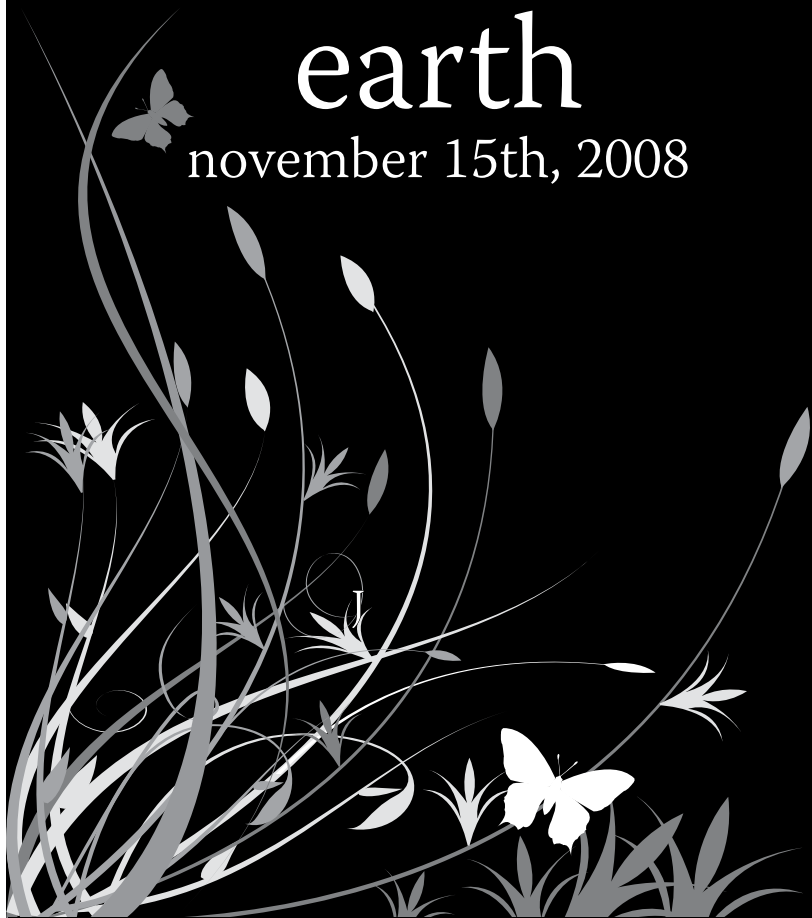


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Reverend Joy
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Chamber Choir

Directed by Leonard Enns

earth
november 15th, 2008



Program

Leonard Enns (b. 1948, Canada): *Cello sonata, 1st movement*
Ben Bolt-Martin, cello

Frank Ferko (b. 1950, USA): *Elegy* from *Stabat Mater*
Cher Farrell, soprano soloist

John Estacio (b. 1966, Canada): *Mrs. Deegan* from *Four Eulogies*

John Estacio: *Ella Sunlight* from *Four Eulogies*
Melanie Van Der Sluis, soprano soloist

John Tavener (b. 1944, England): *Svyati*
Ben Bolt-Martin, cello

James Rolfe (b. 1961, Canada): *Come, lovely and soothing death*

~~~intermission~~~

Giles Swayne (b. 1946, England): *Magnificat*

Arvo Pärt (b. 1935, Estonia): *Magnificat*

Arvo Pärt: *Spiegel im Spiegel*  
Sarah Flatt, piano  
Ben Bolt-Martin, cello

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943, USA): *O magnum mysterium*

Leonard Enns: *This amazing day*

*Please join us for an informal reception following the concert.*

## Notes & Texts (notes written by L. Enns)

On November 21, 1998 the DaCapo Chamber Choir performed its first concert here at St John's. As a fledgling 13-voice ensemble we presented a concert including Arvo Pärt's landmark *Magnificat*, also on tonight's program. Today we celebrate our tenth anniversary concert; we have presented over fifty performances in this time. My one word — to some sixty different singers who have been part of the choir over the decade, to our board members, to our generous supporters, and especially to our audience — is a heartfelt, humble, and grateful *thanks!*

For this anniversary year we have planned the season by returning to basics by considering the four classical elements of our world: earth, water, fire & air.

Earth — mother earth, that takes old leaves, fallen rotting apples, the stubble of the fields, as well as our spent lives, and turns all into the hope for, and reality of, new life; transmuting earth that receives life exhausted and births hope and celebration — this is the starting (and startling!) point of our concert season. Tonight's concert exists inside this conceptual framework, beginning with lament and funeral music (the great *Svyati* of John Tavener), leading to the song of Mary (in two different settings) and ending with a setting by Leonard Enns of E.E. Cummings' poem, *i thank you God for most this amazing day*.

### Leonard Enns: *Cello Sonata No. 1, first movement*

In the summer of 2005 I visited Tiegenghagen, my mother's childhood home in Ukraine, but found no remaining trace of her house or yard at the site of this former Mennonite village. Yet here was the beginning of her story, of childhood years in revolutionary Russia, before her family fled for refuge to a new homeland in North America in 1920s. This music is affected by what I have learned of the intense violence and heart-rending loss of revolutionary times; it is not narrative, nor in any way program music, but is imbued with a sense of desolation, and a deep lament for a people who suffered forced starvation, terror, and execution, whose experience is echoed daily in our world. The work is unapologetically melodic; in this, perhaps, the *Sonata* reflects my personal history of choral and congregational singing. I have always loved the cello — in my imagination it is a human voice — a fitting beginning to our choral concert tonight.

The entire *Sonata* is dedicated to cellist Ben Bolt-Martin, who premiered it in Waterloo, Ontario on February 7, 2007. The first movement is recorded on the CD, *Notes toward*, on sale at tonight's concert.

## Frank Ferko: *Elegy from Stabat Mater*

*Elegy*, by Chicago-based composer, organist and conductor Frank Ferko, is from his hour-long *Stabat Mater*. Ferko writes: "...it would be difficult for anyone to ignore the overwhelming number of children and young adults whose lives have been lost to the ravages of war, murder, suicide, and crimes of hatred, as well as to disease and tragic accidents of all kinds." *Elegy* expresses a grief muted by a calm assurance, a gentle and hopeful mourning; the words are by the American poet and scholar, Sally M. Gall.

My child has said her farewells.  
She has stretched out her arms to the sun  
— Sun, will it be warm where I lie?  
She has stretched out her arms to the moon  
— Moon, will you wrap me in silver?  
She has stretched out her arms to the river  
— River, do not flow over me long.

Now she is alone with the earth.  
She lifts her face to the wind  
and remembers organ-scented trees  
— Earth, I shall bring you soft blossoms  
unwithered and fragrant  
and you shall not harm me.

~ Sally M. Gall

## John Estacio: *Mrs. Deegan and Ella Sunlight (from Four Eulogies)*

Estacio is one of Canada's truly prolific composers, with a catalogue of works including choral, instrumental, orchestral works, and two full-scale operas. Premiered by Pro Coro Canada (Edmonton) in 2000, the *Four Eulogies* were performed shortly thereafter by DaCapo in November 2001; tonight we include two of the four pieces.

### *Mrs. Deegan*

We all know people who are models of decency, of respectful and engaging social exchange, people who bring an aspect of celebration to even the seemingly most ordinary of events. Mrs. Deegan was one of these people; this composition mourns the fact that she represents an endangered species — her passing is a loss of a "century of memories". Poet Val Brandt writes: "In mourning her, I am also mourning the loss of my last link with womanhood as it was defined in my youth. Many things from her day-to-day life are now trivialized, or found demeaning."

And now who will arrange the crystal swans  
frame the petit points  
roll the ribbon sandwiches

and now who will give me crocheted doilies  
and marquisesettes  
and what will become of Persian lamb coats  
and three-button gloves

and who will polish the silver service  
and who will spread the cutwork cloth  
and set the dainty Aynsley cups in their dainty  
China saucers  
and who will remember the sugar tongs  
and who will ask me to pour

and who will be the keeper of all the niceties  
of modesty and decorum and propriety  
and seamliness

and will there still be Easter bonnets  
and jaunty pillboxes and sliver locketts

and did I think I would never lose this sweet  
and gentle refuge  
that there would always be a settee  
a book of knowledge facing me  
smelling of gardenias and a hint of peppermint  
reminiscing of normal school and fancy dance pavilions

and why did I think someone could replace her  
the lady with a century of memories

and why does it make me cry that all the  
lavender in the world went with her  
and there will never be another Trousseau tea

~ Val Brandt

## *Ella Sunlight*

Poet Val Brandt writes: "I know a woman whose only child died at the age of four. Her grief was so complete that she could never be consoled. Her friends told me it was as if there was no one there for them to console. She had been a mother. That was how she defined herself. Then one day her child was gone ... and, in a sense, so was she. What could anyone say? 'I know how you feel?' 'I understand?'"

Ella sunlight. Ella sky.  
Ella water. Ella air.  
Ella movement. Ella life.  
Ella music. Ella dance.  
Ella wonder. Ella joy.

Why, after I taught you all your colours  
would you paint everything gray?

Why, just when you were learning to run  
would the whole world come to a halt?

Why, after you tumbled with fairies  
and stumbled with elves  
and fell into a giggle  
that filled every corner of my soul  
would you take away my faith  
my whimsy  
my god?

*(Pie Jesu Domine  
Dona eis requiem)*

Ella sunlight. Ella sky.  
Ella water. Ella air.

Where you sent here just to say goodbye?

Ella whisper. Ella sigh.  
Ella shimmer. Ella hush.  
Ella why.

~ Val Brandt

## John Tavener: *Svyati*

The text of *Svyati* — O Holy God, Holy and Strong, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us — is the Trisagion, used in almost every Russian Orthodox service and during funerals when the coffin is borne out of the church. Tavener describes the solo cello as representing the Priest, or as the Ikon of Christ, in dialogue with the choir.

## James Rolfe: *Come, lovely and soothing death*

Canadian composer James Rolfe, currently living in Toronto, provides these notes for this setting of Whitman's poetry:

*This setting is a kind of sketch for my piano piece Lilacs, which is based on parts of When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd, an elegy on the death of Abraham Lincoln. As a wound-dresser in the American Civil War, Whitman became intimate with death in its most agonizing and futile guise, so this sensual and wholly accepting ode is to me a genuine and wonderfully gracious response. In keeping with Whitman's intimate tone, the voices are low in tessitura, close or overlapping in range, and moving by little steps. Harmonies are usually very consonant and rooted — dictated in part by the need for clarity when writing for so many voices in the low register. There are echoes of Renaissance vocal writing, say of Byrd or Josquin, as well as passages of more contemporary vintage.*

Come lovely and soothing death,  
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,  
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,  
Sooner or later delicate death.  
Prais'd be the fathomless universe,  
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,  
And for love, sweet love – but praise! praise! praise!  
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.  
Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,  
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?  
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,  
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come,  
come unfalteringly.  
Approach strong deliveress,  
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously  
sing the dead,  
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,  
Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death.

From me to thee glad serenades,  
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and  
feastings for thee,  
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky  
are fitting,  
And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.  
The night in silence under many a star,  
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice  
I know,  
And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veil'd death,  
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.  
Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,  
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields  
and the prairies wide,  
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming wharves  
and ways,  
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee O death.  
~ from *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd*  
by Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

### **Giles Swayne: *Magnificat***

Giles Swayne lives in London, teaches composition at Cambridge University, and is Composer in Residence of Clare College, Cambridge. He studied with a number of the major late 20th century composers of that country, including Harrison Birtwistle and Nicholas Maw, and also for a year with Olivier Messiaen at the Paris Conservatoire. Most important, though, for tonight's concert was his 1981 visit to southern Senegal to record the music of the Jola people of Casamance. He wrote the *Magnificat* the next year, commissioned by Christ Church College, Oxford, "still reeling from the impact of my belated discovery of African music," as he puts it.

The *Magnificat* begins with the opening call of a work-song recorded by Swayne in Senegal; you will hear that call returning several times in the piece. This "found" music is set in a pointilistic musical context — seemingly abstract and Stravinsky-like in its jagged rhythms and repetitive patterns; a further element in the music is a sustained chant line that emerges from the middle of the texture (listen for the altos and tenors). 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 transcending the traditional Euro-centric claim. 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!”

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.

*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

## Arvo Pärt: *Magnificat*

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. The result? We relax and release our hold on pulse, on measure, on schedule and goal-defined meaning. We 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.

## Arvo Pärt: *Spiegel im Spiegel*

*Spiegel im Spiegel* (Mirror in a Mirror), written three decades ago, develops gradually from three basic pitches — one below and then one above the initial centering pitch, A. The work is unremittingly in F major (if you have your doh-re-mi working, the two opening string notes will sound like re mi). Pärt gradually expands the cello tones around the center A, until complete scale passages are slowly built, step by step, like infinite reflections of the first tones. Who hasn't tried, with one mirror behind and one in front, to look into eternity? Here is another way.

## Morten Lauridsen: *O magnum mysterium*

Lauridsen calls his composition "a quiet song of profound inner joy." And that it is. Here we have a tender setting of an age-old text that points to the hope of creation sleeping with the barn animals, and born of a poor young girl — all pretty unconventional, that. In one of his poems, the 18th-century Christopher Smart remarks: *Oh, the strength of infant weakness, if eternal is so young!* That sense of awe, that mystery, imbues Lauridsen's setting. Though the text (historically a chant from the Christmas Matins service) is a reflection on the mystery of the incarnation, Lauridsen reserves his most tender music

for the phrase “Blessed is the Virgin (Beata Virgo)”; here is a profound, gentle and tender joy at the thought that a young likely-naïve teenager — humanity itself — can birth a new hope; the circle is complete, mourning has led to a quiet “Alleluia”, and what remains now is rejoicing!

Lauridsen’s harmonic palette is by now quite conventional to contemporary listeners, yet the motet speaks profoundly again and again in performance. Like the music of Pärt, this piece imparts an overwhelming sense of awe and mystery, yet has a more “fleshy” quality to it, compared to the near-disembodied mysticism of Pärt’s music.

O magnum mysterium et admirabile sacramentum,  
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,  
jacentem in præsepio.  
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt  
portare Dominum Christum, Alleluia!

*O great mystery, and wondrous sacrament,  
that animals should see the newborn Lord,  
lying in their manger!  
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy  
to bear the Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia!*

### **Leonard Enns: *This amazing day***

It is likely true that I became aware of E. E. Cummings’ wonderful poem when I first heard Eric Whitacre’s 1999 setting of it. As much as I love Whitacre’s music, I have actually tried hard to avoid hearing his setting of the poem since then, as I have wanted to work at my own musical version of it, and the influence of memory can be a hard burden for a composer! A year ago I read about a call for new works for a competition sponsored by the Vancouver Bach Choir to be held in May 2008, and that was motivation enough to return to sketches I had for a composition on this text. As it turned out, my submission was chosen as one of six finalists by Canadian composers from across the country.

The motet begins with a gathering of energy, and a dawning awareness of “this amazing day”, leading into a thickly-textured setting of the text (the choir divides into up to seventeen different parts at times). I might mention two things about the piece: first, after all the energy of the main section of the composition, there is a moment of stillness and rest on the text “how should...any...human being...doubt...You?” My old college theology professors would have called this an “aha!” moment.

The realization takes hold, and all that is left is an all-consuming, all-filling, clarity: “now the ears of my ears awake / and now the eyes of my eyes are opened.” The final chord comes into focus like a gentle truth that has been there all along, not so much to be discovered as simply to be realized and accepted.

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees  
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything  
which is natural which is infinite which is yes  
(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth  
day of life and love and wings: and of the gay  
great happening illimitably earth)  
how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any-lifted from the no  
of all nothing-human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?  
(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

~ e. e. cummings

## Artists

### DaCapo Chamber Choir

This season marks the 10th Anniversary of the DaCapo Chamber Choir. The choir was founded in 1998 and is dedicated to exploring unaccompanied music, primarily of the 20th Century and later. Our performance season consists of three annual concerts in Kitchener-Waterloo: one in the Fall around Remembrance Day, a mid-winter, and a spring concert.

Last season, DaCapo also performed as guest artists for the closing concert of the Royal Canadian College of Organists' National Convention (July), as part of Brock University's Encore Professional Concert series (March) and in the concert entitled "Twilight" with Mark Sirett's Cantabile Choirs (April). DaCapo was recently named a semi-finalist in both the contemporary and chamber choir categories of Choral 2008, CBC National Radio-Canada Competition for Amateur Choirs.

This year, the choir is recording its second CD, entitled *ShadowLand*, with an anticipated release date of November 2009.

### Choir Members

#### *Soprano:*

Cher Farrell  
Sara Martin  
Shannon Beynon Semple  
Julie Surian  
Melane VanDerSluis  
Jennie Wiebe

#### *Tenor:*

Thomas Brown  
Christopher Everett  
Michael Lee-Poy  
Stephen Preece

#### *Alto:*

Shauna Leis  
Janice Maust Hedrick  
Susan Schwartzentruber  
Deborah Seabrook  
Sara Wahl

#### *Bass:*

Gordon Burnett  
Jeff Enns  
Bill Labron  
Stephen Horst  
Kevin Martin  
Matt Oxley

Over the last 10 years, in addition to the choir members listed above, we have been fortunate to have the following individuals sing with the DaCapo Chamber Choir:

|                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Mark Adams       | Steve Horst          |
| Chris Allen      | Ben Janzen           |
| Margaret Andres  | Friedrich Kuebart    |
| Nolan Andres     | Angie Koch           |
| Emily Berg       | Brandon Leis         |
| Brian Black      | William Lewis        |
| Ben Bolt-Martin  | Tim Lichti           |
| Joel Brubacher   | Reuben Janzen Martin |
| John Brubacher   | Alan Martin          |
| Donny Cheung     | Kim Nikkel           |
| Diana Chisholm   | John Reusser         |
| Alexander Clarke | Stephanie Rozek      |
| Tim Corlis       | Ron Schweitzer       |
| Daryl Culp       | Tony Snyder          |
| Julie Doerksen   | Jennifer Spaulding   |
| Sarah Flatt      | Rebecca Steinmann    |
| Ana Fretz        | Jordan Stumpf        |
| Sara Fretz       | Stacey Vander Meer   |
| Rob Grundy       | Susan Wall           |
| Nate Gundy       | Colin Wiebe          |
| Tim Hedrick      | Janice Wiens         |
| Jason Hildebrand |                      |

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

### **Leonard Enns, director**

DaCapo's founding director, Leonard Enns, holds a PhD in Music Theory from Northwestern University (with a dissertation on the choral music of Harry Somers), a Master of Music in choral conducting (supervised by the late Margaret Hillis), and undergraduate degrees from Wilfrid Laurier University, and Canadian Mennonite University.

Enns is on the faculty of the University of Waterloo Music Department at Conrad Grebel University College, and is active as composer, conductor, and adjudicator. Recent recordings of his works include the 2006 CD *North Word*, recorded by the Elora Festival Singers, and the 2007 CD *Hammer and Wind*, featuring his chamber music for instruments and vocal solo. His music

appears on various other CDs, the most recent example being the inclusion of the first movement of his Cello Sonata (with opens tonight's concert) on the new CD, *notes towards*, featuring DaCapo in the music of Timothy Corlis.

Enns was the 2008 International Winner of the POLYPHONUS composition competition (Seattle, Washington), and was one of six finalists in the recent competition for works for large choir of the Vancouver Bach Choir. (His composition for that contest was *This amazing day*, on tonight's concert.)

The next months will see the premiere of two newly completed commissioned works, one for the Da Camera Singers of Edmonton, and the other for the Cantabile Youth Singers of Kingston. Enns' music is published by Boosey & Hawkes, E.C. Schirmer, Gordon V Thompson/Warner Chappell, and other publishers.

### **Ben Bolt-Martin, cello**

Ben plays principal cello with the Stratford Festival and has performed with the Georgian Bay String Quartet and the Festival Quartet of Stratford. Ben has recorded incidental music for numerous stage productions, primarily for the Stratford Festival, but also for Shaw, the Grand Theatre (London, Ont.) and Walnut St. Theatre (Philadelphia). Ben is featured on The Glass Menagerie/Orpheus Descending: Theatre Music of Marc Desormeaux and Every Three Children, by Carol Ann Weaver. He also features prominently on the new disc *notes towards* with music by Timothy Corlis, Leonard Enns and Heather Dawn Taves (available after the concert). Ben directs Instrumental Chamber Ensembles for the University of Waterloo. Ben is also active as a composer and arranger, orchestrating Bruce Dow's Stanier award-winning musical, Wilde Tales. For samples and upcoming concerts, go to [www.myspace.com/benboltmartin](http://www.myspace.com/benboltmartin).

### **Sarah Flatt, piano**

Sarah completed her Honours Bachelor of Music degree at Wilfrid Laurier University in 2004 where she studied piano with Jamie Parker and Anya Alexeyev. She then went on to receive her Bachelor of Education at The University of Western Ontario. Sarah currently teaches music within the Waterloo Region District School Board, and piano at her home studio. She has been a member of the DaCapo Chamber Choir since 2004.

## **Acknowledgements**

DaCapo logo, poster, and program design – Heather Lee  
Choir Manager – Sara Martin

## **Board of Directors:**

Marlin Nagtegaal, chair  
Tim Hedrick  
Nancy Kidd

We are currently accepting applications for new Board members.  
For details, please email [info@dacapochamberchoir.ca](mailto:info@dacapochamberchoir.ca).

## **DaCapo thanks the following sponsors:**

- Conrad Grebel University College ~ for providing the space for DaCapo's weekly rehearsals
- PeaceWorks Consulting ~ for hosting our Web site and our online ticket sales

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Glenn Buhr

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Murray Schafer

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Eric Whitacre



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# fire & air

may 9th, 2009

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Leonard Enns

*O Ignis Spiritus*  
Imant Raminsh

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