

A message to our fans about "Postcards from Abroad" & the 2014-15 Season

When I planned the December program last year, I imagined a warm and light-hearted skip around the world, sampling traditions, celebrating the differences in culture that make our world so very rich. We have, indeed, brought together 21 pieces in 12 languages from 15 countries in order to showcase a bit of the world's variety of sound colors. But this year it feels like the world is mired ever-more deeply in hatred, fighting, injustice, and environmental degradation. Now, I feel it is more urgent that we find the commonalities, the overlaps, the shared hopes and expectations, the collective valuing of family and friends, the universal human need for respect and safety in our beliefs and aspirations.

Singing together, even in languages we don't understand, demonstrates that our similarities are much more numerous than our differences. After all, most every culture on earth includes group singing of some kind. And singing connects us back through time with our earliest ancestors. Tenuous as they may seem, I hope that these common threads can serve to bind us together as we face some monumental challenges now and in the future.

However, we joyously welcome this season's Composer-in-Residence, **Daniel Afonso**, and Composer-Not-in-Residence, **Wayne Eastwood**, and join in sharing music to engage the heart, mind and soul. Let us leave the difficulties outside the door for a few hours. They'll surely still be there when we leave!

And it's time for some unabashed horn-tooting: SFCA is 30 years old! Hurrah for us, and hurrah for you who have given us a reason to pursue our mission. Thanks to your support and interest, and the hard work of many singers, staff, board members, and volunteers, look what SF Choral Artists has been able to do:

- given 300+ concerts around the Bay Area and presented 230+ World Premieres
- championed 20 *New Voices Project* composers under age 30
- collaborated with 17 talented *Composers-in-Residence*
- and with 6 *Composers-Not-in-Residence* who have pulled us into new styles

Later this season in June 2015, we'll celebrate SFCA's 30-year milestone with a new and exciting performer-composer project, *SFCA+1*— the Choral Artists plus one instrumentalist. We're thrilled that our inaugural *SFCA+1* artist is **Mads Tolling**, internationally renowned violinist, two-time Grammy Award-Winner, and formerly of Turtle Island Quartet and Stanley Clarke Band. You'll hear us together, and displaying his astonishing improvisational skills. The "*Old Masters, Young Geniuses*" program will also feature works of young geniuses, like Mendelssohn, Gershwin, Distler, Wolf, Moses Hogan, who never had the chance to get old.

In March 2015, we will explore the "*Wisdom, Wit and Wonder*" of sages, mystics, philosophers and poets as set by composers familiar and new, ancient and modern. A special feature will be the world premiere of a commissioned work from **Robin Estrada**— another of SFCA's favorite composers, along with CiR and CNiR world premieres.

With gratitude for your presence in our lives, and with wishes for a peaceful 2015,

— Magen Solomon, celebrating her 20th season as SFCA Artistic Director