive voices of the night  
I join your minstrelsy,  
And call across the fading silver light  
As something calls to me;  
I may not all your meaning understand,  
But I have touched your soul in shadow-land.

– Pauline Johnson (1861-1913; Canada)

### **Silent Dawn - Timothy Corlis, 2003 (Canada)**

*(premiered by DaCapo in 2008; recorded on the ShadowLand CD)*

Corlis writes that "both text and music for Silent Dawn were inspired by the experience of a winter morning, just before sun-rise. In the midst of such moments, time seems to disappear - silence is overwhelming. I hope that the music recreates something of this timelessness, but not as a description of that winter morning. Instead, the music should act as a frame for the silence that we share at its edges."

Still, still this dawn.  
All with winter's hush  
chill and new born snow.  
Be still this dawn  
and cradle up this weary place  
with gentle light.  
Still, still this dawn.  
Still, though all I have known  
falls into shades of night.  
Be still my soul  
and love unfading know.

### ***Sudden Light* - Robert Evans, 1981 (1933-2005; Canada)**

The late composer, poet, and photographer Robert Evans was a much-loved presence in his home village of Elora, recognizable always by the summer shorts which he wore all year round – surely defying death or winter to bring anything other than hope. *Sudden Light* is the fourth of his *Five Song Lyrics* commissioned by the Bach-Elgar Choral Society of Hamilton.

I have been here before  
    But when or how I cannot tell:  
I know the grass beyond the door,  
    The sweet keen smell,  
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

    You have been mine before, –  
How long ago I may not know  
    But just when at that swallows' soar  
Your neck turns so,  
Some veil did fall, –I knew it all of yore.

Has this been thus before?  
    And shall not thus time's eddying flight  
Still with our lives our love restore  
    In death's despite,  
And day and night yield one delight once more?  
    – Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882; UK)

## **Magnificat - Giles Swayne, 1982 (UK)**

In 1981, Swayne visited southern Senegal to record the music of the Jola people of Casamance. His *Magnificat*, commissioned by Christ Church College, Oxford, grew out of that experience, "still reeling from the impact of my belated discovery of African music," as he puts it.

His *Magnificat* begins with a fragment of a work-song he recorded in Senegal; you will hear that call returning several times in the piece. This "found" music is in strong contrast with other seemingly abstract and Stravinsky-like sections, with their jagged rhythms and repetitive patterns; the "Gloria Patri" enters as a sustained chant line emerging from the middle of the texture (listen for the altos and tenors) and leads to the closing "Amen".

All of this suggests a dogged refusal to provide expected musical responses to the text. That assumption is wrong! We have here a truly contemporary and telling response to the song of Mary — a musical setting embracing several cultures, allowing the text a relevance that transcends the traditional Euro-centric understanding. Mainly, though, we have a young Mary, jauntily tripping down the road, proudly "showing", and sing-singing merrily "I've got God in my belly! Yippee!" A soul-changing passing of a year indeed!

Magnificat anima mea Dominum.

Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae:

Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est : et sanctum nomen eius.

Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenie timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede; et exultavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanes.

Suscepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae.

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper

et in secula saeculorum. Amen.

(note: the Gloria Patri appears only in Swayne's setting, not in Pärt's.)



*My soul doth magnify the Lord  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.  
For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.  
For he that is mighty hath magnified me and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm;  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel  
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.*

– Luke 1:46-55

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.*

### **Magnificat - Arvo Pärt, 1989 (Estonia)**

Two more contrasting settings of the Magnificat than those of Arvo Pärt and Giles Swayne would be hard to find! Swayne's music is time-bound and viscerally attached to the ground with its ecstatic rhythms and driving, infectuous pulses (apart from the slightly ethereal final "amen" that functions musically as a composed-out ritard, bringing all the energy to a final resting point).

In contrast, Pärt rejects the dominance of time. His "reading" of the *Magnificat* is a mystical one, removing us from the measured step of our daily lives. He accomplishes this by refusing to allow us the satisfaction of rhythmic anticipation — we don't really know when a long note will end, since almost no two adjacent stressed syllables are given the same duration. We have no option but to release our hold on pulse, on measure, on schedule and goal-defined meaning; to forget the rhythmic and time-measuring realities of breath, heart-beat, and footfall. Pärt takes us to a world that is timeless because he allows us no means by which to measure time. Swayne brings the *Magnificat* down to the ground where we live; Pärt transports us with his mystical, timeless reading of the text. His is best understood as marking the passing of a truly cosmic year, where "a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day." Our trifling time markers have no relevance here.

## ***The Passing of the Year* - Jonathan Dove, 2000 (UK)**

The music of British composer Jonathan Dove is often imbued with a strong pulse and dancing rhythms. Here, in *The Passing of the Year*, Dove uses a technique of overlapping repeating patterns (in both piano and choir), creating points of breathless energy and excitement, and also sublime moments of calm and reflection.

Dove's selection of poetry for the work is masterful, flowing from the celebrative and playful opening poems of Blake and Dickinson (the Dickinson *Answer July* bursts with breathless excitement and urgency) to the more introspective fourth and fifth movements (with texts by Peele and Blake). This is followed by the wonderfully poignant penitential movement which Dove creates by marrying the Nashe text, "Adieu! Farewell earth's bliss!", with the refrain, "Lord, have mercy." The cycle returns to the first music at its end, with the ringing bells of the opening and the prayer that there be a passing of the year from, in Tennyson's words, "the thousand wars of old [to] the thousand years of peace."

### *1. Invocation*

O Earth, O Earth, return!

– William Blake (1757-1827; UK))

### *2. The narrow bud opens her beauties to the sun*

The narrow bud opens her beauties to  
The sun, and love runs in her thrilling veins;  
Blossoms hang round the brows of Morning, and  
Flourish down the bright cheek of modest Eve,  
Till clust'ring Summer breaks forth into singing,  
And feather'd clouds strew flowers round her head.  
The spirits of the air live in the smells  
Of fruit; and Joy, with pinions light, roves round  
The gardens, or sits singing in the trees.

– William Blake

*Sumer is icumen in*  
*Lhude sing cuccu*

### 3. *Answer July*

Answer July –  
Where is the Bee –  
Where is the Blush –  
Where is the Hay?

Ah, said July –  
Where is the Seed –  
Where is the Bud –  
Where is the May –  
Answer Thee – Me –

Nay – said the May –  
Show me the Snow –  
Show me the Bell s–  
Show me the Jay!

Quibbled the Jay –  
Where be the Maize –  
Where be the Haze –  
Where be the Bur?  
Here – said the Year –

– Emily Dickinson  
(1830-1866, USA)

### 4. *Hot sun, cool fire*

Hot sun, cool fire, tempered with sweet air,  
Black shade, fair nurse, shadow my white hair;  
Shine, sun; burn, fire; breathe, air, and ease me;  
Black shade, fair nurse, shroud me and please me:  
Shadow, my sweet nurse, keep me from burning,  
Make not my glad cause, cause of [my] mourning.

Let not my beauty's fire  
Inflame unstaïd desire,  
Nor pierce any bright eye  
That wandereth lightly.

– George Peele (1556–1596; UK)

### 5. *Ah, Sun-flower!*

Ah Sun-flower! weary of time,  
Who countest the steps of the Sun,  
Seeking after that sweet golden clime  
Where the traveller's journey is done;  
Where the Youth pined away with desire,  
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow,  
Arise from their graves and aspire,  
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

– William Blake

6. *Adieu! Farewell earth's bliss! Farewell*

Adieu, farewell earth's bliss,  
This world uncertain is;  
Fond are life's lustful joys,  
Death proves them all but toys,  
None from his darts can fly:  
I am sick, I must die.

Lord, have mercy on us!

Rich men, trust not in wealth,  
Gold cannot buy you health;  
Physic himself must fade;  
All things to end are made;  
The plague full swift goes by:  
I am sick, I must die.

Lord, have mercy on us!

Beauty is but a flower  
Which wrinkles will devour;  
Brightness falls from the air,  
Queens have died young  
and fair,  
Dust hath closed Helen's eye:  
I am sick, I must die.

Lord, have mercy on us!

– Thomas Nashe  
(1567–1601; UK)

7. *Ring out, wild bells*

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

– Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809–1892; UK)

## The Artists

### Leonard Enns

Conductor and composer Leonard Enns is the founding director of the DaCapo Chamber Choir, and Professor Emeritus in the Music Department at Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo. Following three seasons as adjudicator at the Llangollen International Music Eisteddfod in Wales, this spring he serves closer to home as choral clinician in Orillia and composition adjudicator at Waterloo's Kiwanis Festival. Pending composition premieres include *There is a River*, commissioned for the 2015 Royal Canadian College of Organists, and upcoming performances of his music include the Toronto Orpheus Choir performance of his half-hour *Ten Thousand Rivers of Oil* in May.

### DaCapo Chamber Choir

The DaCapo Chamber Choir was founded in 1998 under the direction of Leonard Enns. The mission of the choir is to identify, study, rehearse, and present in public performance and recordings, the outstanding choral chamber works of the past 100 years and to champion music of Canadian and local composers. In 2011, DaCapo was awarded first place in the Choral Canada National Competition for Canadian Amateur Choirs in the Contemporary Choral Music category. The choir also received 2nd place in the Chamber Choir category.

Our performance season consists of three annual concerts in: once in the fall around Remembrance Day, a mid-winter, and a spring concert. In addition, the choir performs on an ad hoc basis at other events. The choir has released two CDs, the award-winning *ShadowLand* (winner of the 2010 Choral Canada's National Choral Recording of the Year award, including the Juno-nominated *Nocturne* by Leonard Enns) and *Still* (2004).

For more information about the choir, including photos, sound clips, the NewWorks choral composition competition, and more, visit our web site at [www.dacapochoir.ca](http://www.dacapochoir.ca) or join our eList by emailing [info@dacapochoir.ca](mailto:info@dacapochoir.ca).


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## **Catherine Robertson**

Catherine Robertson is active as a pianist, chamber musician, singer, coach and teacher. She is a frequent piano and choral adjudicator at music festivals across the country. Catherine received her B. Mus. Piano Performance (Queen's University), Piano Licentiate LRAM, (Royal Academy of Music, London, U.K.) and her M. Mus. Piano Performance (WU) degrees. She was a collaborative pianist and coach at Wilfrid Laurier University, and taught piano at Redeemer University College.

Catherine presently teaches piano and piano literature courses at the music department of Conrad Grebel College, University of Waterloo. In this capacity, and in previous DaCapo Chamber Choir collaborations, she has enjoyed the opportunity to perform new compositions. In addition, Catherine has shown her love of early music as director of TACTUS Vocal Ensemble, a professional group specializing in music of the European Renaissance, and as a consort member of Tafelmusik Chamber Choir. For many years she sang with the Elora Festival Singers.

Catherine recently joined the board of the Guelph Connections Concerts series. She is active in recital and in planning concerts for this venture, dedicated to presenting musical excellence and accessibility in the community.

## **Choir Members**

### ***Soprano***

Sara Fretz  
Sara Martin  
Laura McConachie  
Rebecca McKay

### ***Tenor***

Curtis Dueck  
Robert Gooding-Townsend  
Marcus Kramer  
Stephen Preece  
Cam Streicher

### ***Alto***

Theresa Bauer  
Janice Maust Hedrick  
Susan Schwartzentruber  
Jennie Wiebe

### ***Bass***

Donny Cheung  
Michael Hook  
Stephen Horst  
Phil Klassen-Rempel  
Bill Labron

To inquire about auditions, email [auditions@dacapochamberchoir.ca](mailto:auditions@dacapochamberchoir.ca)

## Acknowledgements

DaCapo logo, poster, and program design –

Heather Lee, [www.leedesigns.ca](http://www.leedesigns.ca)

Choir Manager – Sara Martin

*Lee Designs*  
FREELANCE DESIGN + PHOTOGRAPHY

## Board of Directors

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## DaCapo thanks the following organizations and individuals:

Music Plus (and, in particular, Bill Labron) – for providing the piano at St. John's Lutheran

Erb St. Mennonite Church – for providing the space for DaCapo's weekly rehearsals

Jennie Wiebe – Music library co-ordinator



**PeaceWorks**  
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– for hosting our Web site



– for hosting and catering our NewWorks celebration reception.

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Peter Nikiforuk, music director

Poulenc: Stabat Mater

[mennosingers.com](http://mennosingers.com)

## **Mar 21 KW Community Orchestra**

Daniel Warren, music director

Emily Wan, Rachel Kim, Charis Ho, Michael Wong

2014 Kiwanis Piano Competition Winners

[www.kwco.org](http://www.kwco.org)

## **Mar 28 Cambridge Symphony Orchestra**

Sabatino Vacca, music director

Alexei Gulenco, piano

Dukas, Liszt, Beethoven

[www.cambridgeorchestra.ca](http://www.cambridgeorchestra.ca)

## **Mar 29 Guelph Symphony**

Judith Yan, artistic director

John McCrae Public School Choir, GSYO

Scheherezade, Peer Gynt

[www.guelphsymphony.com](http://www.guelphsymphony.com)

## **Mar 29 KW Chamber Orchestra**

Matthew Jones , music director

Joanna Gorska, Mengxi You, Katie McBean, Matthew Henry

Concerto Competition Winners

[www.kwchamberorchestra.ca](http://www.kwchamberorchestra.ca)

## Upcoming DaCapo performances



**In the Beginning**  
Saturday May 9/15 – 8pm  
St. John the Evangelist, Kitchener  
Sunday May 10/15 – 3pm  
St. John's Lutheran, Waterloo

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(for orchestra, dancers, actors, and 12 choirs)

Watch DaCapo's website for upcoming ticket information.