

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
UPDATED February 14, 2011

Contact: Wieneke Gorter

Phone 650.387.1708

(press contact only)

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

To download photos, please go to  
<http://www.calbach.org/press.html>



CALIFORNIA BACH SOCIETY

Paul Flight, Artistic Director

presents

Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostris*

with

Carla Moore and Rachel Hurwitz, baroque violins

**“Absolutely stunning!”**—Larry Marietta, Music Program Director, First Congregational Church, Berkeley, on the performance of Monteverdi program, March 2010

Friday, March 4, 2011, 8pm at St. Mark's Lutheran Church,  
1111 O'Farrell Street (at Franklin), San Francisco

Saturday, March 5, 2011, 8pm at All Saints' Episcopal Church,  
555 Waverley Street (at Hamilton), Palo Alto

Sunday, March 6, 2011, 4pm at St. Mark's Episcopal Church,  
2300 Bancroft Way (at Ellsworth), Berkeley

Doors open 30 minutes prior to each performance

Tickets at the door: \$30 (discounts for advance purchase, seniors, and students)

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

**Palo Alto, February 3, 2011 — Biber, Scarlatti, Steffani, Rosenmüller: by programming masterworks by lesser known composers since 2007,** Paul Flight and California Bach Society have successfully shown Bay Area audiences that there is more to Baroque choral music than Bach and Handel. Serious about his mission to introduce rarely performed jewels to the public, and following his passion for 17<sup>th</sup> century German music, Paul Flight leads the 30-voice chorus in yet another highlight of the vocal Baroque

repertoire: Buxtehude’s expressive and poignant *Membra Jesu Nostrī*. Set to a 13<sup>th</sup> century medieval hymn, the work is a cycle of seven mystical contemplations on the body of the crucified Christ—the feet, knees, hands, side, chest, heart, and face. The virtuoso string parts will be in the expert hands of baroque violinists Carla Moore and Rachel Hurwitz.

The profoundly moving character of the piece reminds Paul Flight of Scarlatti’s *Stabat Mater*, which the group performed in February 2008. Among the critical acclaim for these concerts was the San Francisco Classical Voice review by harpsichordist and musicologist Jonathan Rhodes Lee, who found the chorus “a joy to hear,” and wrote:

“Domenico Scarlatti’s setting of the Stabat Mater fared well under Flight’s direction. The music was [...]well-served by Flight’s careful attention to the text’s structure and semantics.

His interpretations employed affective caesuras where appropriate, and, in other places, rushed aggressively through unimportant cadences to get to crunchy, expressive dissonances. The chorus got some moments of virtuoso pageantry with Scarlatti’s densely contrapuntal writing, which it rendered with clarity of horizontal musical line and, perhaps even more remarkably, with clarity of text in all the parts — further testament to Flight’s acumen at choral leading.”

Buxtehude is best known as a performer and composer of organ music, and this is the bulk of his work published during his lifetime. But he also left a large collection of vocal music: vocal concertos, chorales and arias that he combined into an early cantata form, further developed and made famous in the late Baroque by Johann Sebastian Bach. Visits from both Handel and Bach in Buxtehude’s later life attest to the fame and esteem in which he was held during his lifetime. In 1668, Buxtehude assumed the post of organist at the Marienkirche in Lübeck, one of the best known musical positions in Northern Germany at the time, following Franz Tunder, another great and relatively unknown composer.

The first half of California Bach Society’s upcoming program features two works by Buxtehude’s predecessor in Lübeck, Franz Tunder: *Dominus illuminatio mea* (The Lord is my light and my salvation) , a setting of Psalm 27; and *Wend' ab deinen Zorn, lieber Herr, mit Gnaden* (Turn away your anger from me, dear Lord, with mercy), a cantata based on this penitential chorale, in which each verse of the chorale is arranged for chorus.

The second half features Buxtehude’s masterwork: *Membra Jesu Nostrī*. The seven cantatas that comprise *Membra Jesu Nostrī* all follow a similar structure. Each cantata begins with a short instrumental sinfonia, followed by a vocal concerto, usually for five voices. Three arias that alternate solos with duets and trios, form the center of the cantata. The opening chorus is repeated at the end. The first and last cantatas vary from this pattern. In the first cantata, a verse of the third aria is sung by the chorus and followed by the repeat of the opening chorus. The final cantata concludes with a choral Amen section.

## Biographies

Artistic Director **Dr. Paul Flight**, a noted choral conductor, teacher and singer, is in his fifth 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 appointed Artistic Director of Schola Cantorum San Francisco, and the Founding Director of Chora Nova. For the last nine years, Dr. Flight was Principal Conductor of the Madison Early Music Festival, where he 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. A renowned countertenor, Paul Flight 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. In 2003, he sang the title role in Philip Glass's *Akhmaten* for Oakland Opera-Theater. He made his debut at the Kennedy Center in 2008, singing the first countertenor role in Adams' *El Niño*, and in August 2010 he made his debut at the Edinburgh Festival, in the third countertenor role. Dr. Flight received his doctorate from Indiana University, where he studied conducting with Robert Porco. His research focused on Venetian composer Giovanni Croce (1557-1609). He has recorded a program featuring the music of Croce for *Harmonia*, a nationally syndicated radio show. He recently appeared as a guest on KALW radio's performing arts program, *My Favorite Things*.

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 highly successful concert seasons. He has enthralled audiences and critics with his thoughtful and refreshing programming. A fine voice coach, Dr. Flight has attracted talented 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."

Described by *Strad* magazine as possessing "unerring musicality", **Carla Moore** enjoys exploring and performing the repertoire for baroque violin. Carla moved to the San Francisco Bay Area from New York City in 1991 when she joined Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. She now serves as one of Philharmonia's concertmasters and soloists, performs and solos with American Bach Soloists, and travels to Portland, OR to serve as concertmaster for Portland Baroque Orchestra. Carla is co-director of Archetti, a new conductor-less Baroque string band she founded in the Bay area, and is a member of the chamber groups Music's Re-creation and Voices of Music. Carla won First Prize in the 1989 Erwin Bodky Competition for Early Music, and has since traveled with many leading Baroque orchestras and chamber groups throughout North America, Britain, Europe and Asia. She has recorded extensively for a wide range of labels, the latest entitled *Concerto Barocco* with Voices of Music. Carla teaches baroque violin at the University of California at Berkeley. She received her Master of Music Degree from Indiana University's Early Music Institute where she was a student of Stanley Ritchie.

**Rachel Hurwitz** is active in the Bay Area's historical performance community, performing regularly as a Baroque violinist with Philharmonia Baroque, the California Bach Society, Jubilate Baroque Orchestra, the San Francisco Bach Choir, American Bach Soloists, and the Albany Consort. As a modern violinist, she completed six national tours with San Francisco Opera's now defunct Western Opera Theater and currently serves as principal second violin for the San Francisco Opera Center Orchestra. Ms. Hurwitz is a M.M. graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and received her B.Mus. in violin performance and her B.A. in English from Oberlin College, where she was a recipient of the Pi Kappa Lambda Musicianship Award. A native of Eugene, Oregon, she has been a member of the Oregon Bach Festival orchestra for twenty-five years. She can be heard on that festival's 2001 Grammy award winning CD for "Best Choral Performance," as well as on additional recordings for Hänssler and BMG Conifer.

= END =