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**Tucson Chamber Artists Newsletter**  
**The latest from Tucson's professional chamber choir**  
**March 2007**  
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In this issue

- Upcoming Concert
- Concert Details
- Noteworthy
- About Tucson Chamber Artists

Greetings!

Another musical presentation of Tucson Chamber Artists is just ahead. Here are details of the concert, and a look inside the chorus.

We hope to see you on March 31 or April 1.

*Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?
What masque, what music? How shall we beguile
The lazy time if not with some delight?*

~ William Shakespeare

Upcoming Concert

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Tucson's professional chorus, Tucson Chamber Artists, continues its tradition of bringing seldom-heard choral works to your ears with great musicality and joy. Tucson audiences will have another opportunity to hear this brilliant young chorus in concert on March 30 and April 1 (concert details below). Music Director Eric Holtan has titled the Spring concert "Music Fit for a King... and Queen: A Choral Music Tribute to Famous Monarchs." Attendees with eclectic tastes will love this musical offering. Holtan has assembled works by or about kings for the first half of the concert, and focusing on queens of earth and heaven for the second half.

Here's a sample of the works concertgoers will hear:

What reader over age 35 can't whistle "I'm Hen-er-y the Eighth, I am?" But fewer of us knew King Henry VIII was a gifted athlete, dancer and composer. *Pastime With Good Company* was written in the early years of the 16th Century while Henry was still a handsome prince, before he started disposing of wives. This composition, in which Henry extols the virtues of song and dance, of having pastimes rather than living a life of idleness, has become a favorite among members of the Society for Creative Anachronism, the Renaissance reenactment organization.

A few years later, around 1622, Thomas Tomkins wrote *When David Heard [that Absalom was slain]*. Tomkins' setting of this Biblical account describing how King David wept when his son was slain is especially dramatic, moving, and heartbreakingly beautiful.

Jean-Philippe Rameau's *Laboravi Clamans*, is based on Psalm 69:3, in which King David laments: I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched. My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God.

Another work written in the early 1600s is Orlando Gibbons' *Hosanna to the Son of David*. With this work, the focus of the concert changes from earthly kings to Jesus, called the Son of David and the Prince of Peace. Gibbons had an exceptional gift for word-setting in which the text remains clear while the music reigns with churchly majesty and elegance. This is music that immediately could engage any congregation of the period, and yet, at its finest, also could artfully challenge the most accomplished singers.

The first half of the concert is completed with Benjamin Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*, commissioned for the 50th Anniversary of St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, by its vicar, Matthew Hussey. Its text is based on extracts from the poem *Jubilate Agno* by Christopher Smart. The poem was written during Smart's incarceration in an asylum. He was said to suffer from "religious mania," and his work reflects his unusual, mystical beliefs. Whether describing how flowers battle the devil, or how cats worship God by their movements, the normal Christian concepts of his day are absent. Britten revels in this material, bringing out its unsettling nature and beautiful visions.

The distaff side of the concert opens with William Turner's *The Queen Shall Rejoice*, which was written for the coronation of Queen Anne in 1702. This is followed by the beautiful *Salve Regina*, composed by Franz Liszt for unaccompanied chorus in 1885. The second half of the concert closes with *All creatures now are merry-minded*, which was part of the Orianna Celebration for Queen Elizabeth I, who reigned from 1533 to 1603 and was referred to as "Fair Oriana."

Also to be heard in the second half are works performed in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the death of Princess Diana, including John Tavener's *Song for Athene*, which was sung at her funeral.

This final concert of TCA's 2006-07 season promises to delight you with old and new works that will expand your knowledge and appeal to your love of music.

**Concert Details**

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Tucson - East  
Friday, March 30, 8:00 p.m.  
Rincon Congregational Church  
122 N Craycroft Road, 85711

Tucson - Northwest  
Sunday, April 1, 3:00 p.m.  
Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church  
7570 N Thornydale Road, 85741

Tickets: Adults \$15; students \$8  
TCA Ticketline: 520-401-2651

**Noteworthy**

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The talented singers who comprise Tucson Chamber Artists have impressive résumés and can be heard not only around Southern Arizona, but throughout the nation. Here is a peek into the performing lives of several of the singers:

Tenor **Adam Boyles** has been named conductor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Symphony Orchestra (MITSO). [MIT Press Release](#) [Arizona Daily Star profile](#)  
Congratulations, Adam! You will be missed.

Alto **Laurel Decker** also performs with a local quartet, the Five Seasons (SATB + accompanist). They perform mostly classical music, but have done some lighter works as well. All members are soloists and this is their second season together. Past performances include the St. Philip's Friends of Music series and the annual UA Poetry Center Event. They've been asked to travel to Phoenix to make a recording for a researcher's project on what music would sound like in heaven!

Soprano **Molly Holleran** and Tenor **Justin Raffa** recently took part in the Southwest U.S. premiere of J.A. Kawarsky's *Prayers for Bobby*.

*Prayers for Bobby* is the story of Bobby Griffith, a young boy who grew up in a small suburb of San Francisco. Born in 1963, Bobby leapt to his death from an interstate overpass just shy of his 20th birthday in response to the challenges and pressures his family, church, and community put on him because he was gay. The book and cantata, written roughly ten years after Bobby's death, follows the powerful transformation his mother underwent through the struggle between her faith and her love for her son. Raffa, who is a graduate student in choral conducting at the University of Arizona and a former student of Kawarsky, conducted the performance. Holleran sang the lead role of Bobby's mother, Mary.

And finally, Alto and TCA Board Chair **Kay Wiley** divides her time between Tucson and Santa Fe, where she sings with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. She also participates in a Helmuth Rilling workshop at Carnegie Hall, where this past January she performed the Bach *St. Mathew Passion*.

**About Tucson Chamber Artists**

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In its third year, Tucson Chamber Artists is Tucson's first professional chorus. Recently acclaimed by the Arizona Daily Star as giving a "near flawless performance of Mozart's *Mass in C-minor*, the mission of the chorus is to enhance the cultural life in southern Arizona by performing choral music at the highest professional level.

**Contact Information**

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