



**10 MOSS
ARTS
CENTER**
10TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

**VT VIRGINIA
TECH.**

BLACKSBURG MASTER CHORALE

Messiah

Sunday, December 17, 2023, 4 PM

Street and Davis Performance Hall, Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre



SŌ PERCUSSION

WITH CAROLINE SHAW AND SPECIAL GUEST SHODEKEH

Wednesday, March 20, 7:30 PM

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BLACKSBURG MASTER CHORALE

Handel's Messiah

DWIGHT BIGLER, CONDUCTOR

Soloists

ALISON WAHL, SOPRANO

KAYLA BROTHERTON, MEZZO-SOPRANO

BENJAMIN BUNSOLD, TENOR

MARKEL WILLIAMS, BASS-BARITONE



PROGRAM

PART I

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|---|
| 1 | Orchestra | <i>Sinfonia (Overture)</i> |
| 2 | Tenor Recitative | <i>Comfort ye my people</i> |
| 3 | Tenor Air | <i>Ev'ry valley shall be exalted</i> |
| 4 | Chorus | <i>And the glory of the Lord</i> |
| 5 | Baritone Recitative | <i>Thus saith the Lord</i> |
| 6 | Baritone Air | <i>But who may abide</i> |
| 7 | Chorus | <i>And he shall purify</i> |
| 8 | Mezzo Recitative | <i>Behold, a virgin shall conceive</i> |
| 9 | Mezzo Air and Chorus | <i>O thou that tellest good tidings</i> |
| 10 | Baritone Recitative | <i>For behold, darkness shall cover
the Earth</i> |
| 11 | Baritone Air | <i>The people that walked in darkness</i> |
| 12 | Chorus | <i>For unto us a child is born</i> |
| 13 | Orchestra | <i>Pifa, Pastoral Symphony</i> |

14a	Soprano Recitative	<i>There were shepherds</i>
14b	Soprano Recitative	<i>And lo, the angel of the Lord</i>
15	Soprano Recitative	<i>And the angel said unto them</i>
16	Soprano Recitative	<i>And suddenly there was with the angel</i>
17	Chorus	<i>Glory to God</i>
18	Soprano Air	<i>Rejoice greatly</i>
19	Mezzo Recitative	<i>Then shall the eyes of the blind</i>
20	Mezzo and Soprano Air	<i>He shall feed his flock</i>
21	Chorus	<i>His yoke is easy, and his burthen is light</i>

————— **PART II** —————

44	Chorus	<i>Hallelujah!</i>
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————— **PART III** —————

45	Soprano Air	<i>I know that my Redeemer liveth</i>
48	Baritone Air	<i>The trumpet shall sound</i>
53	Chorus	<i>Worthy is the Lamb</i>

BLACKSBURG MASTER CHORALE

SOPRANO

AMY ALLEN
AMELIA BALL
JEAN BRICKEY
DEB CALL
JENNA CATALANO
GENA CHANDLER
SARAH CONGER
SHEILA DARBY
ROSE DUVEN
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BIOGRAPHIES

DWIGHT BIGLER, CONDUCTOR



Dwight Bigler is the director of choral activities at Virginia Tech, where he conducts the Virginia Tech Chamber Singers and teaches choral literature, choral arranging, conducting lessons, and orchestration. Bigler is also music director of the Blacksburg Master Chorale and has held positions at Trinity University and Colorado State–Fort Collins and was the pianist and assistant conductor of the Dale Warland Singers. He has conducted many masterworks for choir and orchestra, including Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*, and Orff's *Carmina Burana*. Under his direction, the Virginia Tech Chamber Singers have performed at Carnegie Hall, at the Virginia Music Educators Association conference, and throughout Italy, Ireland, and Spain. He has conducted concerts and workshops throughout the United States and in Austria, China, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Indonesia, and Italy. Bigler's

BIOGRAPHIES, cont.

compositions are published by Alliance, Boosey & Hawkes, E.C. Schirmer, Hinshaw, Oxford, and Walton. His new environmental oratorio, *Mosaic for Earth*, can be viewed at mosaicforearth.org. Bigler holds degrees from Brigham Young University (bachelor of music in piano performance and master of music in choral conducting) and the University of Texas at Austin (doctor of musical arts in choral conducting).

KAYLA BROTHERTON, MEZZO-SOPRANO



Kayla Brotherton is a mezzo-soprano from Greensboro, North Carolina. Brotherton has been featured in *Spotlight on Opera* (La Zia Principessa, *Suor Angelica*, and Zita, *Gianni Schicchi*), New York Dramatic Voices (Klytaemnestra, *Elektra*), Berlin Opera Academy (The Mistress of the Novices, *Suor Angelica*; and the Witch, *Hansel and Gretel*), and Greensboro Light Opera and Song (Dame Hannah, *Ruddigore*). She was educated at Greensboro College and University of North Carolina-Greensboro, where she sang Dame Quickly in *Falstaff*, Third Lady in *The Magic Flute*, and Audience in *Talk Opera*. Brotherton spent three years working as a Lake Junaluska singer, regularly sings chorus with Greensboro Opera, and has frequently been engaged as a featured soloist with the Greensboro Choral Society, including recently in Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody*.

BENJAMIN BUNSOLD, TENOR



Benjamin Bunsold's notable roles include Fenton (*Falstaff*) with Opera Idaho and Fort Worth Opera, Alfredo (*La Traviata*) with Asheville Lyric Opera, Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) with Shreveport Opera, Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*) with

St. Petersburg Opera, Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) with Opera in the Heights, and Count Almaviva (*Il Barbiere di Sevilla*) with Center Stage Opera. Bunsold has performed leading roles with Opera Memphis, Charlottesville Opera, Opera Columbus, Cleveland Opera, Opera Delaware, Opera North Carolina, and for the Drei Groschen Oper in Munich, Germany. He has been a young artist with Fort Worth Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Opera Tampa. An active concert soloist, Bunsold has performed Handel's *Messiah* with the Tucson Symphony, the Kalamazoo Orchestra, and Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, and as tenor soloist in *Carmina Burana* with the Southern Arizona Symphony. Other concerts include tenor soloist in the Great American Voices tour sponsored by the National Endowment of the Arts, Saint-Saëns' *Christmas Oratorio* with ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, Beethoven's Mass in C with the Knox County Symphony, Mozart's *Requiem* for the Fairbanks Symphony in Alaska and the Paducah Symphony, and guest artist at Heidelberg University's Christmas Concert. Upcoming engagements include Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the Lima Symphony. Bunsold holds a bachelor of music from Ohio Wesleyan University, a master of music from the University of Illinois, and has completed additional graduate work at Ohio State University.

ALISON WAHL, SOPRANO



Alison Wahl's work as a vocalist, composer, and songwriter spans many genres and seeks to center authentic human presence. Wahl's music is earnestly human, stubbornly optimistic, intricate, and thoughtful. Her newest EP, *Songs of Change*, was released in September of 2022. Equally at home on the operatic and oratorio stage, Wahl was praised by the *Chicago Tribune* for her "appealing," "bright, vibrant soprano." She has

BIOGRAPHIES, cont.

appeared as a soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, the Boston Pops, and the Rochester Philharmonic. Wahl was a 2015 vocal fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center and a 2012 young artist at the Steans Music Institute at the Ravinia Festival. She won an Encouragement Award from the Metropolitan Opera's 2012 National Competition. Wahl holds a doctor of musical arts and a master's degree in voice performance and literature from Northwestern University, as well as a master's degree in composition from the Peabody Institute.

MARKEL WILLIAMS, BASS-BARITONE



Markel Williams graduated with a bachelor's degree in music performance and a master's degree in adult education from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Williams has performed the role of Comandante in *Manon Lescaut* (2022); Sergente in *La Bohème* (2022); and Parson Alltalk and Simon in *Treemonisha* (2023). Throughout the 2022-2023 season, Williams performed in three Opera About Town recitals, with pieces from *Porgy and Bess* and *Les pêcheurs de perles*. He performed in *Don Giovanni* and *Porgy and Bess* with the North Carolina Opera in the spring of the 2022-2023 season. Williams covered the roles of Peter Still and Henry Brown for the world stage premiere of *Sanctuary Road* with the North Carolina Opera (2022), and he was a featured soloist with the North Carolina Symphony during the Juneteenth Celebration Concert Series in the 2021-2022 season.

BLACKSBURG MASTER CHORALE

The Blacksburg Master Chorale (BMC) is a musical community organization based in Blacksburg that welcomes singers ages 18 and up who want to enjoy singing and performing contemporary and classical choral works. The group regularly performs a diverse body of repertoire, from Renaissance madrigals to Broadway favorites, from Orff's *Carmina Burana* to Mozart's *Requiem*. The chorale is an avid supporter of new choral works and was a major sponsor of the recent world premiere of Dwight Bigler's *Mosaic for Earth*, winner of the American Prize in Composition (2023). At Christmastime in 1987, founding musical director Craig Fields recruited local choir members and musicians and performed Handel's *Messiah* after just one rehearsal. The entrance fee was canned food for the local food pantry. That event led to the establishment of the Blacksburg Master Chorale, now at 80-100 singers with three to four major performances annually in the New River Valley and Roanoke Valley areas. The chorale has been guest conducted by legendary conductor Robert Shaw and has performed with Opera Roanoke and the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. The chorale has also been on three European tours. In 2006 the BMC expanded by developing the Blacksburg Children's Chorale (BCC). The BCC engages 50-60 youth each year and is designed for singers of various ages and experience. For information about joining or supporting the BMC or BCC, visit blacksburgmasterchorale.org.

The Blacksburg Master Chorale previously performed at the Moss Arts Center in 2015, 2019, and 2022, as well as with Opera Roanoke in 2023.

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TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!



We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis on Tuesday, January 23, 2024.

bit.ly/bmc-messiah-feedback

GO DEEPER

Though *Messiah* was originally composed to commemorate Easter, Handel's piece has since become a staple of the Christmas holiday season. Why do you think the work has developed such a strong contemporary association with Christmas? In your opinion, what about *Messiah* musically makes it more or less fitting for celebrating Easter and/or Christmas?



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10TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

A black and white photograph of an orchestra performing on a stage. The conductor is in the center, facing the musicians. The stage is lit, and the audience seating is visible in the foreground.

10 YEARS

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IN THE GALLERIES

THROUGH SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

william cordova

can't stop, won't stop: tenets of southern alchemy

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

william cordova examines the visual aspects of transition and displacement, studying the evolution and adaptation of objects and perception across time and space. Constructing artworks composed of reclaimed elements, paint, gold leaf, and collage, cordova presents encoded representations of social systems and the material histories of objects and images.

Laurie Steelink

Spirit Is Alive, Magic Is Afoot

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen '71
Reception Gallery

Multidisciplinary artist Laurie Steelink is a citizen of the Akimel O'otham Nation and a member of the Gila River Indian Community. Exploring connections to her Native American roots, Steelink creates assemblages of found objects and reassembled paintings to question authenticity and consider spirituality. Using her creativity to reconnect with and to reference her ancestors, culture, and community, Steelink defines her work as an expression of her personal identities.

K-12 PROGRAMS AT THE MOSS ARTS CENTER

At the Moss Arts Center, we believe that arts experiences are a crucial part of a child's education. We've been dedicated to providing opportunities for children at no cost since we opened in 2013. A wide array of Moss programming and experiences to inspire, engage, and empower students of all ages and backgrounds. This season, we're offering five school-day matinee programs, in-school workshops and performances, and gallery tours with professional artists for learners of all ages.

Learn more at bit.ly/moss-K12.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Moss Arts Center's 2013-2014 inaugural season offered a dynamic range of programming, featuring 21 performances by international, national and regional touring performing artists and companies — from timeless classics and family-friendly offerings, to works with deep meaning and global themes, to events with a fresh and sometimes unexpected perspective. The center celebrated its successful first season on April 26, 2014, with a special gala celebration featuring R&B and jazz vocalist Natalie Cole and the Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland, and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that the Morrill Land-Grant College Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands in California and other areas in the West.

LABOR RECOGNITION

Virginia Tech acknowledges that its Blacksburg campus sits partly on land that was previously the site of the Smithfield and Solitude Plantations, owned by members of the Preston family. Between the 1770s and the 1860s, the Prestons and other local White families that owned parcels of what became Virginia Tech also owned hundreds of enslaved people. Enslaved Black people generated resources that financed Virginia Tech's predecessor institution, the Preston and Olin Institute, and they also worked on the construction of its building.

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We are grateful for the generosity of our patrons and donors who sustain the Moss Arts Center with their annual gifts. The impact of all contributions, no matter the amount, is significant in helping us transform lives through exploration and engagement with the arts and the creative process. We are honored to have received cash donations during the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, from the following:

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YMCA AT VIRGINIA TECH



On November 4, we held an Open House to kick off a year of celebration of 150 years of service to this community! Our student leaders showcased their programs and attendees had fun learning more about the work of the Y! Be sure to keep an eye on our website and social media for more birthday year fun!



Y Pottery Studio



Have you checked out our Pottery Studio? We now offer classes in wheel and hand building with our excellent instructors—Jennifer Lawrence, Tonia Moxley, Heather Johnson & Jack Gulley. New classes start every 6–8 weeks, but hurry because they fill up fast!



www.vtymca.org/pottery-2/

Did You Know

The Golden Triangle Award

The YMCA VPI Golden Triangle Award is just over an inch long and stands for mind, body and spirit, a unity of purpose and balance that is essential to lives committed to service.

The Fellowship of the Golden Triangle was started in 1928 as a way to recognize men and women who contributed appreciably to Virginia Tech's campus and community through their involvement with the Y. It includes such illustrious members as Julian A. Burruss, Ellison A. Smyth, Walter S. Newman, John Whittemore, Charlie Yates, Leander Deitrich, George Litton, & Paul Reaves. You may recognize these names from several campus buildings!

The Golden Triangle award was begun in 1928 by Daniel Bowden, who was the Student President of the YMCA at the time.



www.vtymca.org
