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**California Bach Society, under the direction of Paul Flight,  
presents "From Tallis to Tavener"**

Friday May 1, 2009, 8 p.m. at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church,  
500 De Haro Street (at Mariposa), San Francisco

Saturday, May 2, 2009, 8 p.m. at All Saints Episcopal Church,  
555 Waverley Street (at Hamilton), Palo Alto

Sunday, May 3, 2009, 4 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church,  
2300 Bancroft Way (at Ellsworth), Berkeley

Doors open 30 minutes prior to each performance

Tickets:

Advance purchase (until 5 p.m. Thursday April 30): General \$25 / Senior \$18 / Student \$10

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

(415) 262-0272 / <http://www.calbach.org>  
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**"...Flight has made of the choral group a professional ensemble capable of every expressive nuance and glorious ensemble sound."**

-- Rebekah Ahrendt in San Francisco Classical Voice on California Bach Society's performance of Biber's *Requiem* and Steffani's *Stabat Mater* on March 15, 2009

**Palo Alto, April 6, 2009 – In California Bach Society's last concerts of the season, artistic director Paul Flight sees a dream come true:** "I wanted the choir to perform the gems of the English repertoire." Flight has a special connection to the British choral tradition, strengthened by his days as counter-tenor at Norwich Cathedral in 1986. During the weekend of May 1<sup>st</sup>, California Bach Society performs the music Flight envisioned, spanning more than 300 years: from Tallis' *O sacrum convivium* to Tavener's *Hymn to the Mother of God*.

The first half of the program showcases the rich cathedral choir tradition, from Renaissance works by Tallis, Byrd and Dering, to a rarely-heard motet by Henry Purcell. The second half reflects the influence of the earlier music on contemporary composers such as John Tavener (born 1944), and Late Romantic composers such as Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924). "Stanford deserves to be better known," says Flight. "His setting of *Beati quorum via* has to be one of the most beautiful English motets ever composed."

### **Works for double choir**

Many of the selected compositions are for double choir, for example *O clap your hands* by Orlando Gibbons, and *Hail, Gladdening light* by Charles Wood. "Wood wrote beautifully for double choir, the music is sonorous and very appealing," says Paul Flight. In English cathedrals, the choir stalls are divided into two sections that face each other. One side is called *Cantoris* (the Cantor's), the other *Decani* (the Dean's). Flight remembers: "I still see my *Cantoris* seat at Norwich Cathedral in my mind, and the elaborately carved figures adorning it." It is this physical arrangement of the singers in the cathedrals that led so many British composers to write for double choir.

### **Part-songs**

Part-songs by Gustav Holst and Gerald Finzi form an important part of the second half of the program. As a genre –a setting of a secular poem for multiple vocal parts– the part-song flourished in the late nineteenth and early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Britain. The composers intended them to be sung by amateur singing groups. Love is a common subject of the poetry, but other themes are nostalgia, or lament for the loss of innocence.

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**Program:**

|  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Haec dies                                    | William Byrd (1543-1623)    |
| Teach me, O Lord                             | Byrd                        |
| O clap your hands together                   | Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) |
| O sacrum convivium                           | Thomas Tallis (1505-1585)   |
| O vos omnes                                  | Richard Dering (c1580-1630) |
| O quam suavis est, Domine                    | Peter Philips (c1560-1628)  |
| Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes mei,<br>Z.135 | Henry Purcell (1659-1695)   |

*Intermission*

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Hail, gladdening light   | Charles Wood (1866-1926)              |
| Hymn to the Mother of God  | John Tavener (b. 1944)                |
| Nunc dimittis  | Gustav Holst (1874-1934)              |
| Justorum animæ, <i>op. 38</i>  | Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) |
| Beati quorum via, <i>op. 38</i>  | Stanford                              |
| I love my love   | Traditional, arr. Holst               |
| <i>From Seven Poems of Robert Bridges,</i><br><i>op. 17</i><br>I praise the tender flower<br>My spirit sang all day<br>Clear and gentle stream<br>Nightingales<br>Haste on, my joys! | Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)              |
| Come live with me  | William S. Bennett (1816-1875)        |

## Biographies

To read the latest concert review, please go to: <http://www.sfcv.org/news-reviews/reviews/glories-baroque>

To read the article on Paul Flight and California Bach Society that appeared in the Palo Alto Weekly on Friday March 13, please go to [http://www.paloaltoonline.com/weekly/story.php?story\\_id=10578](http://www.paloaltoonline.com/weekly/story.php?story_id=10578)

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 *Akhnaten* 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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