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Contact: Wieneke Gorter

Phone 650.387.1708

(press contact only)

wienekegorter@yahoo.com

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CALIFORNIA BACH SOCIETY,
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PAUL FLIGHT,
PRESENTS TWO RARELY HEARD BAROQUE MASTERWORKS

Requiem in F Minor by Heinrich Biber and *Stabat Mater* by Agostino Steffani

with

Brian Staufenbiel, tenor, Curtis Cook, bass, and a baroque ensemble of strings and organ

Friday March 13, 2009, 8pm at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church,

500 De Haro Street (at Mariposa), San Francisco

Saturday, March 14, 2009, 8pm at All Saints Episcopal Church,

555 Waverley Street (at Hamilton), Palo Alto

Sunday, March 15, 2009, 4pm at St. Mark's Episcopal Church,

2300 Bancroft Way (at Ellsworth), Berkeley

Doors open 30 minutes prior to each performance

Tickets:

Advance purchase: General \$25 / Senior \$18 / Student \$10

At the door: General \$30 / Senior \$22 / Student \$10

(415) 262-0272 / <http://www.calbach.org>

info@calbach.org

“... such astonishing purity and beauty of tone ...”

-- Lisa Hirsch in her Classical Music Blog *The Iron Tongue of Midnight*,
on California Bach Society's October 19, 2008 performance of *Early Bach Cantatas*

Palo Alto, February 19, 2009 – California Bach Society, under the direction of Paul Flight, brings two rarely heard Baroque masterworks to Bay Area audiences. Heinrich Biber (1644-1704) was regarded as one of the foremost violin *virtuosi* of the 17th century and among the finest of German Baroque composers. The singers of California Bach

Society will showcase their extraordinary ensemble sound in his *Requiem in F Minor*, written for Salzburg Cathedral sometime in the last decade of the composer's life. It may very well be the first opportunity for Bay Area listeners to hear this beautiful work live. California Bach Society performs it with the *Stabat Mater* of Agostino Steffani, written in 1727 for the *Academy of Vocal Music* in London, later to become the *Academy of Ancient Music*. Tenor Brian Staufenbiel, bass Curtis Cook, and a baroque ensemble of strings and organ join the 25-voice chamber chorus.

Artistic Director **dr. Paul Flight**, a noted choral conductor, teacher and singer, is in his third season with the California Bach Society. A former member of such distinguished ensembles as The Waverly Consort, Theatre of Voices, Pomerium Musices, and the New York Collegium, he brings a wealth of expertise to CBS. In addition, he is the newly appointed Artistic Director of Schola Cantorum San Francisco, and the Founding Director of Chora Nova.

Dr. Flight is also in his ninth season as Principal Conductor of the Madison Early Music Festival, where he has directed masterworks by Bach, Handel, Telemann, Vivaldi, Purcell, Dufay and Guerrero. He has twice been a Visiting Professor of Music at UC Berkeley, directing the Music Department's top choral ensembles. He conducted an operatic double-bill production of Gustav Holst's *Savitri* and Darius Milhaud's *Les malheurs d'Orphée* for Mills College and, in 2003, sang the title role in Philip Glass's *Akhmaten* for Oakland Opera-Theater. A renowned counter-tenor, he has also performed works by John Adams, Leonard Bernstein and Unsuk Chin with The Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, The Berkeley Symphony, and the Norwegian State Opera, and recently made his debut at the Kennedy Center singing the first counter-tenor role in *El Niño*. He received his doctorate from Indiana University, where he studied conducting with Robert Porco. His research focused on the Venetian composer Giovanni Croce (1557-1609), and he has recorded a program featuring the music of Croce for *Harmonia*, a nationally syndicated radio show. Dr. Flight recently appeared as a guest on KALW radio's performing arts program, *My Favorite Things*, and has lectured on opera, music history and form as a Visiting Professor at Mills College.

California Bach Society has established a reputation for its historically informed interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque choral music. Throughout its 37-year history, CBS has performed with such early music luminaries as Magnificat and members of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. CBS was a featured concert presenter at the 2000 Berkeley Early Music Festival. In 2003, CBS joined the world-renowned Kronos Quartet in the Bay Area premiere of Terry Riley's *Sun Rings* at the San Francisco Jazz Festival. San Francisco Classical Voice has praised the chorus for its "elegant affecting performance" and noted that the choir sang with "serene confidence...delicate nobility...[and] effervescent grace."

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