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Contact: Wieneke Gorter  
Phone 650.387.1708  
(press contact only)

[wienekegorter@yahoo.com](mailto:wienekegorter@yahoo.com)

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CALIFORNIA BACH SOCIETY, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PAUL FLIGHT,  
RECREATES ADVENT IN DRESDEN, 1620

Vesper music for Advent by Schein, Scheidt, Schütz, and Praetorius

*“It is as if the musical motives are leaping off of the page and bouncing around the room!”*

Artistic Director Paul Flight on the Italian-inspired polyphonic style of the North German composers

Friday, December 4, 2009, 8pm at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church,  
1111 O’ Farrell Street (at Franklin), San Francisco  
Saturday, December 5, 2009, 8pm at All Saints Episcopal Church,  
555 Waverley Street (at Hamilton), Palo Alto  
Sunday, December 6, 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](mailto:info@calbach.org)

**Palo Alto, November 2, 2009 – The California Bach Society welcomes the holidays with a program from 17th century Northern Germany.** Performed in the order prescribed for Advent Vespers, the 30-voice chamber choir will present a richly varied program of intricate polyphony, hymns, and splendid double choruses. Artistic Director Paul Flight explains: “The beauty of this program lies in the contrast between the simple and the complex. On the one hand, we will sing a number of well-known Lutheran hymn tunes, with their heartfelt, pietistic poetry. These are not sung in the archaic Latin language

prevalent in the religious music of the Renaissance and Middle ages, but in the vernacular language of German, which became standard in religious services after the Reformation. By contrast, the majority of the pieces we will perform are elaborately worked out renditions of these hymn tunes. Among them are *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, *Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir*, and two wonderful versions of *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*. One can only marvel at the skills of the North German composers, Schütz, Schein, Scheidt, and Praetorius, as they develop every musical possibility inherent in the tune."

In 1620, Dresden, seat of the Elector of Saxony, was the leading musical center of northern and central Germany. Both Michael Praetorius and Heinrich Schütz were employed at the court, while other composers - notably Johann Hermann Schein in Leipzig and Samuel Scheidt in Halle - had close ties with the musical life there. All composers from this period were influenced by two 17th century Italian developments, the polychoral style that emerged from Venice, Florence, and Rome, and the expressive musical language of Claudio Monteverdi, and Alessandro Grandi, with its word painting and its heightened emotion. The result is a wonderful polyphony. Paul Flight says: "The rhythms are crisp and lively, and there is a great deal of motivic interplay among the vocal lines. It is as if the musical motives are leaping off of the page and bouncing around the room!"

## Biographies

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The **California Bach Society**, a 30-voice chamber chorus, has established a reputation for its interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque choral music. Specializing in historically informed performances since 1998, the choir has shared the stage with such Early Music luminaries as Magnificat and members of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and was a featured concert presenter at the 2000 Berkeley Early Music Festival.

The appointment of artistic Director Dr. Paul Flight in 2006 has resulted in three highly successful concert seasons. A fine voice coach, Dr. Flight has attracted talented new singers, and his sensitive direction has brought new definition to the choir. A recent reviewer from San Francisco Classical Voice wrote "Flight has made of the choral group a professional ensemble capable of every expressive nuance and glorious ensemble sound."

For the past three seasons, Dr. Flight has enthralled audiences and critics with his thoughtful and refreshing programming, eliciting reviews such as "one of the most delightful programs of Christmas music in my memory".

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 *Akhmaten* 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.

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