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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,
OPENS ITS 39th SEASON WITH “ITALIAN CEREMONY AND SPLENDOR”

with soprano Rita Lilly and a baroque ensemble of strings and organ

Antonio Vivaldi: *Domine ad adjuvandum me festina*
Alessandro Scarlatti: *Magnificat* (U.S. West Coast premiere)
George Frideric Handel: *Dixit Dominus*

“CBS handled these [quick contrasts in the music] with unerring confidence, never faltering in the rapid lines and nicely sustaining the elongated melodies.”

San Francisco Classical Voice on California Bach Society’s performance of Handel’s *Chandos Anthems*,
October 23, 2007

Friday October 16, 2009, 8pm at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church,
1111 O’ Farrell Street (at Franklin), San Francisco
Saturday, October 17, 2009, 8pm at All Saints Episcopal Church,
555 Waverley Street (at Hamilton), Palo Alto
Sunday, October 18, 2009, 4pm at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church,
2300 Bancroft Way (at Ellsworth), Berkeley

Doors open 30 minutes prior to each performance
Advance purchase tickets: General \$25 / Senior \$18 / Student \$10
Tickets at the door: General \$30 / Senior \$22 / Student \$10

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

Palo Alto, September 2, 2009 – Over the past three years, the golden combination of Paul Flight and California Bach Society has proven to be especially fruitful for the interpretation of 18th century sacred choral music. Audiences present at their performances of Handel’s *Chandos Anthems* (October 2007) or the masterful settings of the *Stabat Mater* (by Domenico Scarlatti in March 2008, and by Augustino Steffani in March 2009)

will rejoice that works of similar exuberance and beauty are on the program for October 16 to 18, 2009.

The program "Italian Ceremony and Splendor" opens with Vivaldi's *Domine ad adjuvandum me festina*, written for double choir, orchestra, and soprano soloist. Choir and soprano Rita Lilly will shine in this work, as in Handel's youthful masterpiece *Dixit Dominus*. But the jewel in the crown will likely be Alessandro Scarlatti's setting of the *Magnificat*. Paul Flight says: "It is a deeply expressive work that is not very well known, since a modern edition of the work has only very recently been produced. We will likely be giving the first performance of the work in this country, and certainly on the West Coast." Alessandro Scarlatti's style of composing sacred music has been compared to Johann Sebastian Bach's: both composers stayed away from incorporating the latest fashion into their work, and thus became masters in perfecting the polyphonic tradition.

Biographies

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Soprano **Rita Lilly** moved to the Bay Area from New York almost five years ago. She is a graduate of the Crane School of Music in New York and has performed in the United States and abroad in concert, oratorio and opera in such venues as Alice Tully and Carnegie Recital Hall in New York. Specializing in the performance of early music, she was the soprano soloist with the renowned Waverly Consort for nine years, performing over 70 concerts annually, and was heard on many live radio broadcasts. Since moving to the Bay Area, Ms. Lilly has sung with the American Bach Soloists, Magnificat, Bay Choral Guild, and was featured in concerts at MusicSources, and operas at Mills College and San Francisco Opera. She can be heard on numerous recordings with the Waverly Consort, American Boychoir, and the American Classical Orchestra. Also in October 2009, Ms Lilly will be singing the *Requiem* by Jean Gilles with Jesse Blumberg and San Francisco Renaissance Voices.

Artistic Director **Dr. Paul Flight**, a noted choral conductor, teacher and singer, is in his fourth 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 Artistic Director of Schola Cantorum San Francisco, and the Founding Director of Chora Nova. Dr. Flight is also in his tenth 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 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 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 38-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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