



IN DARKNESS, LIGHT

Rob Curtis, conductor
Marnie Giesbrecht, organ
Ariane Lowrey, resident accompanist

February 26, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.
streamed live from Holy Trinity Anglican Church,
Edmonton

www.iCoristi.com





I CORISTI CHAMBER CHOIR

Now celebrating its 28th season, i Coristi is one of Edmonton's premiere chamber choirs. Membership is by audition and encompasses a broad cross-section of the population: accountants, teachers, computer programmers, nanotechnologists, designers, theologians, administrators, office personnel—singers for whom music is their vocation, and singers for whom music is their avocation!

The name i Coristi is Italian, meaning "the choral singers". Noted for its unique, eclectic programming, the choir focuses on a *cappella* masterpieces from the Renaissance to the 21st century, presented in three main concerts each season; the choir also performs at seniors' facilities and various local

businesses and gatherings. i Coristi has been heard on national and regional broadcasts of CBC Radio, and is a past first-prize winner in the Mixed-Voice Adult Chamber Choir category of the National Competition for Canadian Amateur Choirs. The choir has performed with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, has toured to England, Wales, Newfoundland, Ontario and Manitoba, and has been invited to perform in Toronto, Winnipeg and Edmonton at Podium, the national biennial conference of Choral Canada. The choir has recorded four CDs, including *Paths*, released in 2016.

Founded by Dr. Debra Cairns, the choir is currently led by Artistic Director Dr. Rob Curtis.

i Coristi Chamber Choir is a proud partner of Choir Alberta and Choral Canada.

*i Coristi Chamber Choir
PO Box 52068
Edmonton, AB T6G 2T5*

i Coristi Chamber Choir

Soprano

Caroline De Grave
Raegina Diceman
Ariane Fielding
Kari Heise
Odette Lackey
Ariane Lowrey
Alison McInnes
Aynsley Schilbe

Alto

Heather Berg
Amanda Daignault
Lidia Khaner
Diana Tayler
Yvonne Trethart
Sarah Van Veen*
Kirstin Veugelers
Rachelle Wong

Tenor

Wayne Hiebert
Conrad Lutz
Shawn Wakley
Russell Wilkinson
Michael Woodside*

Bass

Cameron Dyck
Patrick Farkas
Gord McCrostie
David Ravensborg
Erwin Veugelers

**on leave*

Honorary Members

Lorna Arndt
Dr. Debra Cairns
Colleen Jahns
Douglas Jahns
Peter Malcolm
Margaret 'Peg' Matheson



photo: Hal Thiessen

BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Rob Curtis is delighted to be back in person for his eighth season as artistic director of i Coristi Chamber Choir. He completed a master's degree in choral conducting in 2007 and a doctorate in 2015, both at the University of Alberta; his doctoral research focused on elements of space and place in the choral music of composer Malcolm Forsyth. Rob's other interests include spatialized choral music in general as well as the Canadian choral music repertoire. In addition to his work with i Coristi, Rob also conducted the University of Alberta Concert Choir from 2011 to 2017. Prior to that role he conducted Sine Nomine Chamber Choir and was the assistant conductor for the Richard Eaton Singers. Outside of his musical pursuits, Rob works as a freelance writer and keeps busy chasing after his very energetic five-year-old.



A passionate and versatile keyboard artist, Marnie Giesbrecht is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, Professor Emerita at the University of Alberta (1988 to 2014) and Adjunct Professor of Music at The King's University, Edmonton. She performs and records as organ soloist, collaborative musician (organ, piano, harpsichord) and with Joachim Segger as *Duo Majoya*. CD recordings include solo organ, duets for piano and for organ as well as for the combination of organ and piano. Marnie Giesbrecht is music director at First Presbyterian Church together with Joachim Segger.

As community builder Dr. Giesbrecht served as local and national RCCO (Royal Canadian College of Organists) presidents and on organ selection/building committees including the Davis Concert Organ at the Winspear Centre in Edmonton. She is honoured to have served on national and international organ competition juries including the RCCO, Claude Lavoie, CIOC (Canadian International Organ Competition) and the Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition.

"I am delighted to make music with i Coristi again and to work with director Rob Curtis. I have fond memories of performances with your founding director and my good friend Debra Cairns."

Born and raised in the Smoky River Region of Alberta, Ariane Lowrey received her Bachelor of Music Degree in piano performance at the University of Alberta in 2003, studying with Ayako Tsuruta and Janet Scott Hoyt. In the summers of 2001 and 2002, she attended the Summer Festival at the Orford Art Centre in Quebec, studying with piano professors Jean-Paul Sevilla, Jean Saulnier, and Richard Raymond. After completing her undergraduate degree, Ariane studied at the Université de Montréal with Paul Stewart and completed her Master of Music degree in piano performance in 2005.



Ariane is actively involved in accompanying and collaborative work as well as teaching and adjudicating and has been i Coristi's resident accompanist for the past 12 seasons. Ariane is also the resident accompanist for *A Joyful Noise Monday Choir* under the direction of Eva Bostrand and a collaborative pianist for the Department of Music at King's University.

When not at work, Ariane can be found with her husband and three young children walking or biking to the playground, growing a garden, baking, crafting, dancing and jamming with them on any musical instrument they can get their hands on.

PROGRAM NOTES

Humans respond to light on a deep, fundamental level. You can spot how important it is to us in our language: when we learn something new we're *enlightened*, and it can always help to *shed some light on a situation*. Businesses work hard to *keep the lights on*, and when we see someone we love, our *face lights up*. You certainly don't want anyone to *punch your lights out*; much better to walk on the *sunny side of the street*.

Little wonder, then, that light and darkness form such an intuitive metaphor for life and death. Tonight's program explores that duo—in particular, the consolation and hope that light brings in dark times.

Edward Elgar's *Nimrod* variation from his orchestral *Enigma Variations* forms the basis of John Cameron's choral arrangement, **Lux Aeterna**. The text of the choral arrangement is drawn from the Latin funeral mass, and will come up again at the very end of tonight's program. Elgar's *Enigma Variations* are based on a theme that is never actually sounded (the "Enigma")—over the years, many theories have been proposed as to the identity of the mystery theme. Each variation is dedicated to one of Elgar's friends or family members, and Elgar tried to capture in each person's variation some aspect of their personality or their relationship to him.

The Nimrod variation is named for Augustus Jaeger, Elgar's editor and good friend. ("Jäger" is German for "hunter", and "Nimrod" alludes to the Bible's "Nimrod, the mighty hunter".) Rather than trying to illustrate some part of Jaeger's personality, Elgar was inspired by a specific event from their past. Elgar had been deeply depressed and discouraged, ready to give up music entirely. Jaeger urged him to persevere, reminding him of Beethoven's struggles and how he had turned them into music of great beauty. Jaeger told Elgar, "This is what you must do," and then he sang the opening of the slow movement of Beethoven's *Pathétique* piano sonata. Elgar wrote this movement with that musical theme in mind, not intending to quote it directly, but only to hint at it. Perhaps this is why the *Lux Aeterna* text works so well with this music, which itself reflects the moment when his friend shone some light into the midst of a very dark time for Elgar.



composer Nicholas Kelly

The Blue and the Sun by Canadian composer Nicholas Kelly was the winner of i Coristi's 2019 Competition in Choral Composition, chosen unanimously by our panel of judges. We had planned to premiere the piece in 2020, but when our live performances that year were all cancelled due to COVID, we had to delay this premiere as well. We're delighted to be able to finally share this wonderful new music with you tonight.

The text is by the American poet Carl Sandburg, one of the most lauded writers in the United States during his lifetime. At his funeral, he was described as the "man whose voice was our voice", and in a message from President Lyndon B. Johnson, "more than the voice of America, more than the poet of its strength and genius. He was America." The text of *The Blue and the Sun* is Sandburg's poem *Have Me*, which forms an interesting dialogue with the Cameron/Elgar *Lux Aeterna*. For Sandburg, light is in the here and now, and the time to cherish each other is the present. The focus here is on the light of living, rather than light dispelling the darkness of death.

Morten Lauridsen wrote his large-scale work **Lux Aeterna** while he was the composer-in-residence for the L.A. Master Chorale; the piece was written in response to the news that his mother was dying. (This is reminiscent of Brahms and his *German Requiem*, which was also written in response to the death of his mother—and which also sets a variety of texts outside the traditional Requiem mass.) Lauridsen focuses on images of light and consolation in choosing his texts, drawing from a variety of sacred sources: the Te Deum, the book of Psalms, traditional hymns from the Roman Missal for the feasts of Transfiguration and Pentecost, and excerpts from the Requiem mass itself. There's no Dies irae ("day of wrath") here. Instead, Lauridsen opens and closes with the "Lux aeterna" ("eternal light") from the Requiem mass, and in between he highlights "light risen in the darkness", "light born of light", and light illuminating the heart. The piece concludes with an "Amen" preceded by an effusively joyful "Alleluia", which calls to mind the ancient Kontakion of the Departed: "even at the grave, we make our song: 'Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia'."



composer Morten Lauridsen

Lauridsen’s musical material is firmly rooted in a modern, gently dissonant harmonic language, but is also strongly influenced by centuries-old techniques. He writes:

“Paul Salamunovich, conductor of the Los Angeles Master Chorale for whom I composed this cycle, considers *Lux Aeterna* to be one long chant. That did not happen by accident—I was writing for one of the world’s foremost experts not only on Gregorian chant but of Renaissance music in general—and while I do not incorporate an overt reference to the single line chant anywhere in the piece, the conjunct and flowing melodic lines contributing to the work’s overall lyricism and the chant-like phrase structures creating a seamlessness throughout certainly have their underpinnings in the chant literature. Renaissance procedures abound throughout *Lux Aeterna*.”

Above all, the music is luminous and hopeful, springing from a dark year in Lauridsen’s life yet providing tremendous consolation in the midst of grief. The past 23 months have held much darkness for many of us, and we hope that tonight’s program can be a source of consolation and light for all of our listeners.

–Rob Curtis

PROGRAM

Lux Aeterna (1898-99, 1996)

Edward Elgar (1857-1934),
arr. John Cameron (b. 1944)

The Blue and the Sun (2019)

Nicholas Kelly (b. 1987)

Lux Aeterna (1997)

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)

1. *Introitus*
2. *In Te, Domine, Speravi*
3. *O Nata Lux*
4. *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*
5. *Agnus Dei - Lux Aeterna*

Marnie Giesbrecht, organ

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Edward Elgar (1857-1934), arr. John Cameron (b. 1944) - **Lux Aeterna** (1898-99, 1996)
text: Requiem mass, Communion antiphon

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine:
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.
Lux aeterna, lux perpetua, Domine.
Requiem aeternam dona eis.
Lux aeterna, requiem.

*May eternal light shine upon them, O Lord,
With your saints forevermore,
For you are good.
Eternal light, perpetual light, O Lord.
Grant them eternal rest.
Eternal light, rest.*

Nicholas Kelly (b. 1987) - **The Blue and the Sun** (2019)
text: Carl Sandburg (1878-1967)

Have me in the blue and the sun.
Have me on the open sea and the mountains.

When I go to the grass of the sea floor, I will go alone.
This is where I came from—the chlorine and salt are blood and bones.
It is here that the nostrils rush the air to the lungs. It is here the oxygen clamours to be let in.
And here in the root grass of the sea floor I will go alone.

Love goes far. Here love ends.
Have me in the blue and the sun.

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943) - **Lux Aeterna** (1997)

1. Introitus

text: Requiem Mass, Communion antiphon

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine:
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Te decet hymnus Deus in Zion,
et tibi redetur votum in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.

*Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord,
and may perpetual light shine upon them.
A hymn, O God, befits you in Zion,
and a vow shall be paid to you in Jerusalem.
Hear my prayer;
all flesh shall come to you.*

2. *In Te, Domine, Speravi*
text: *Te Deum*; Psalm 112:4

Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem,
non horruisti Virginis uterum.
Tu devicto mortis aculeo,
aperuisti credentibus regna coelorum.

Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis.

Miserere nostri, Domine.
Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super nos,
quemadmodum speravimus in te.
In te, Domine, speravi:
non confundar in aeternum.

3. *O Nata Lux*
text: Feast of the Transfiguration, Lauds hymn

O nata lux de lumine,
Jesu redemptor saeculi,
dignare clemens supplicum
laudes preces que sumere.
Qui carne quondam contegi
dignatus es pro perditis,
nos membra confer effici
tui beati corporis.

*To deliver us you became man,
not disdaining the Virgin's womb.
You, overcoming the sting of death,
opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.*

A light is risen in the darkness for the upright.

*Have mercy upon us, O Lord.
May your mercy be upon us, O Lord,
As we have placed our trust in you.
In you, O Lord, have I trusted:
let me never be confounded.*

*O Light born of Light,
Jesus, redeemer of the ages,
Deem worthy and accept
your supplicants' praises and prayers.
You who once deigned to be
clothed in flesh for the lost,
Grant that we be made members
of your blessed body.*



4. *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*

text: Mass of Pentecost, Sequence

*Veni, Sancte Spiritus,
et emitte coelitus
lucis tuae radium.*

*Veni, pater pauperum,
veni, dator munerum,
veni, lumen cordium.*

*Consolator optime,
dulcis hospes animae,
dulce refrigerium.*

*In labore requies,
in aestu temperies,
in fletu solatium.*

*O lux beatissima,
reple cordis intima
tuorum fidelium.*

*Sine tuo numine,
nihil est in homine,
nihil est innoxium.*

*Lava quod est sordidum,
riga quod est aridum,
sana quod est saucium.*

*Flecte quod est rigidum,
fove quod est frigidum,
rege quod est devium.*

*Da tuis fidelibus,
in te confidentibus,
sacrum septenarium.*

*Da virtutis meritum,
da salutis exitum,
da perenne gaudium.*

*Come, Holy Spirit,
and send forth the heavenly
ray of your light.*

*Come, father of the poor;
come, giver of gifts;
come, light of hearts.*

*Most excellent comforter,
sweet guest of the soul,
sweet consolation.*

*In labour, rest;
in heat, temperateness;
in weeping, solace.*

*O most blessed light,
fill the inmost heart
of your faithful.*

*Without a nod of your head,
nothing is in humanity,
nothing is harmless.*

*Cleanse that which is soiled,
water that which is dry,
heal that which is hurt.*

*Bend that which is rigid,
warm that which is chilled,
correct that which has gone astray.*

*Give to your faithful,
who trust in you,
your sevenfold gifts.*

*Give the reward of virtue,
give salvation from death,
give eternal joy.*

5. *Agnus Dei – Lux Aeterna*

text: Requiem Mass

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.*

*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant them rest.*

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.*

*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant them rest.*

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem sempiternam,
et lux aeterna, Domine.*

*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant them everlasting rest,
and eternal light, O Lord.*

*Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine:
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.*

*May eternal light shine upon them, O Lord,
With your saints forevermore,
For you are good.*

*Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis, Domine.*

*Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
and may perpetual light shine upon them, O Lord.*

Alleluia. Amen.

Alleluia. Amen.

DR. DEBRA CAIRNS LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS

After 19 years as visionary Music Director of i Coristi, Dr. Debra Cairns retired in the summer of 2013. To honour Debbi's significant contributions to the choral community in Edmonton, the province, and the nation, and in recognition of her long and close association with Choir Alberta, i Coristi Chamber Choir has established the Dr. Debra Cairns Legacy Scholarships.

Donations made to i Coristi will be used to support Alberta's delegates to the National Youth Choir, covering a portion of their participation fees.

Please consider supporting these legacy scholarships, and assisting young Alberta singers, by making a donation.

Cheques can be made payable to "i Coristi Chamber Choir", with "Legacy Scholarship" written on the memo line. Donations may also be made online through www.CanadaHelps.org.

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i Coristi Chamber Choir is grateful for the ongoing support provided by the following agencies and individuals:

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*We have made every effort to acknowledge all donations received since December 1, 2020.
Please contact us in case of error or omission.*

Mark your calendars for i Coristi's next performance:



MEETING PLACES III: SPACE

Choral music and astrophysics meet at last as we explore fascinating space topics through music and science.

Saturday, May 28, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Holy Trinity Anglican Church
(10037 84 Ave, Edmonton)

and streamed live online at iCoristi.com