

The University of Virginia
Music Department

presents

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
CHAMBER
SINGERS
CONDUCTED BY MICHAEL SLON

20th Anniversary Concert

Highlights from the first 20 years

with

Deke Polifka & Karen Dalton, *piano*

&

Adam Carter, *cello*

Friday, April 4, 2025

8:00 pm

Old Cabell Hall

University of Virginia

Program

Sicut cervus
Sung for the Peter Phillips and members of the Tallis Scholars
in 2012 masterclass
G.P. da Palestrina

Fair Phyllis
John Farmer

Plorate filii Israel
from *Jephthe*
Giacomo Carissimi
– solo selection –

Pilgrim's Hymn
from *The Three Hermits*
Stephen Paulus

O Weisheit & O Morgenstern
from *Sieben Magnificat Antiphons*
Arvo Pärt

Zum Schluß
from *Neue Liebeslieder*
Johannes Brahms
– solo selection –

Jane, My Jane
from *The Art of the Ground Round*
PDQ Bach

Son de la loma
Miguel Matamoros
arr. Jonathan Quick

My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose
Scottish folk song
Text: Robert Burns
arr. John Cameron
Janelle Lawson, *soloist*

Beautiful City
from *Godspell*
Stephen Schwartz
arr. Mac Huff

The Luckiest
Ben Folds
arr. Jim Clements

Selections & UVA Songs with alumni

Translations

Sicut cervus (Psalm 42)

As the hart longs for the water springs,
So my soul longs for Thee, O God.

Plorate filii Israel

Weep ye children of Israel, weep all ye virgins, and lament the only-begotten daughter of Jephthe in a song of sorrow.
(translation: Fiora Contino)

O Weisheit (O Wisdom)

O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High,
stretching from end to end, disposing all things in strength and sweetness:
come and teach us the way of understanding.

O Morgenstern (O Star of the Morning)

O Star of the Morning, splendor of eternal light,
and sun of righteousness:
come and shine upon those who sit in darkness
and in the shadow of death.

Zum Schluß

Now, you Muses, enough!
In vain you try to describe
how grief and happiness alternate
in a loving heart.

You cannot heal the wounds
that Cupid has inflicted,
but relief comes solely,
dear Muses, from you.

Son de la loma (“They are from the hills”)

Mama, I want to know where the singers are from.
I find them charming and I want to meet them,
with their fascinating songs that I want to learn.

Where would they be from?
Would they be from Havana?
Would they be from Santiago?
The sovereign land?

They are from the hills and they sing on the plains.
You’ll see, you’ll see it!
Mama, they are from the hills
But Mama, they sing on the plains.

Where would they be from, Mama?
That I want to learn about them?
They are from the hills and I want to learn about them.
Let’s go see. Yes sir!



UVA Chamber Singers

Michael Slon, Director

Deke Polifka, Accompanist

Miles Jackson, Assistant Conductor

Karen Dalton, Choral Administrator

Niamh Kierans & Maya Pattison, Student Managers

Sopranos

Rachel Bohannon

Kathryn Geoffroy

Ava Ghods

Amanda Hellwig

Evaline Mitchell

Maya Pattison

Skylar Raynor

Anna Russell

Christine Schueckler

Altos

Shinjini Bose

Abigail Dodd

Lauren Kim

Niamh Kierans

Caroline Lingle

Hannah Loeb

Anna Miller

Gina Vicari

Julia Wall

Mags Worden

Tenors

Jordan Fulayter

Miles Jackson

Janelle Lawson

Godwin Mensah

Siam Salam

Luke Watson

Basses

Casey Bloome

Sebastian Condyles

Kevin Duan

Andrew Heil

Nathan Hershberger

Drew Holland

Jackson Pace

Jack Wallace

Camron Williams

UVA Chamber Singers

Founded in the spring of 2005 by faculty conductor Michael Slon, the UVA Chamber Singers is a select ensemble drawn from the University Singers (UVA's flagship chorus), and committed to broad programming perspectives, performs a wide variety of repertoire ranging from early music to contemporary compositions. In addition to a performance for the Governor and other distinguished guests at UVA's 2017 Bicentennial Cornerstone Celebration, performances have included Britten's *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas* (with Three Notch'd Road Baroque ensemble), programs of Latin American choral music, choral music from film and Broadway, new music by Meredith Monk (performed with the Meredith Monk Vocal Ensemble), and a concert of campaign songs with the UVA Center for Politics and special guests including Martin Luther King III.

The ensemble's repertoire has also included: Byrd's *Mass for 4 voices* and *Mass for 5 voices*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* and *Magnificat*, Copland's *In the Beginning*, Allegri's *Miserere*, Whitacre's *Five Hebrew Love Songs*, Lauridsen's *Mid-Winter Songs*, Glass's *Three Songs*, Burtner's *Palladian Echoes*, and Bach's *Mass in B minor* and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the University Singers. In addition, the group has performed popular standards by Harold Arlen, Jerome Kern, George Gershwin, and the Beatles, and a spoof concert with music of P.D.Q. Bach. Other collaborations include concerts with the Staunton Music Festival (including with Grammy-award winning baritone Kevin McMillan), Victory Hall Opera (in pioneering presentations of Poulenc and Gluck operas with deaf actors), the Charlottesville Chamber Music Festival (featuring Peteris Vasks' *Plainscapes*), and a 2022 presentation of Defiant Requiem (honoring the prisoners at Terezin who performed the *Verdi Requiem*) at the Strathmore Music Center with five other universities. They've sung in workshop with UVA Chamber Singers Peter Phillips and members of the Tallis Scholars, and in 2014, were honored to perform for composer Philip Glass. They've also been heard in major works, at VMEA, and on tour in the U.S. and Europe with the University Singers, including for Evensong with the Jesus College Choir at Cambridge University.

Auditions: held at the beginning of each semester

For more information: visit music.virginia.edu/chamber-singers
music.virginia.edu/usingers

Highlights from the UVA Chamber Singers' first 20 years

- 2005** The Chamber Singers are founded by Michael Slon, and give their first performances:
April 2 – performance with Meredith Monk & Meredith Monk Vocal Ensemble
April 22 – performance on University Singers concert of Bach's motet: *Lobet den Herrn*
Fall 2005 – performance of the Byrd *Mass for 4 voices*
- 2006** April 28 – Chamber Singers gives their first stand-alone concert, performing Carissimi's *Jephthe*, Bach's *Cantata 150*, and Purcell's *Rejoice in the Lord Alway*
- 2007** Chamber Singers first appears on concert tour with the University Singers
Performances of *Carmina Burana* with the Charlottesville Symphony & University Singers
- 2008** Concert featuring music of Benjamin Britten
- 2010** Performances of the Bach *Mass in B minor* with the University Singers
- 2011** April Fool's Day concert, with spoof music by PDQBach and others
- 2012** Workshop with Peter Phillips and members of the Tallis Scholars
Collaboration with Cantate Children's & Youth Choir, Lynchburg, VA
First collaboration with Three Notch'd Road Baroque Ensemble
- 2014** Performance of several works for composer Philip Glass during his UVA residency
- 2015** Collaboration with Jesus College Choir, Cambridge on University Singers 2015 international tour to England, Poland, Czech Republic, and Austria

- 2017** Performance for the Governor of Virginia and distinguished guests at the UVA Cornerstone bicentennial ceremony October 6, 2017 on the Lawn
- 2019** Concert of Latin American Choral Music
- 2020** Pandemic video masterclass with composer Jake Runestad
- 2021** Concert of Choral Music from the Broadway Stage
- 2022** Collaboration with 5 other universities for performances of the Defiant Requiem (Verdi's *Requiem*) with conductor Murry Sidlin, at the Strathmore Music Center
- 2023** Collaboration with Victory Hall Opera on pioneering *Orpheus and Erica* production
- 2024** Collaborative concert with the UVA Center for Politics featuring “Campaign Songs”, in which they were joined in singing on stage with Martin Luther King III
- 2025** 20th anniversary concert

Original UVA Chamber Singers – Spring 2005

Sarah Nalls (Meadows), *accompanist*

Soprano

Sarah Cupp
 Brittany McLaughlin
 Ellen McRae
 Anna Oppenheimer
 Rachael Reeder
 Catherin Welch

Alto

Jana Hester
 Jennifer Itzkoff
 Anna Krome-Lukens
 Tam Nguyen
 Kristen Rush

Tenor

Jake Carter-Lovejoy
 Elliott Grabill
 John Jesus

Bass

David Faulkner
 Ryan Fleenor
 Jason Manto
 Rob Marney
 Scott Meadows

Michael Slon



Michael Slon is Director of Choral Music and Professor at the University of Virginia, where he leads the University Singers, UVA Chamber Singers, and also guest conducts the Charlottesville Symphony. He also serves as Music Director of the Oratorio Society of Virginia, and as conductor and chorusmaster with Charlottesville Opera. Having led the University Singers and Charlottesville Symphony in a gala performance for UVA's 2017 Bicentennial Launch Celebration

(which included Copland's *Appalachian Spring* with the Martha Graham Dance Company), he and the Singers presented the regional premiere of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass* at UVA in 2018. His UVA ensembles have also performed for composer Philip Glass and the creators of *Les Misérables*, toured Europe, Canada, and the United States, and received more than half a million views on social media platforms. Also active as a composer and writer, his first book – *Songs from the Hill* – has been cited in a variety of other publications, and his work on Leonard Bernstein has appeared in the Choral Journal, won the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) Julius Herford Prize, and appeared in *Bernstein in Context* (2024) from Cambridge University Press. He holds degrees from Cornell University and the Indiana University School of Music.



Deke Polifka



Deke Polifka is Director of Music at St. Paul's Memorial Church (Episcopal) on The Corner, where his duties include directing choirs for children and adults, serving as principal organist, and overseeing all aspects of the parish's music. Deke accompanies the University Singers and Chamber Choir at UVA, and

has enjoyed recent collaborations with The Oratorio Society of Virginia and The Virginia Consort. Previously, Deke served for eleven years as Organist and Choirmaster at Grace and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Colorado Springs, and was Assistant Conductor and accompanist for The Colorado Vocal Arts Ensemble.

An active performer, he has presented organ recitals in venues such as the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, and has appeared with orchestra for performances of Barber's Toccata Festiva, the Poulenc Concerto and organ symphonies by Widor and Guilman. Deke holds degrees in piano performance from The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, and earned an Artist Diploma in Organ Performance from The University of Denver. In 2013, he spent a summer sabbatical in France, playing many of the significant instruments in and around Paris and studying French organ repertoire with Marie-Louise Langlais. Deke is an Associate of the American Guild of Organists (AAGO) and has served in various leadership positions for that organization. He and his wife Joyce have three children and very much like spending time outdoors, cooking, and making music together.

Special Thanks To:

The Department of Music, Music Department Chair Ted Coffey, President Jim Ryan, Provost Ian Baucom, Vice Provost Jody Kielbasa and the Office of the Vice Provost for the Arts, Dean Christa Acampora, Associate Dean Sarah Betzer, Gene Schutt, and the College of Arts and Sciences; the UVA Parents Program, the Joseph & Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, and our Alumni, Friends, and Family supporters.

Upcoming Choral Events

University Singers performance for Virginia All-State
Thursday, April 24, Richmond, VA

Concert tour to the Baltics
May 19-29, 2025

To make a gift to the UVA Choral Ensembles,
or help support the tour:
write the choral ensembles at: university-singers@virginia.edu
or scan the following QR code:

