



SAN FRANCISCO CHORAL ARTISTS

Magen Solomon, Artistic Director

present

Midsummer Night's Singing

“No matter what situation I find myself in, Shakespeare has written about it. There is something magical about that”

— William J. Brown III, Artistic Director and Founder of the Arabian Shakespeare Festival, actor in this program

With actors of The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival
Sarah Shoshana David and William J. Brown III

Sunday June 8, 2014, 4:00 pm

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Ave, Palo Alto 94306

Saturday June 14, 2014, 8:00 pm

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1111 O'Farrell Street, San Francisco 94109

Sunday June 15, 2014, 4:00 pm

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 114 Montecito Avenue, Oakland 94610

TICKETS: \$30 at the door; discounts for advance purchase, seniors, and students.

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San Francisco, May 14, 2014—Celebrating Shakespeare's 450th, the award-winning San Francisco Choral Artists present works by Vaughan Williams, Felciano, Chihara, and others, set to words from Shakespeare's plays and sonnets. The special icing on this already delectable cake: two world-class actors from The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival delivering monologues and dialogues, plus several world premieres, including a setting of a poem by “Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me!” limerick master Philipp Goedicke, written especially for this party.

It is Composer-in-Residence Benjamin Taylor who—through a friend—turned to Goedicke for Shakespeare-inspired text. Taylor says:

"I found myself wondering how a 450-year-old person with such wit might express himself. Philipp graciously provided two wonderfully crafted little verses. They humorously employ some of Shakespeare's most famous lines, adjusted to the voice of an ancient old smarty-pants. The music is jazzy and has some unexpected twists and turns. It's fun stuff, especially for Shakespeare fans."

The other world premieres on the program are the brain children of Composer-Not-in-Residence Kala Pierson and the three winners of this year's New Voices Project competition. In "Boundless," Pierson paints the words (from "Romeo and Juliet") with bold washes of color, long held chords, and dramatic changes in dynamic.

Since 2005, SF Choral Artists' New Voices Project for composers under the age of 30 has promoted high-quality new music for chamber choir. This year's winning pieces – selected from 23 works by 18 composers – are "Over hill, over dale" by David von Kampen (Nebraska), "Sonnet #60" by Natalie Bell (North Carolina), and "Sonnet #73" by Kevin Laskey (New York).

In addition to the world premieres, the concerts feature works by long-time friends of the Choral Artists Paul Chihara and Richard Felciano, the masterful "Three Shakespeare Songs" by Ralph Vaughan Williams, the popular, jazzy "Shall I Compare Thee" by Nils Lindberg, the light and crisp "Tell Me Where Is Fancy Bred" by Mendelssohn contemporary Mrs. Bartholomew Mounsey, and a setting of "Come Away, Death" by New York composer Robert Baksa.

With an already so beautifully assembled program one wonders why Solomon would still feel the need to include drama performance in this program as well. She explains: "Music stretches words out, and thus something happens to the text. Even a recitativo is not exactly like speech. Since Shakespeare was primarily a dramatist, we had to include some drama. Also, I simply thought it would be fun!"

Winner of the 2012 ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming, **San Francisco Choral Artists** is a 24-voice chamber ensemble specializing in innovative programming, performance excellence, and fostering the work of living composers. SFCA has premiered over 230 works. Through the Roger Nixon Living Music Initiative, SFCA supports living composers and the creation of new music in programs such as the New Voices Project for composers under 30, the Composer-in-Residence and Not-in-Residence programs, and the Composers Invitational. SF Choral Artists also actively seeks to encourage and develop young student composers through student-composer outreach programs. They offer audiences three to four concert sets per season in the San Francisco Bay Area, showcasing new works by living composers programmed alongside masterworks and favorites from the choral repertoire.