

**“Mads Tolling is the most exciting musician I have come across in the past ten years.”**

Stanley Clarke

**“unforgettable”**

Niels Swinkels for San Francisco Classical Voice, reviewing San Francisco Choral Artists’ December 2014 performances

## SAN FRANCISCO CHORAL ARTISTS

Magen Solomon, Artistic Director

presents

### **Old Masters, Young Prodigies**

Improvised and composed works, jazz and classical, including four world premieres

Also: music by composers who didn’t live long enough to become old masters

with

Grammy Award winning jazz violinist **Mads Tolling**

**Saturday June 6, 2015, 8:00 pm**

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

**Saturday June 13, 2015, 8:00 pm**

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

**Sunday June 14, 2015, 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 4, 2015:** Grammy winning jazz violinist Mads Tolling joins San Francisco Choral Artists for their first “SFCA+1” concerts. The shared program features the beautiful jazz standard “Waltz for Debby” by Bill Evans, the outrageous “You Drive Me Crazy” for choir and solo violin (from 1988) by local composer Herb Bielawa, a lovely folksong from Tolling’s native Denmark, and a stunning world premiere written especially for this event by Michigan-based composer Frederic Himebaugh: “Colman Returning” for solo violin, solo voice, and choir.

Artistic director Magen Solomon says: "Mads is a brilliant musician and a wonderful person. Because he's fluent in the jazz as well as classical idiom, he's a perfect stage partner for SFCA and I'm very much looking forward to working with him!"

Mads says: "I think the violin is one of the closest instruments to the human voice, so the blend with a choir is perfect! Working with a choir represents a fresh challenge to me. Magen is one of the most visionary music directors I know. That she dares to visit genres outside of the traditional choir repertoire is wonderful, and I believe this will be the thing of the future."

24-voice San Francisco Choral Artists—twice winner of the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming—performs three more world premieres, and celebrates young prodigies who never had the chance to become old masters, including Moses Hogan (of the world-famous Moses Hogan Chorale), Felix & Fanny Mendelssohn, Holocaust victim Gideon Klein, Franz Schubert, and Johann Hermann Schein.

#### **More about the program:**

"Waltz for Debby," by the great jazz pianist Bill Evans, imagines the transition from the simplicity of childhood to adulthood. SFCA performs the famous tune in an arrangement by the Real Group (a Swedish a cappella jazz quintet), appended to Mads Tolling's improvisation.

"I Skovens Dybe Stille Ro" ("In the Peaceful Forest") is a Danish folksong, made even more famous in Denmark by world-renowned jazz bass player Niels Henning Orsted-Pedersen (simply called NHOP in the jazz world). Mads says: "Everyone in Denmark knows this song. I used to sing it as a child. NHOP turned this song as well as other famous Danish songs and children's songs into jazz pieces by re-harmonizing them. He did it really tastefully, which made them so successful. To this day, people love to play them." The song, dedicated to NHOP, also features on Mads' CD "The Playmaker."

"You Drive Me Crazy" is an outrageous, fun, and flashy piece for choir and solo violin by local composer Herb Bielawa. The piece is set to a poem by Jeannie Pool and wittily details the everyday frustrations familiar to many couples. The exasperation grows through a driving 16th-note violin line and ends with a surprise. Bielawa (SFCA's second Composer-in-Residence, in 2000) wrote this piece in 1988 for conductor Donald Aird and his violinist son Brooke Aird.

World-premiere "Colman Returning" is this year's "Composers Invitational" work, by Michigan-based Frederic Himebaugh, for solo voice, violin, and choir. The text, a 9th-century Latin poem, is a letter by an old man writing to a young one returning to his native land.

### **More about Mads Tolling:**

Mads grew up in Copenhagen, Denmark and moved to the U.S. at the age of 20 to pursue jazz studies. He studied under violinist Matt Glaser, and graduated summa cum laude from Berklee College of Music in Boston in 2003. While still attending Berklee, the renowned jazz violinist Jean-Luc Ponty recommended Mads to join Stanley Clarke's band. Since then, Mads has performed more than one hundred concerts with Clarke worldwide, including the Newport Jazz Festival and the Hollywood Bowl and appears on Clarke's album: "Toys of Men."

For nine years in Turtle Island Quartet, Mads spent most of his professional life on the road or in the recording studio. In 2006 and 2008 as part of Turtle Island Quartet, he won two Grammy Awards for Best Classical Crossover album with the recordings "4+Four" and "A Love Supreme – The Legacy of John Coltrane."

Besides his activities as a performer, Mads Tolling is an accomplished composer. His latest work was premiered in February by Michael Morgan and the Oakland East Bay Symphony. Since 2010 Mads has been on the faculty at Berkeley's California Jazz Conservatory, spreading the knowledge of jazz and groove oriented styles to string players of all ages. Mads has received Denmark's Sankt Annae's Award for Musical Excellence as well as grants from Queen Margaret, Sonning Foundation and the Berklee Elvin Jones Award.

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